

FOOD STAMP [SNAP] CASH BENEFITS

ELIGIBLE/INELIGIBLE FOOD ITEMS

Households CAN use SNAP benefits to buy foods for the household to eat, such as:

- breads and cereals;
- fruits and vegetables;
- meats, fish, and poultry;
- dairy products; and
- seeds and plants which produce food for the household to eat.

Households CANNOT use SNAP benefits to buy:

- beer, wine, liquor, cigarettes or tobacco;
- any nonfood items, such as:
 - pet foods
 - soaps, paper products
 - household supplies;
- vitamins and medicines;
- food that will be eaten in the store; and
- hot foods.

The USDA defines eligible food as any food or food product for home consumption.

IMPORTANT SNAP INFORMATION

GROCERY BAG FEES

Grocery bag fees may **not** be paid for with SNAP benefits. Grocery bag fees must be paid for using cash, credit card, or non-SNAP debit. Stores that give discounts to customers using their own bags must give SNAP clients the same discount.

SALES TAX

SNAP retailers may not charge state or local sales tax on purchases using SNAP benefits. **Sales tax can be charged on the portion of eligible items paid for with manufacturers or other discount coupons. For example, if a customer is using a two-for-one coupon, sales tax can be charged for the value of the second item. The sales tax cannot be paid with SNAP benefits.**

GIFT BASKETS AND SEASONAL ITEMS

Gift baskets, containing both food and non-food items are NOT eligible for purchase with SNAP benefits if the value of the nonfood portion of the basket clearly accounts for more than 50% of the purchase price.

Seasonal gift items such as Valentine's Day chocolates, Easter baskets, and holiday stockings containing more than 50% of eligible food items may be purchased with SNAP benefits.

Baskets and holiday stockings that contain any non-eligible items may NOT be purchased with SNAP benefits.

For Example:

A stuffed holiday bear sold with a small package of chocolate for \$14.99 would NOT be eligible for SNAP purchase. A gift basket filled with meats and cheeses or snack foods, and including a small toy would be eligible for purchase with SNAP benefits.

ENERGY DRINKS

Energy drinks with a FDA nutrition facts label are considered eligible foods.

LIVE ANIMALS

Live animals may not be purchased with SNAP benefits.

PUMPKINS

Pumpkins are edible and eligible for purchase with SNAP benefits. However, inedible gourds and pumpkins that are used solely for ornamental purposes are not eligible items.

SPECIAL OCCASION CAKES

Birthday and other special occasion cakes are eligible for purchase with SNAP benefits as long as the value of non-edible decorations does not exceed 50% of the purchase price of the cake.