



Jim Pillen
Governor

STATE OF NEBRASKA

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April 7, 2025

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins,

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides food assistance to low-income families. In Nebraska, approximately 75,000 households or 152,000 individuals receive SNAP benefits.

The SNAP program was designed to support individuals and families with access to nutritious options to improve their health and well-being. However, the SNAP program currently allows the purchase of any food or beverage bearing a nutritional label regardless of nutritional value. According to United States Department of Agriculture, the most common purchase with SNAP is soft drinks or soda.

Also of concern are energy drinks, which contain caffeine or other similar compounds, sweeteners, and carbonation and can be purchased through SNAP. Studies indicate the negative effects of caffeine are elevated in children and youth, including increases in stress, anxiety, agitation, sleep disturbance, and high blood pressure, often leading to difficulties in learning and academic performance.

Nebraska believes promoting nutritious foods will improve health and reduce the prevalence of chronic disease. Ensuring Nebraska children have the advantage of a healthy diet supports brain development and prepares them for success throughout their lives.

To improve the health of families in Nebraska, on behalf of the State, I wish to notify you of Nebraska's intent to pursue a SNAP Waiver from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service that removes soda and energy drinks from SNAP allowable purchases. We look forward to working with you on changes to the SNAP program that will benefit the health of Nebraska citizens. Thank you for your help in making Nebraska healthy again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Pillen".

Jim Pillen
Governor