

# Don't let Colorado be next: Advocates warn against SNAP purchase restrictions

*Call on Governor Polis to protect food choice, reject copying Arkansas and Indiana*

DENVER (April 24, 2025) – Anti-hunger advocates across Colorado are urging Governor Jared Polis to reject recent waivers from other states that would restrict what Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants can purchase—potentially starting with bans on categories like “soda and candy.” They warn such a move is a dangerous first step toward future dismantling of the program.

Following recent announcements from Arkansas and Indiana seeking USDA waivers to ban soda and candy from SNAP purchases, insiders suggest that Colorado may be considering a similar policy. Advocates caution the consequences could create a harmful domino effect that drastically reduces benefit levels for 617,000 Coloradans who use SNAP, including children and older adults.

“We want to be clear that we support healthy eating,” said Joël McClurg, Executive Director of Systems at the [Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger](#). “But we also need to be honest about what happens next—restricting SNAP today makes it easier to cut benefits in the future.”

A March 2025 white paper by the Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger, [Protecting Food Choice in the Free State of Colorado](#), outlines the fatal flaws in pursuing SNAP restrictions:

- **Opening the door to future SNAP cuts:** Restricting purchases is a stepping stone to further reductions in SNAP and creates a false narrative that smaller benefits are justified. The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), which has strict limitations on food purchases, offers only one-third of SNAP’s average benefit; a warning of where this road may lead.
- **Creating an administrative nightmare for retailers and taxpayers:** With over 650,000 food and beverage products on the market—and 20,000 added yearly—tracking “approved” items would be costly for taxpayers and businesses. Small retailers may no longer be able to accept SNAP benefits due to technical and financial burdens.
- **Recognizing that cost and access are the real barriers:** SNAP participants overwhelmingly want to eat healthy, but fresh foods can be expensive and many communities still lack full-service grocery stores. Rather than policing shopping carts and creating additional stigma around public benefits, advocates propose that Colorado should increase SNAP benefits, expand fresh food incentives, and support local food infrastructure.

“Coloradans pride themselves on protecting choice and dignity in our market economy. Implementing restrictive, costly, and ineffective SNAP policies modeled after states with entirely different values would betray that legacy,” said McClurg. “Governor Polis must stand firm and not let Colorado be the next test case for dismantling SNAP under the guise of health reform. We must reject restrictions and focus on the root causes of these issues.”