

# Moving Puerto Rico from NAP to SNAP: The Economic and Legislative Case for Equitable Nutrition Aid

COALITION FOR FOOD SECURITY ♦ PUERTO RICO

# Coalition for Food Security Puerto Rico

- The Coalition for Food Security Puerto Rico (CFSPR) was launched by partners in the food and beverage industry to support efforts for nutrition aid to Puerto Rico following Hurricanes Irma and María.
- The Coalition grew to over 80 organizations in private industry (manufacturers, distributors, retail, and shipping) and respected non-profits and think tanks working in the States and Puerto Rico. The Coalition is focused on a bi-partisan effort to engage both parties in Congress.
- Industry leaders in Puerto Rico include manufacturing, banking, shipping, retailers and trade associations.
- Multi-state non-profits and fair share advocacy groups from California, Connecticut, D.C., Florida, Georgia, Hawaii Kentucky, Illinois, Ohio, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Texas.

# Food Insecurity in Puerto Rico



Since 1981, Puerto Rico has received nutritional assistance aid through a federally-funded block grant. The \$1.9B capped block grant limits Puerto Rico's ability to manage changes in demand, including those due to demographic shifts, poverty levels, and economic stagnation.



Over decades, Puerto Rico has endured difficult economic circumstances. As a result, Puerto Rico has experienced steady increases in poverty rates; over 43% of the population is living below the poverty line and dependent on some form of government aid. In 2020, the situation was exacerbated by earthquakes and COVID-19, resulting in significant infrastructure damage and unemployment and economic losses to the residents of Puerto Rico.

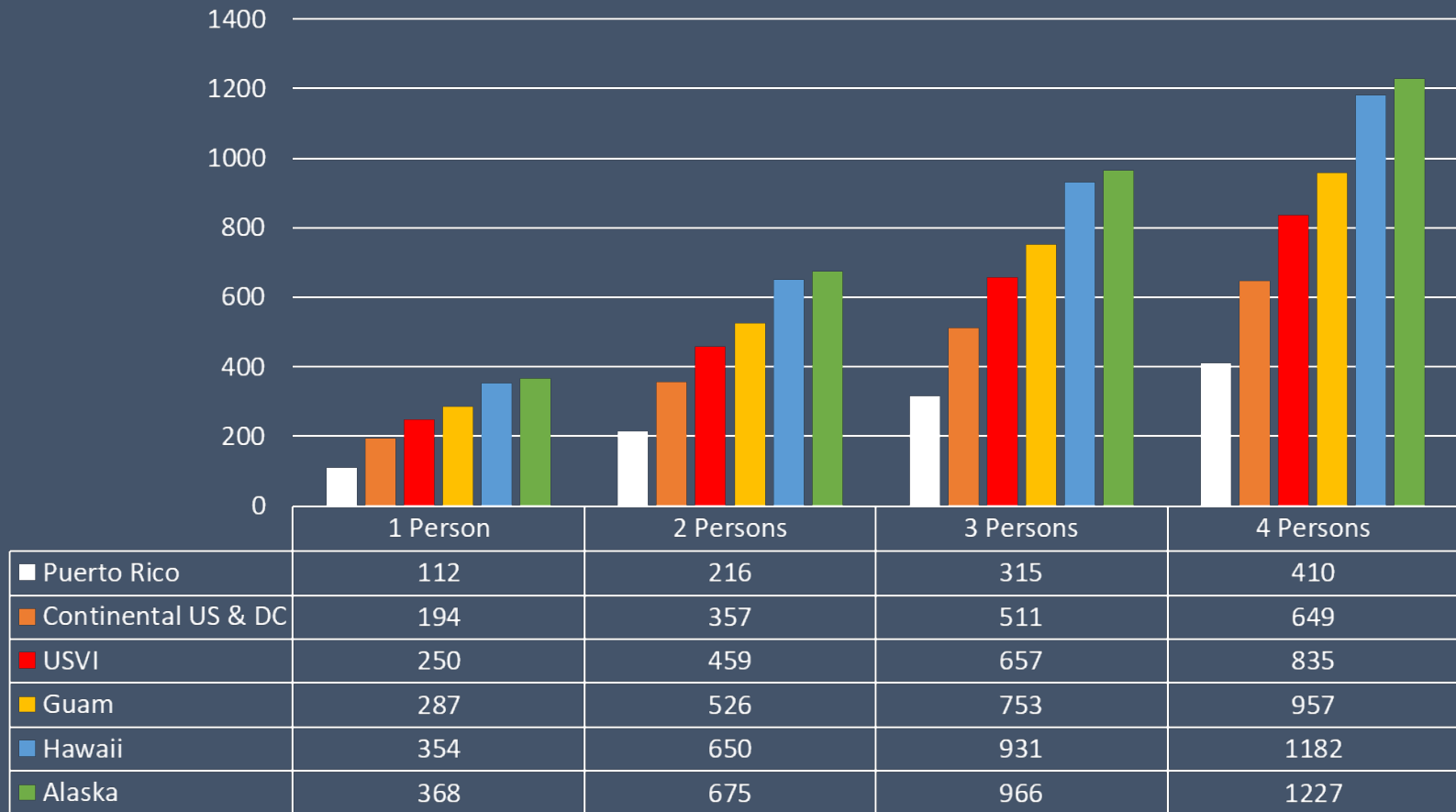


Close to 1.5 million residents currently receive some level of nutrition assistance aid. Most of the beneficiaries are children, elderly, and disabled individuals. The levels of aid in Puerto Rico falls well below those of many states and territories. Puerto Rico has limited eligibility requirements, reduced benefit levels, and is in the process of eliminating the cash benefit portion and guiding participants into work settings.

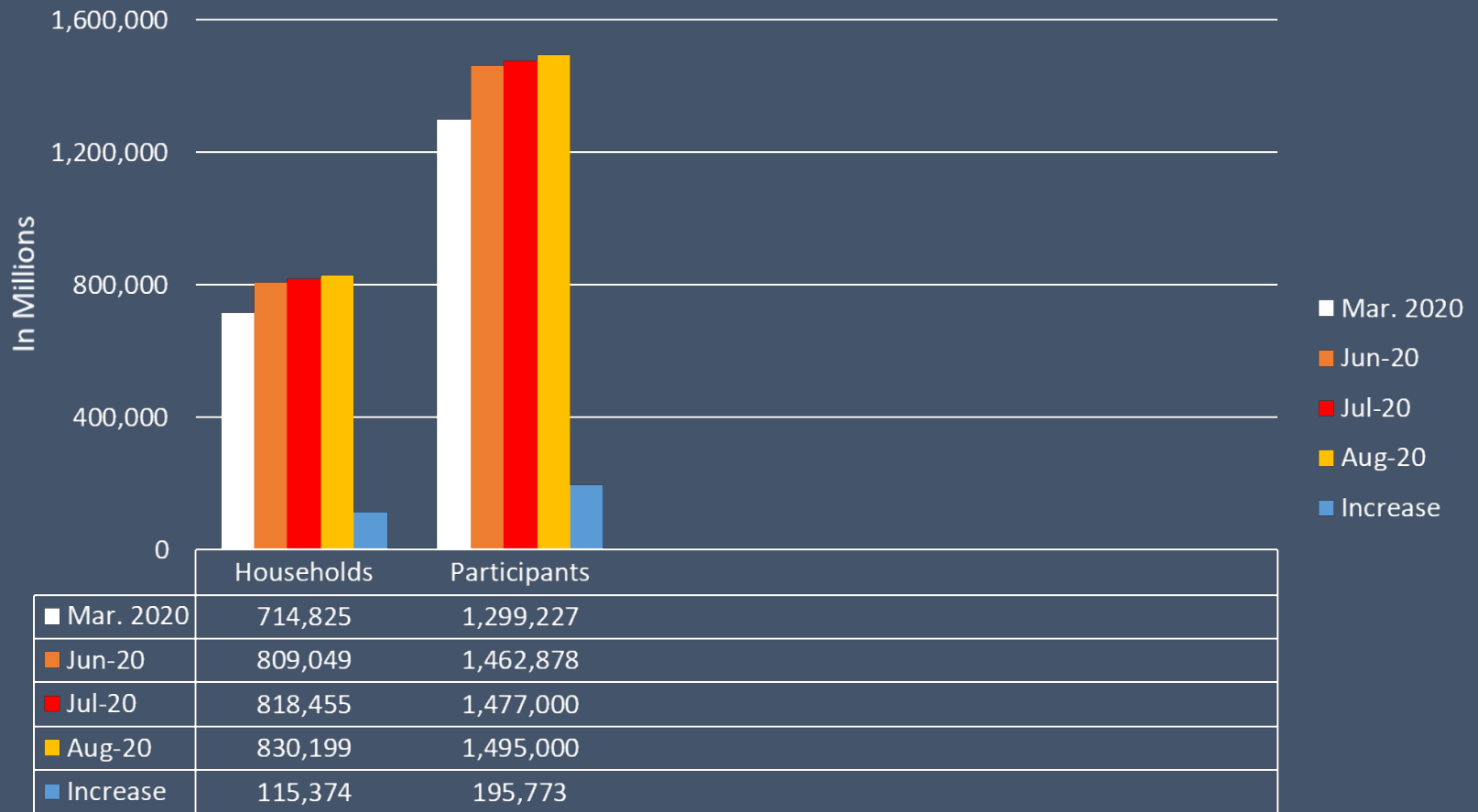


Puerto Ricans continue to experience food insecurity and inequity as a result of their exclusion from the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP is available to residents of the Continental US, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and the District of Columbia. These disparities necessitate legislative action to integrate Puerto Rico into SNAP.

# PUERTO RICO NAP VS. STATES & TERRITORIES ON SNAP

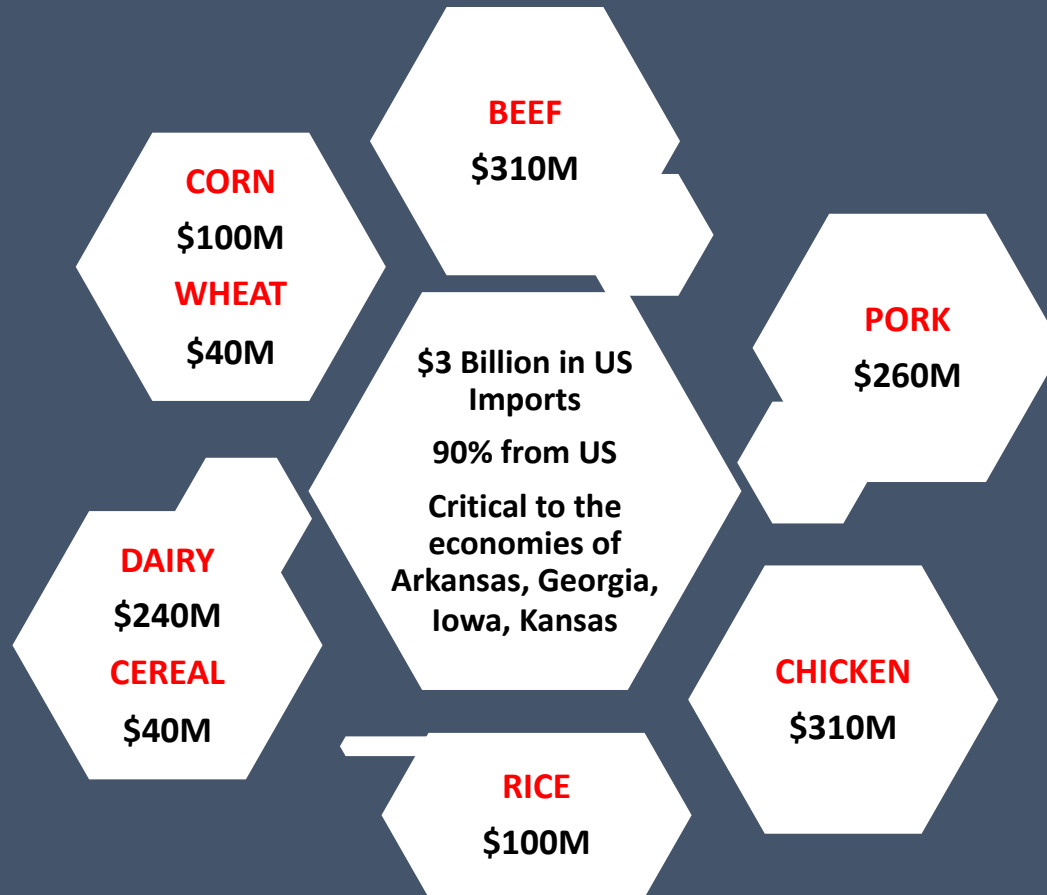


# PR NAP PARTICIPANT & HOUSEHOLD ENROLLMENT: MARCH – AUGUST 2020



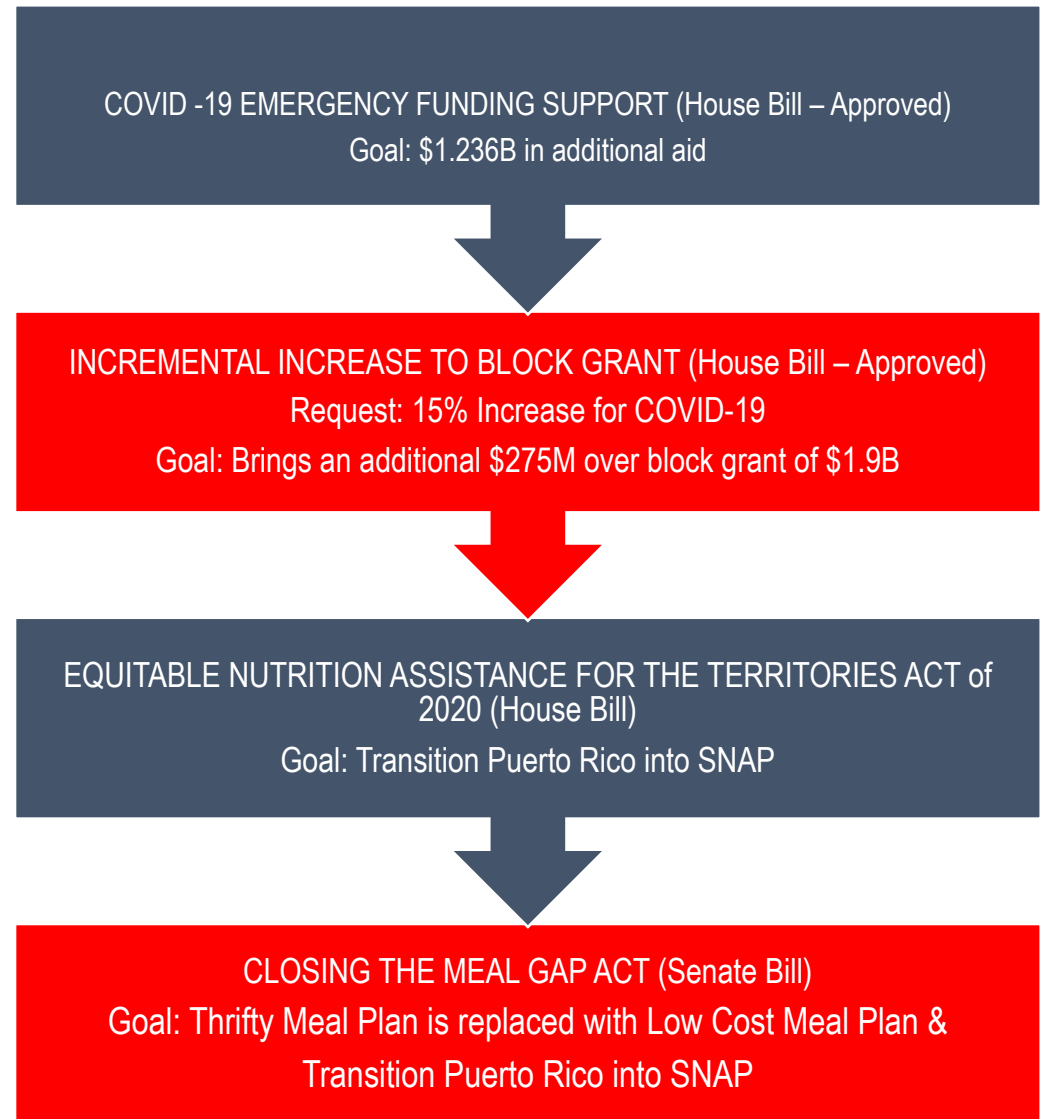
# Circular Economy: US Agriculture & Manufacturing & PR Food Consumption

US Trade with Puerto Rico and US Possessions, Census Bureau: 2014



# CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITY ON PUERTO RICO

## NUTRITION AID – FY20-21



# Courts Rule In Favor of Puerto Rico on Denial of Equitable Federal Benefits

April 2020 - in Vaello Madero vs. HHS, the First Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of plaintiff on the unlawful denial of SSI benefits to US citizens on the basis of residency in Puerto Rico.

August 2020 - District Court ruled it unconstitutional due to violation of equal law protections, to deny SSI, SNAP and Medicare Part D – LIS benefits to residents in Puerto Rico.

- Judge William Young ordered the U.S. government to provide the nine (9) plaintiffs with immediate access to the programs in Puerto Rico and to comply with "constitutional provisions" and make those programs available island wide.
- The courts rejected the federal government's arguments - non-payment of contributions, cost, and disruption of the economy - to deny access to the SSI, SNAP, and Medicare Part D LIS programs in Puerto Rico.
- Benefits Equity could result in \$3.1B in nutrition aid.