WISCONSIN

FUTURES

A Wisconsin Farmers Union Foundation Initiative

FACT SHEET

In partnership with Wisconsin Farmers Union Foundation

SNAP CUTS & WISCONSIN'S FARM ECONOMY

When Food Assistance Is Cut, Wisconsin Farmers Lose, Too

The 2025 federal budget cuts slash $187 billion from SNAP nationally — an estimated $2.7 billion of that hits Wisconsin's FoodShare program over 10 years. These cuts don't just affect families at the grocery store. They drain revenue from the farmers who grow our food, the markets that sell it, and the rural communities that depend on both. Wisconsin farmers could lose an estimated $350 million in revenue over the next decade.

700,000	~$2.7B	~$350M	~$40M
Wisconsinites rely on FoodShare (SNAP)	Estimated SNAP cuts hitting Wisconsin over 10 years	Estimated lost revenue to WI farmers over 10 years	Estimated annual lost revenue to WI farmers

What the 2025 Federal Budget Cuts Mean for Wisconsin Families

- Nearly **700,000 Wisconsinites** receive FoodShare benefits each month — 1 in 8 people in our state.
- The state distributes approximately **$113.6 million in FoodShare benefits monthly**, all previously funded by the federal government.
- Wisconsin DHS estimates **~43,700 Wisconsinites** will face new work requirements, with about half at immediate, high risk of losing benefits.
- Reduced benefits already hit Wisconsin: **$149–$497 less per month** for households of one to four people starting November 2025.

WHAT THE 2025 CUTS DO

Stricter work requirements now apply to adults up to age **65** (up from 59). Parents of children under **14** lose their exemption (previously 18). Homeless individuals and veterans lose protections too. Benefits are **reduced for everyone** by rolling back the 2021 Thrifty Food Plan update.

Source: Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau, July 28, 2025 memo

NEW COSTS FOR WISCONSIN

The 2025 cuts shift **$314 million/year** in SNAP costs to Wisconsin taxpayers — plus up to **$205.5 million annually** in penalties if Wisconsin's error rate exceeds 6%. DHS is requesting $69.2M from the Legislature just to comply.

Source: Wisconsin DHS, OBBBA Impact Analysis

Connecting the Dots: SNAP Cuts Mean Farm Revenue Loss

STEP 1	→	STEP 2	→	STEP 3	→	RESULT
2025 federal cuts slash $187B from SNAP over 10 years		Recipients cut food purchases by ~50¢ per $1 lost		Farmers receive ~25¢ of every food dollar spent		**~$25B nationally / ~$350M for WI farmers over 10 yrs**

Source: Congressional Budget Office score

Source: House Agriculture Committee Democratic Staff Fact Sheet

The Farm Revenue Math

Based on House Agriculture Committee methodology: farmers receive nearly a quarter of every food-at-home dollar, and SNAP recipients cut purchases by roughly half for every dollar of benefits lost — meaning roughly 13 cents in lost farm revenue for every dollar cut from SNAP.

$187B	×	**50%**	×	**25¢**	=	**~$25B**
Total SNAP cut over 10 years (per CBO)		Reduction in food purchases per $1 of SNAP lost		Of every food dollar that reaches farmers		Lost from farmer revenue over 10 years

What that means for Wisconsin specifically:

10-YEAR IMPACT

Wisconsin's share of the $187B national SNAP cut is estimated at **~$2.7 billion** over 10 years (proportional to WI's $1.364B share of national annual SNAP spending). Applying the 13¢ multiplier: **~$350 million in lost revenue to Wisconsin farmers** over a decade.

HAPPENING NOW

Wisconsin DHS estimates **$314M in annual SNAP cuts** to Wisconsin. Applying the 13¢ multiplier: **~$40 million in lost revenue to Wisconsin farmers every year.** Already, ~50,000 fewer Wisconsin recipients since Feb. 2025 means an estimated **~$10M in farm revenue lost** — and that number grows every month.

Source: Wisconsin DHS OBBBA Impact Analysis

AN IMPORTANT NOTE

The 2025 federal budget cuts reduce federal SNAP funding and shift costs to states — but states retain the option to cover benefits above the federal floor from their own budgets. Wisconsin could choose to backfill some cuts. That said, the federal reductions **directly put farm revenue at risk** regardless: if the state doesn't make up the difference, farmers lose the market. And given Wisconsin's already strained state budget, full replacement is far from guaranteed.

The Rural Community Double Hit

- Approximately **$120 million** in Wisconsin FoodShare dollars are spent at farmers markets annually — a direct lifeline for small and specialty crop growers. (Source: UW–Madison Division of Extension)
- Wisconsin's own **Dept. of Health Services** flagged it directly: the 2025 federal budget cuts will cause "a decrease in revenues for Wisconsin farmers, transportation vendors, and retail outlets where FoodShare benefits are used." (Source: Wisconsin DHS)
- Every $1 in FoodShare benefits generates **$1.50 in economic activity** in Wisconsin communities. (Source: Wisconsin DHS)
- If $40M cut in SNAP benefits in a year in WI, that's a $60M hit to WI economy. (Source: Wisconsin DHS)
- SNAP delivers stronger returns in rural areas, where participation rates are **higher than in cities** — meaning cuts hit farm country hardest. (Source: House Ag Committee)

> "In rural communities where people have to drive upward of an hour to get foods that are a little fresher, these farmers who accept SNAP can make a difference. One of our concerns is that these cuts might disproportionately affect rural areas."
>
> **— Danielle Endvick, Executive Director, Wisconsin Farmers Union**

> "SNAP cuts and loss of funding will make it harder for families to access healthy foods, particularly in rural areas where options are already limited."
>
> **— Kris Koch, Manager, Janesville Farmers Market**

Healthy Food Access: A Local Food Economy at Risk

Farmers markets in Wisconsin aren't just a weekend amenity — in many rural communities and food deserts, they are the primary source of fresh, affordable produce. When SNAP dollars dry up, both the family that relied on them and the farmer who accepted them lose out.

- Manitowoc County ranked **third in Wisconsin** for the percentage of farmers market sales made using FoodShare — and local programs faced new federal delays after the 2025 cuts passed.
- Small rural farmers accepting FoodShare EBT reported being unable to **keep shelves stocked**, vendors paid, and staff employed due to processing delays after the 2025 government shutdown. (Source: Wisconsin Examiner, 2025)
- Upwards of **$50 million** redirected from SNAP cuts goes toward subsidies for large-scale commodity farms — leaving small and specialty crop farmers further behind. (Source: Farmers Market Coalition)
- Communities like Janesville are already food deserts. Without FoodShare at the farmers market, many families have **no accessible path** to fresh produce. (Source: Milwaukee Journal Sentinel)

THE BOTTOM LINE

From Viroqua to Washburn, from Merrill to Spring Valley, Wisconsin's farm families and rural communities are already stretched thin. The 2025 federal budget cuts don't land in Washington — they land at the farmers market, the feed store, the school lunch table, and the kitchen table. **Cutting food assistance is cutting the market for Wisconsin farmers.** When we let that happen, we don't save money — we just move the cost onto our farmers, our rural towns, and our future.

Tell Your Story. Protect Wisconsin's Future.

Wisconsin Futures is a network of neighbors, farmers, and local organizations documenting how these policy decisions affect real people across our state. Add your voice at:

wisconsinfutures.com/tell-your-story

Sources

Wisconsin Dept. of Health Services (DHS), OBBBA Impact Analysis, Aug. 2025 · Wisconsin DHS, SNAP Reform 2025 (snap-reform-2025.pdf) · Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), "Millions of Low-Income Households Would Lose Food Aid," Feb. 2025 · House Agriculture Committee Democratic Staff Fact Sheet, Apr. 2025 · UW–Madison Division of Extension, FoodShare at Farmers Markets · Farmers Market Coalition, SNAP Matters for Farmers Markets, Jan. 2026 · Milwaukee Journal Sentinel / Yahoo News, Oct. 2025 · Wisconsin Examiner, Nov. 2025 · Congressional Budget Office score, 2025 · Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau, July 2025 · Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin, Oct. 2025

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