

**Issues in Food Assistance: How Do Food Assistance Programs
Improve The Well-being of Low-income Families?**

By Joshua Winicki, Craig Gundersen, and Dean Jolliffe

ERS Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Report No. FANRR26-9. 4 pp, October 2002

The costs of USDA's three largest food assistance programs-food stamps, school meals and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)-are easier to measure than the benefits of those programs. In 2000, the three programs' direct costs were \$28 billion. As shown in this issues brief, the well being of low-income families who participate in food assistance programs is enhanced by the alleviation of the severity of poverty, an increase in food security, satisfactory nutrient intake, and increases in household food expenditures.

Released Friday, October 25, 2002

See <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/fanrr26/fanrr26-9/>