

# Mapping New England

## Distance to Closest SNAP (Food Stamp) Outlet, by Census Tract

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The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps feed almost 50 million people in the United States each year. In November 2013, SNAP experienced an adjustment, and beneficiaries saw their food budgets cut by around 5 percent. In 2013, the

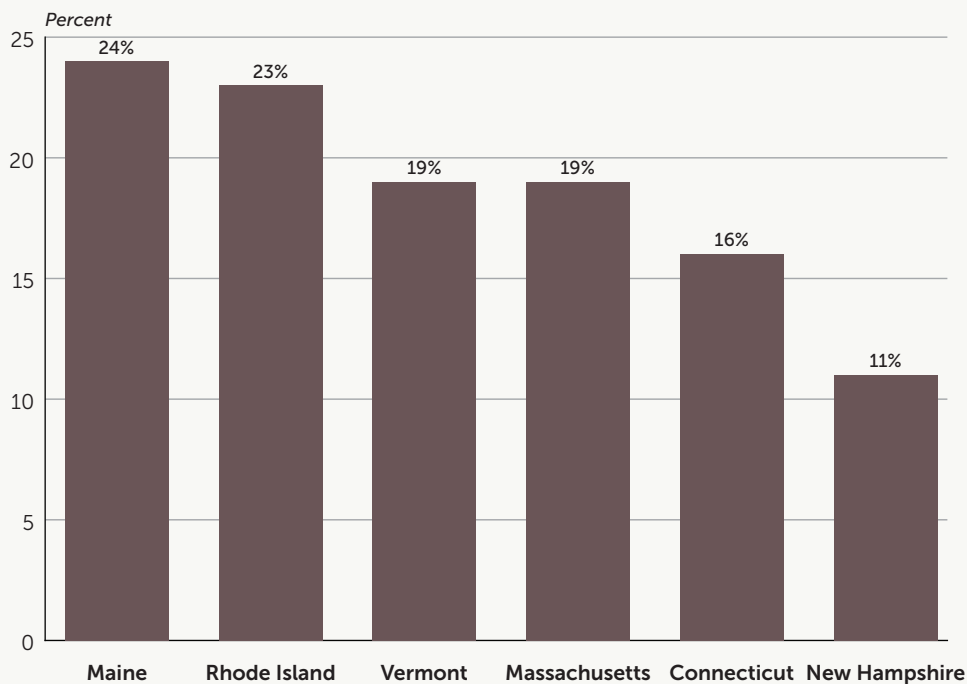
average person in New England received around \$129 per month in benefits, only about \$1.40 in assistance per meal. The United States Department of Agriculture indicates that the cheapest monthly food-plan cost for individuals aged 19 to 50 is \$182 (for males) and \$162 (females).<sup>1</sup>

Regardless of the amount the benefit provides, it relies on beneficiaries' access to outlets that accept food stamps. Almost one in four households in Maine receives SNAP benefits, but not all of them can walk to a store where they can use those benefits. The map estimates the distance from the population center of each census tract to the closest outlet that accepts SNAP benefits.

All six states have at least one tract that is more than six miles from the closest SNAP outlet. In Maine, there

are more than 19,000 beneficiaries living more than six miles from the closest SNAP outlet. Even the more urban states, like Massachusetts, have a distance barrier, with close to 6 percent of the population more than four miles from the closest SNAP outlet.

### Percentage of Households Receiving SNAP Benefits

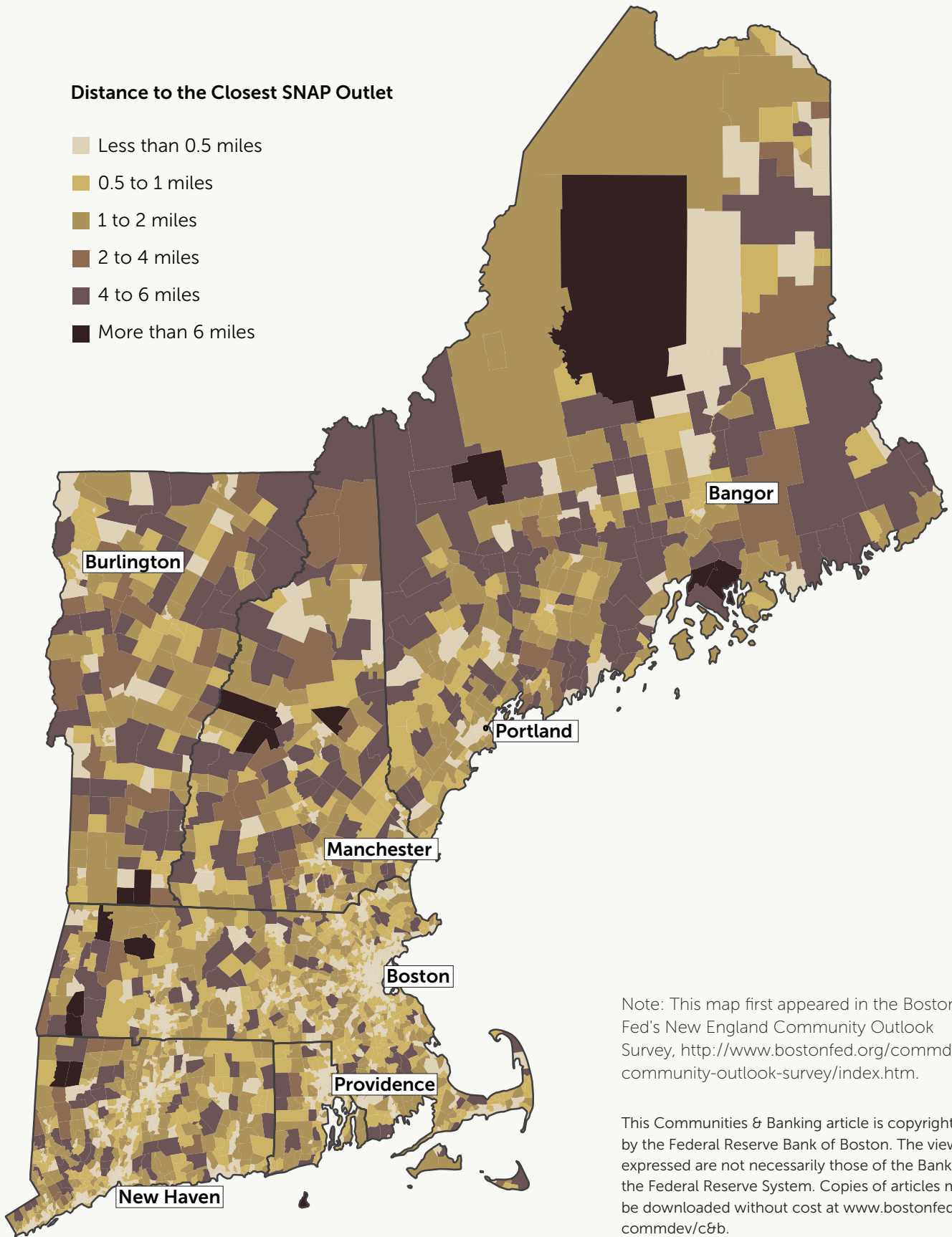


Source: USDA 2012 and American Community Survey 2012 1 year estimates.

<sup>1</sup> "Official USDA Food Plans: Cost of Food at Home at Four Levels, U.S. Average," U.S. Department of Agriculture, Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, June 2013, <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/FoodPlans/2013/CostofFoodJun2013.pdf>.

**Distance to the Closest SNAP Outlet**

- Less than 0.5 miles
- 0.5 to 1 miles
- 1 to 2 miles
- 2 to 4 miles
- 4 to 6 miles
- More than 6 miles



Note: This map first appeared in the Boston Fed's New England Community Outlook Survey, <http://www.bostonfed.org/commdev/community-outlook-survey/index.htm>.

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