



Food and Nutrition
Service

1320 Braddock Place
Alexandria, VA
22314

Stacie Gordon
Bureau Chief
Division of Community Access and Eligibility
Iowa Department of Health and Human Services

Dear Bureau Chief Gordon:

Thank you for the waiver request from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHSS) dated May 24, 2024, seeking authority to implement a statewide demonstration waiver under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to exclude cultivated-protein food products from SNAP eligibility. The Food and Nutrition Service is unable to approve this request.

To waive provisions of the Food and Nutrition Act (FNA), a demonstration project must be reviewed under Section 17 [7 U.S.C. 2026]. Section 17 [7 U.S.C. 2026] (b)(1)(B)(i) provides that a project may not be conducted unless:

- 1) the project is consistent with the goal of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program of providing food assistance to raise levels of nutrition among low-income individuals; and
- 2) the project includes an evaluation to determine the effects of the project.

Section 17 [7 U.S.C. 2026] (b)(1)(B)(ii) of the FNA lists The Secretary may conduct a project to:

- 1) improve program administration;
- 2) increase the self-sufficiency of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipients;
- 3) test innovative welfare reform strategies; or
- 4) allow greater conformity with the rules of other programs that would be allowed but for this paragraph.

This waiver request to prohibit cultivated-protein food products in SNAP is impermissible per Section 17 [7 U.S.C. 2026] (b)(1)(B)(i), as it does not provide information on how the project would raise levels of nutrition or how the State would evaluate the effects of the project. Further, the waiver does not meet any one of the four criteria under permissible projects per Section 17 [7 U.S.C. 2026] (b)(1)(B)(ii).

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We appreciate Iowa's interest in SNAP and those served by this important nutrition assistance program. If you have any questions, please contact Andrea Gold, Director, Retailer Policy Division, via email at andrea.gold@usda.gov. If you have questions about cultivated proteins foods in other FNS Programs, please reach out to your Regional contact in those Program areas for more information.

Sincerely,

Catherine Buhrig
Associate Administrator
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
USDA, Food and Nutrition Service