



# **HUNGER IN FLORIDA: FIVE-YEAR PARTNERSHIP IMPROVES FOOD SECURITY**

A report on the successful collaboration among five Florida agencies administering United States Department of Agriculture programs (USDA).

Florida agencies involved in this partnership are the Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Department of Children & Families, Department of Education, Department of Elder Affairs, and Department of Health.

# The Efforts of the Florida Food Security Team Have *Paid Off!*

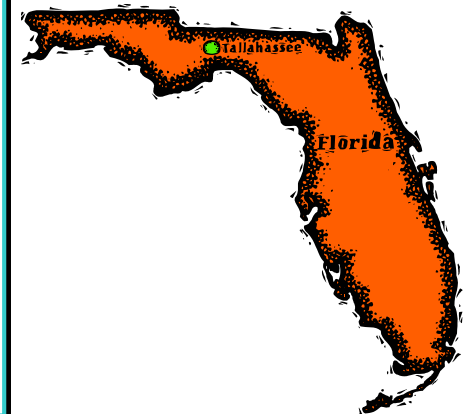
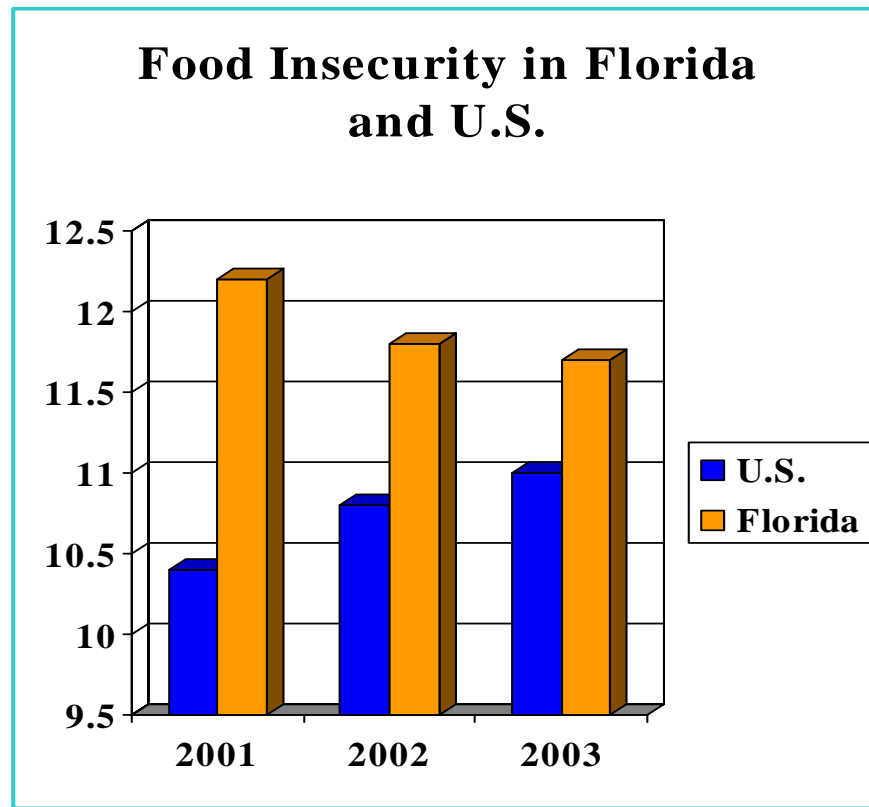
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## *Food Security is on the rise in Florida!*

- ✦ Participation has increased in each of the major feeding and nutrition programs in the past five years, bringing billions of federal dollars into the state and local economies while serving those in need.
- ✦ A greater percentage of the population has access to enough food for active, healthy living.

# Florida Food Insecurity

The percentage of food insecure\* households has decreased in Florida, as compared to an increase in the U.S.



\*Food insecurity is defined by USDA as lack of access to enough food to fully meet basic needs at all times due to lack of financial resources. For complete information as to how households were deemed "food insecure," see: [Understanding Food Security Data and Methodology, www.centeronhunger.org/pdf/understanding.pdf](http://www.centeronhunger.org/pdf/understanding.pdf)

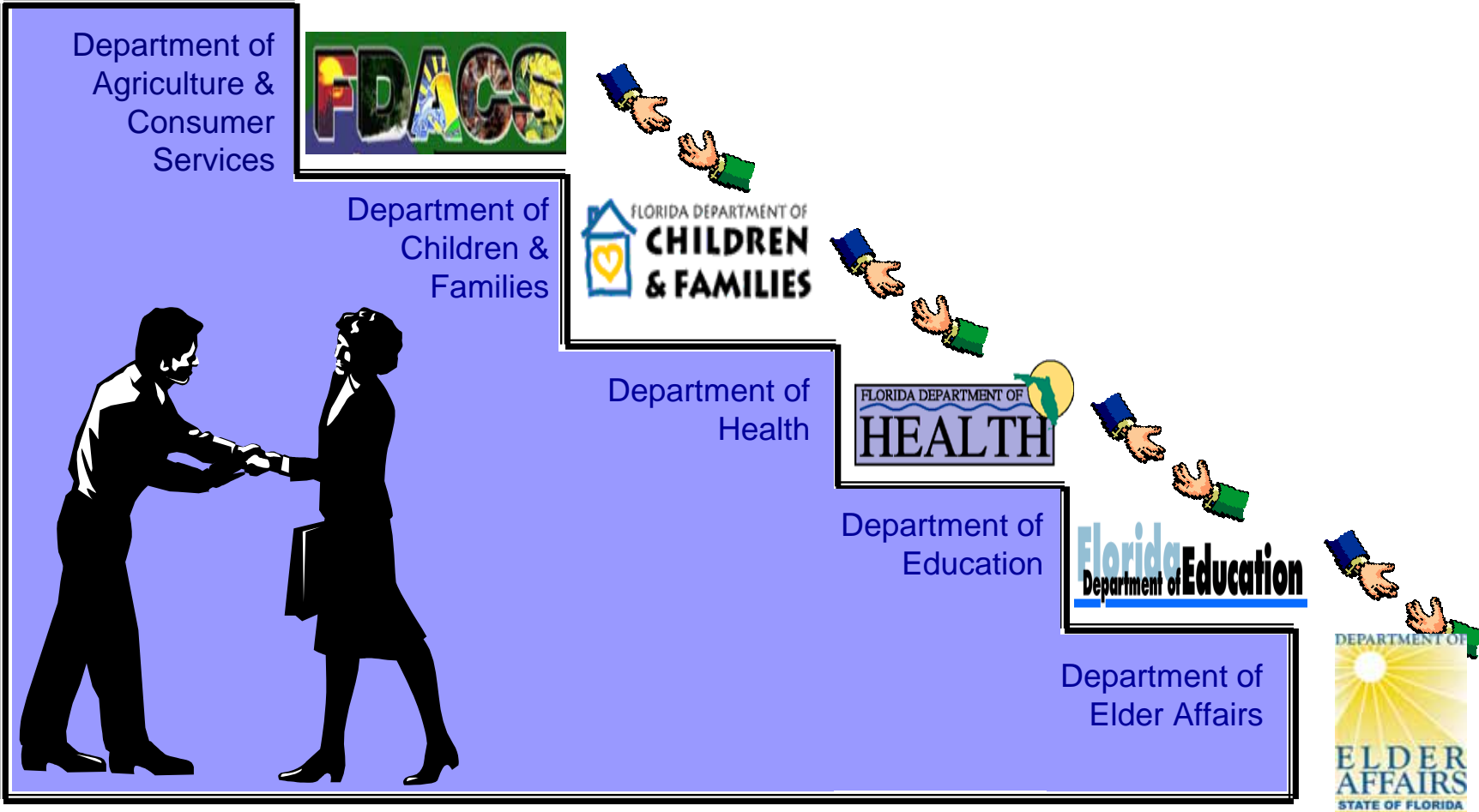


# Florida Food Security Team Background

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- 👍 Partnership between state agencies and private, community-based organizations.
- 👍 Began in 2000 with a challenge from the Southeast Regional Administrator for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Services to end hunger by 2005.
- 👍 Closing out its Five Year Strategic Plan, the Team would like to share its successes with the media and local community.

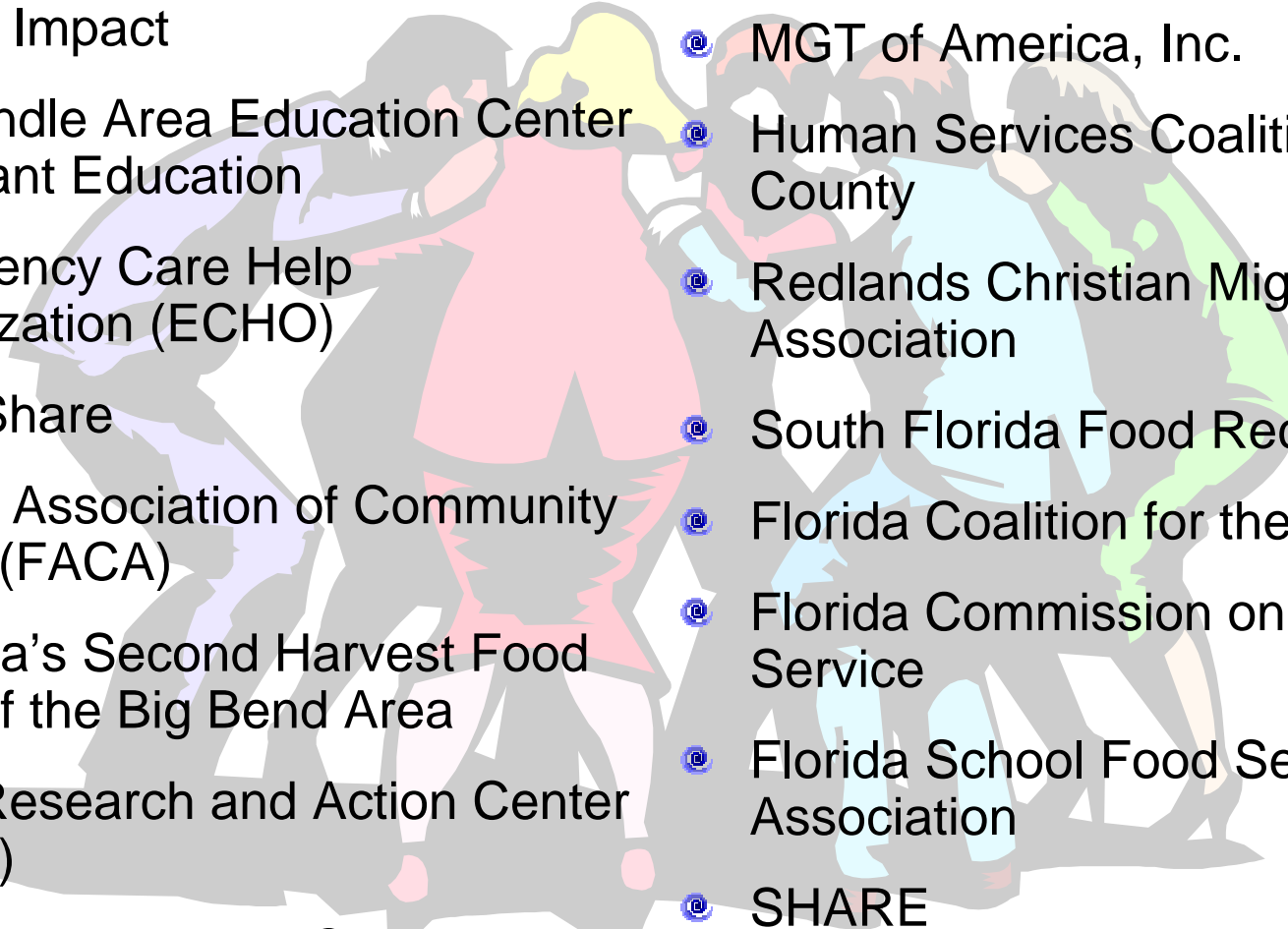
# The Partners...





# Private Agency Members of the Team

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- ② Florida Impact
  - ② Panhandle Area Education Center – Migrant Education
  - ② Emergency Care Help Organization (ECHO)
  - ② Farm Share
  - ② Florida Association of Community Action (FACA)
  - ② America's Second Harvest Food Bank of the Big Bend Area
  - ② Food Research and Action Center (FRAC)
  - ② St. Petersburg Free Clinic
  - ② MGT of America, Inc.
  - ② Human Services Coalition of Dade County
  - ② Redlands Christian Migrant Association
  - ② South Florida Food Recovery
  - ② Florida Coalition for the Homeless
  - ② Florida Commission on Community Service
  - ② Florida School Food Service Association
  - ② SHARE
  - ② Florida Catholic Conference



## Vision



All residents of Florida will have access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food needed for active, healthy lives.

## Mission



Increase food security and reduce hunger in partnership with cooperating organizations by providing residents of Florida access to food, healthful diets, and nutrition education in a manner that inspires public confidence and supports American agriculture.

## Target Populations



Infants, children, adolescents, elderly, homeless, low income, migrant groups, farm workers, homebound, disabled, pregnant women, refugees, medically indigent, medically at risk.





# Goals

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## Goal #1

*Improve awareness of food insecurity and hunger in Florida and available resources to reduce the problem.*

## Goal #2

*Expand participation of eligible populations in food assistance programs.*

## Goal #3

*Encourage healthy eating habits among food assistance program participants.*

## Goal #4

*Close the gaps in Food Assistance and Nutrition Education programs.*



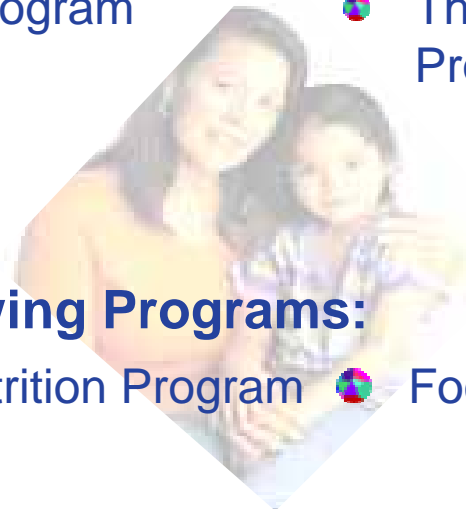
# Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (FDACS)

## Commodities Distributed to the Following Programs:

- National School Lunch Program
- Summer Food Service Program
- Disaster Food Assistance
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

## Administers the Following Programs:

- WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
- Food Recovery Program





# Department of Children & Families

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- ✦ Administers the Food Stamp Program



# Department of Education

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- ✦ Administers the following nutrition programs:
  - ◆ National School Lunch Program
  - ◆ School Breakfast Program
  - ◆ Summer Food Service Program
  - ◆ Special Milk Program



# Department of Elder Affairs

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- Administers the following programs:
  - ◆ Home and Community Services
  - ◆ Adult Care Food Program
  - ◆ Elder Farmers' Market Nutrition Program



# Department of Health

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- Administers the following programs:
  - ◆ Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
  - ◆ Child Care Food Program
    - After School Snack Program
    - Homeless Children Nutrition Program



# Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services Highlights

## WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program :

- ◆ FDACS trains and works with IFAS (Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, from University of Florida) Extension Agents to actively recruit additional farmers to sell their products in the markets.
- The program is now operating in 14 counties with 171 farmers participating (compared with 12 counties and 150 farmers in 2002).



# FDACS Highlights (Continued)

- ✦ In 2004, the Department reorganized The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). It no longer runs as two programs.

- ◆ The state now contracts with 17 Recipient Agencies (food banks) throughout the state to receive commodities for a specific county/counties. These agencies then distribute to local food pantries and kitchens in their designated contract area at no charge.
- ◆ TEFAP food and administrative funds are allocated equitably among all the counties based on their poverty and unemployment levels.
- ◆ FDACS has been able to greatly decrease the amount of food sent to the state-contracted warehouse, thus decreasing storage and transportation costs. This provides more reimbursement funds for the Recipient Agencies and allows them to furnish the food to subdistributors at no charge.



# Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) Highlights

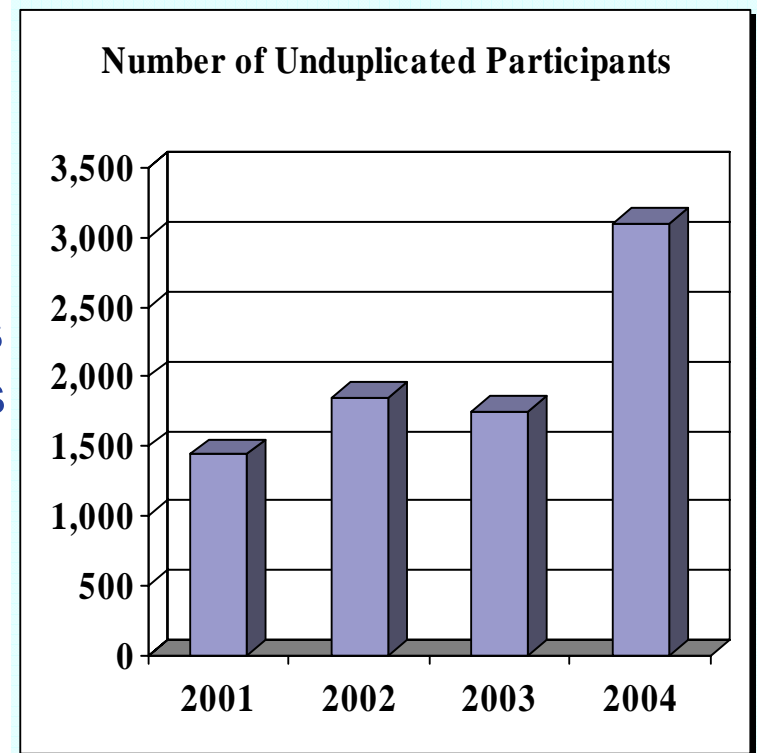
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- ✦ In 2001, DOEA piloted the Elder Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.
  - ◆ Elder FMNP provides eligible seniors (up to 185% of poverty) with up to \$64 worth of coupons with which to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at participating Farmers' Markets. Like the WIC FMNP, this program promotes healthy eating among a high-risk population while promoting Florida-grown produce and supporting small farmers.
  - ◆ Since 2001, DOEA has expanded services from one county (Alachua) to seven (Alachua, Suwannee, Union, Sumter, Bay, Jackson, and Leon).

# DOEA El der Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

- ✦ Despite decreased federal funding for the program, participation has more than doubled (from 1,440 to 3,092).
- ✦ This is in large part due to DOEA efforts to expand the program to other counties and find additional resources (such as the \$288,000 competitive grant they obtained in 2003).

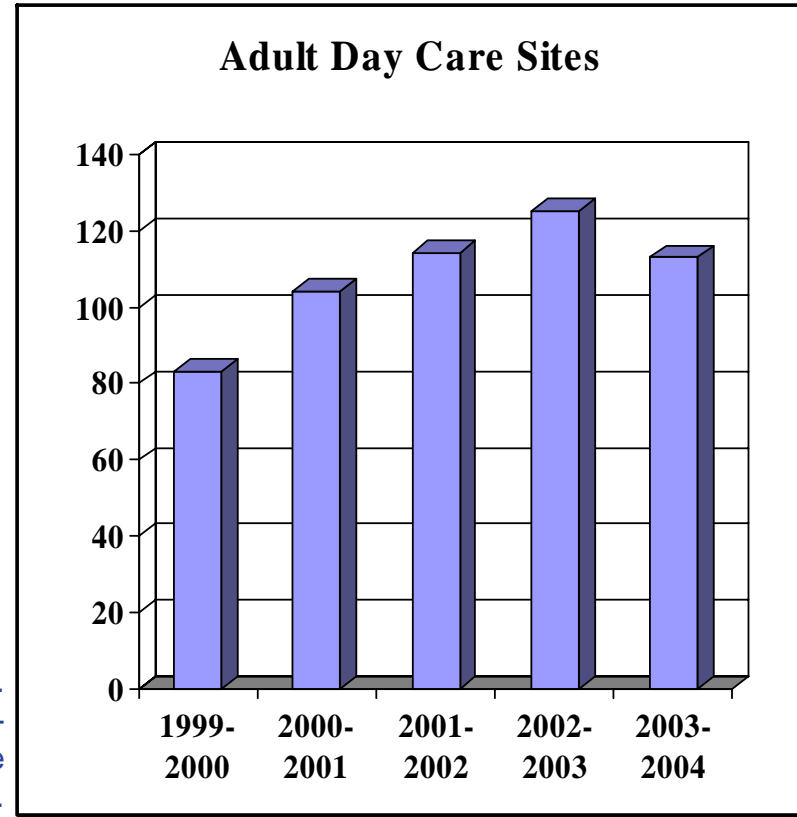


# DOEA Adult Care Food Program

- ✚ The Adult Care Food Program provides meal reimbursements to eligible day care facilities for seniors or functionally impaired adults.
- ✚ From 1999-2000 to 2003-2004,\* the number of Adult Day Care Sites increased by 42 sites.

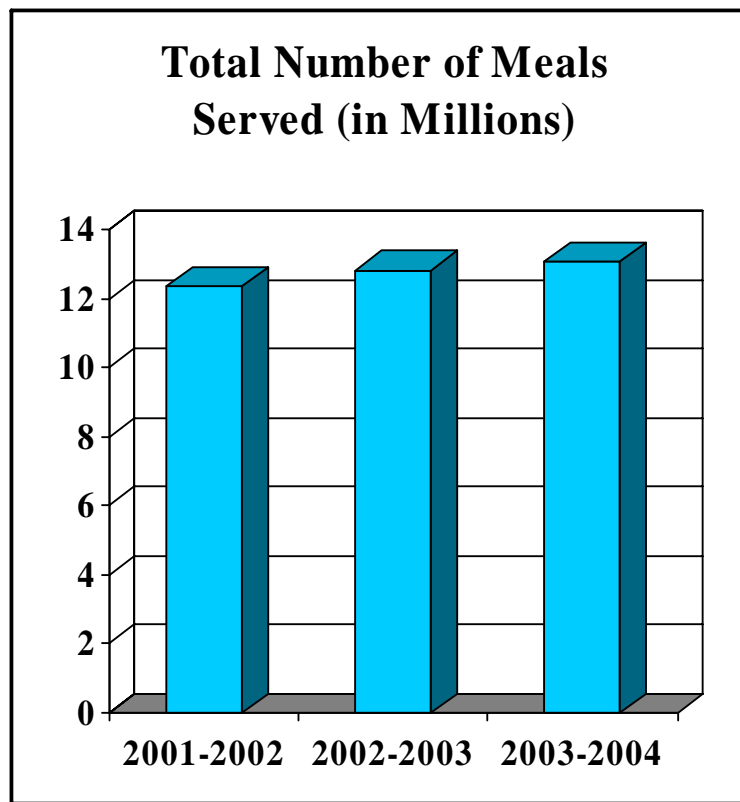


\*2003-2004 number projected.  
Decrease from 2002-2003 to 2003-2004 may be due to site consolidation.





# DOEA Home Delivered and Congregate Meals



- DOEA also provides home delivered and congregate meals for seniors under the Older American Act, Title III-C.
- Since 2002, the total number of meals delivered under the Older American Act has increased by 725,747.





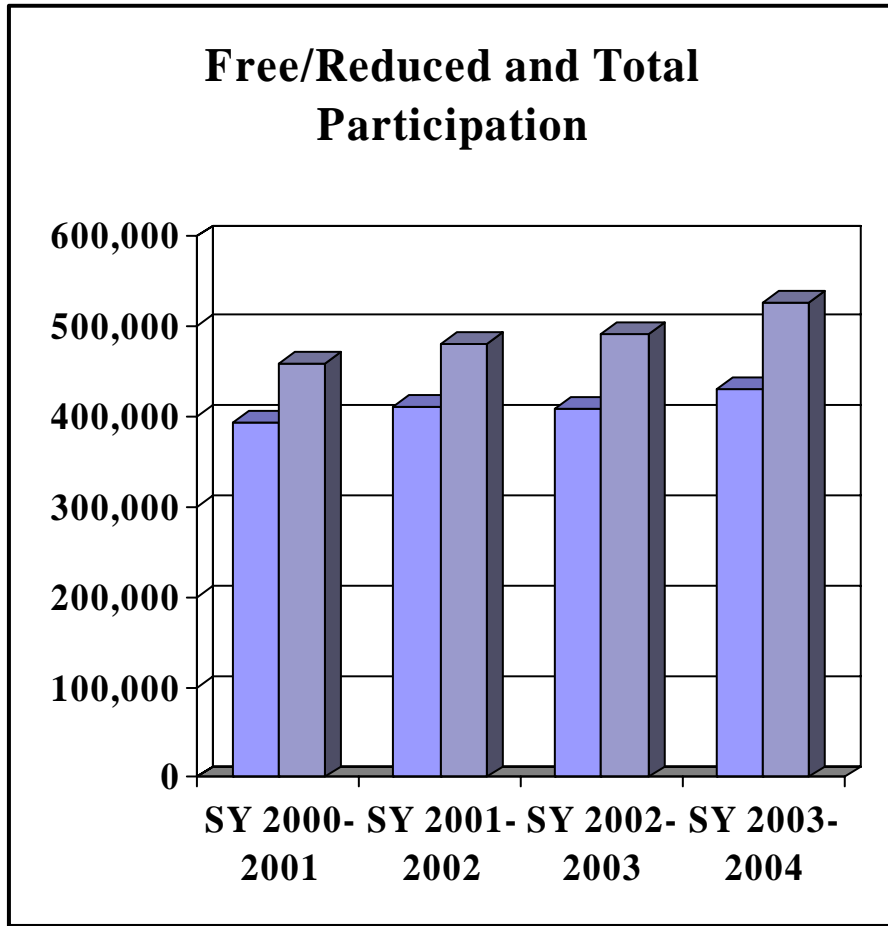
# Department of Education (DOE) Highlights

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## School Breakfast:

- ✚ In 2004, DOE contracted with Florida State University to track and study breakfast participation at Florida elementary and secondary schools for the past three years.
  - ◆ They have developed and sent out participation surveys, and have already heard back from 50% of the schools.
  - ◆ They will come up with a best practices list, with the districts and schools where breakfast programs are the most successful, and take it to a mandatory spring meeting for all of Florida's School Food Service Directors.
  - ◆ They will work with groups such as Florida Action for Healthy Kids to improve participation in lowest-participation districts.

# School Breakfast Program



- From 2000 to 2004, Free and Reduced Participation went up 36,351 students, or 9%.
- Total Participation increased by 67,655 students, or by 14%.



# Seamless Summer Food Program

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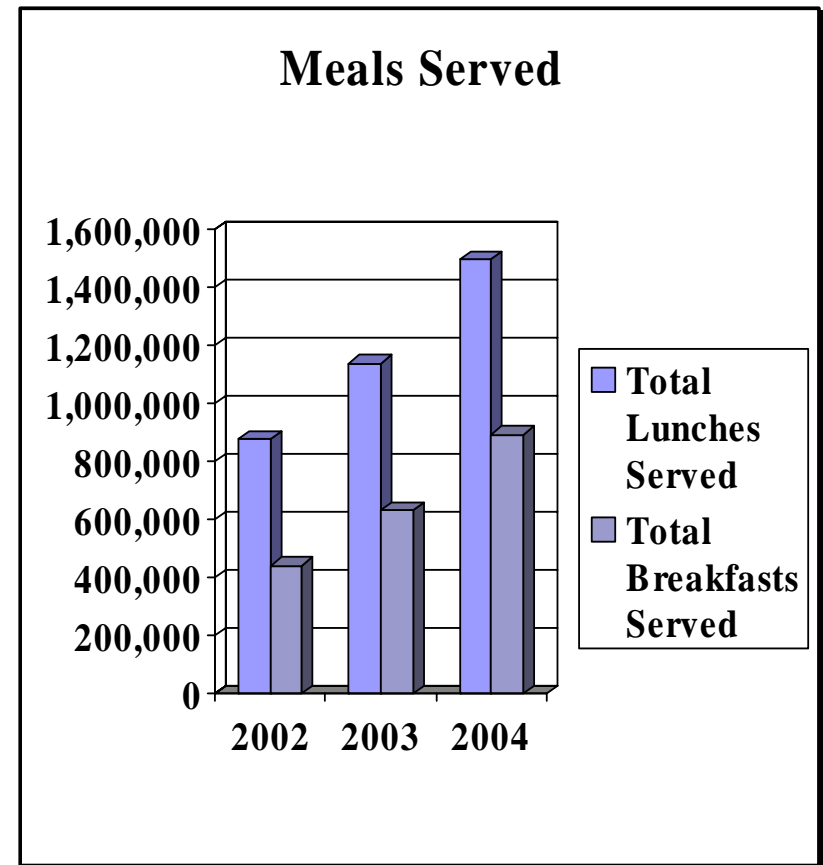
- ✦ In 2001, DOE piloted the **Seamless Summer Food Program**, after receiving three school district waivers. Florida was the first state, along with California, to implement the pilot.



- ◆ The waiver reduces paperwork and administrative burdens normally associated with operating both the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the Summer Food Service Program. Schools do not have to apply for and operate or sponsor two different programs; Seamless Summer Food works as an extension of the NSLP.
- ◆ 18 school districts (or sponsors) participated in 2002, 27 in 2003, and 36 in 2004.

# Seamless Summer Food Program (continued)

- ✦ Since the start of the program in 2002, the total number of breakfasts served has more than doubled; lunches have increased 70.5%.
- ✦ The number of sites has also increased from 463 to 856, and the number of sponsors has doubled.

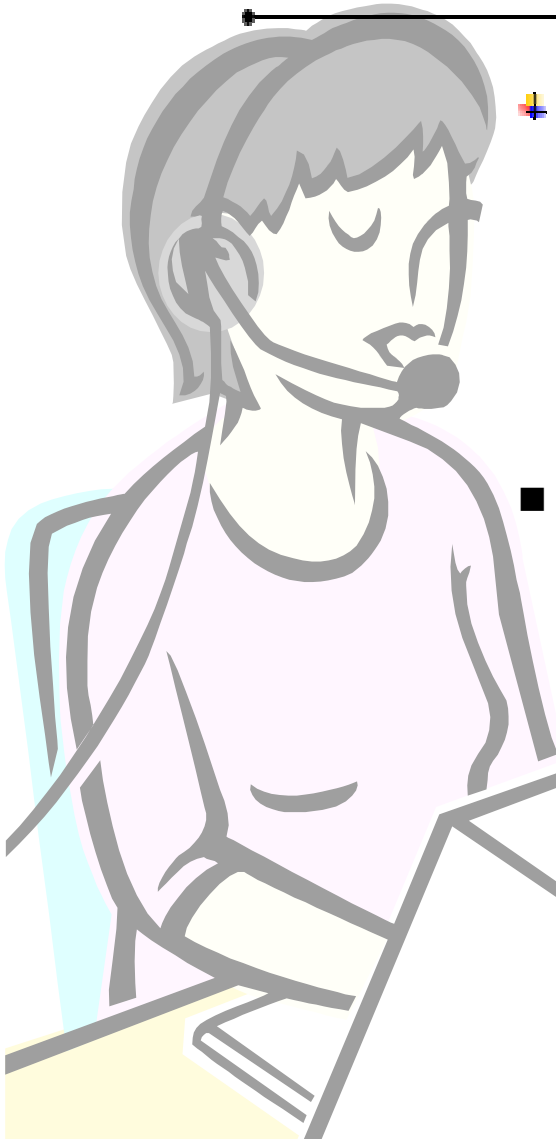


# Department of Children & Families (DCF) Highlights

- ✚ DCF contracted with Florida Impact to develop and maintain the statewide, toll-free Food Stamp Helpline, where callers can undergo an automated prescreening with bilingual operators.

Food Stamp Helpline: 1-800-224-3470

- In less than 10 minutes and in the privacy of their homes, callers are advised of their projected eligibility and monthly benefit level. The FSP prescreening tool can drop the caller's information into an actual FSP application that can be mailed to the caller for a signature. A check-off envelope, listing the documents a client will need for the caseworker interview, is also sent along with a voter registration card.

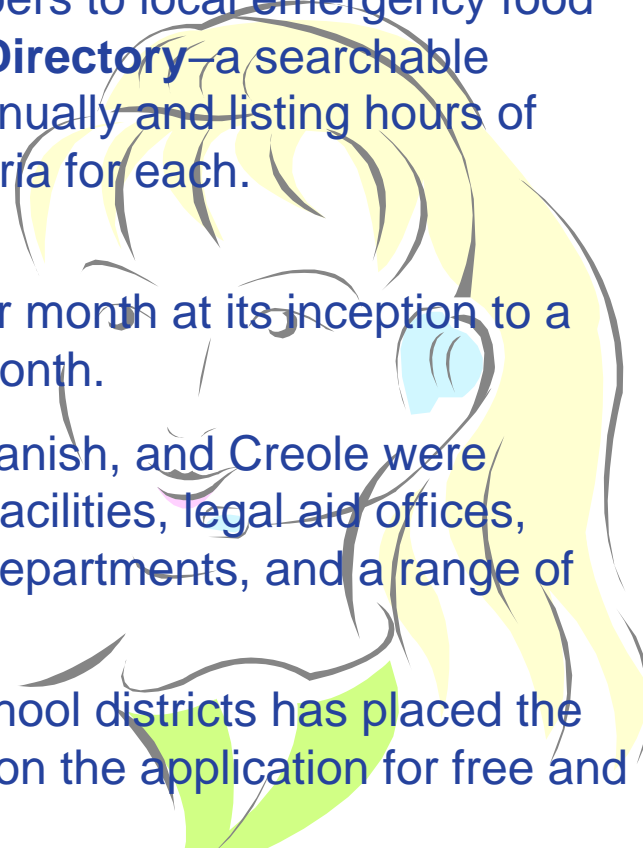




# Department of Children & Families

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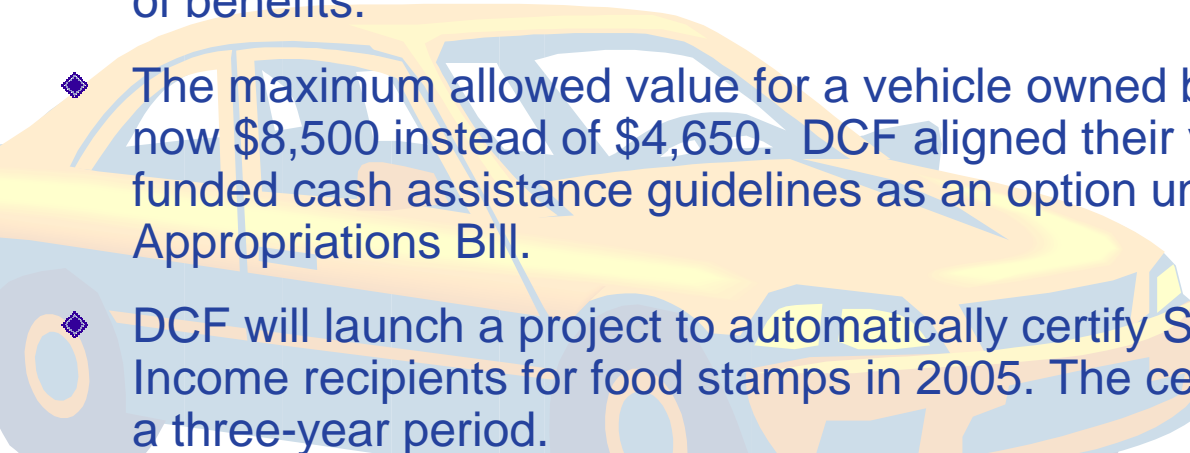
## More on the Food Stamp Hel p-Line

- ✦ Every Help-Line caller is offered referral numbers to local emergency food resources from the **Florida Food Resource Directory**—a searchable database of over 1,600 providers, updated annually and listing hours of operation, services offered, and eligibility criteria for each. ([www.flimpact.org](http://www.flimpact.org)).
  - ✦ The Help-Line has grown from the 50 calls per month at its inception to a current average of well over 1,500 calls per month.
  - ✦ Over 71,000 posters and cards in English, Spanish, and Creole were distributed at local WIC offices, elder service facilities, legal aid offices, Workforce One-Stop Centers, county health departments, and a range of private direct-service organizations.
  - ✦ An effective partnership with the state's 67 school districts has placed the Help-Line number in school menus and even on the application for free and reduced-price school meals.
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## DCF Highlights (Continued)

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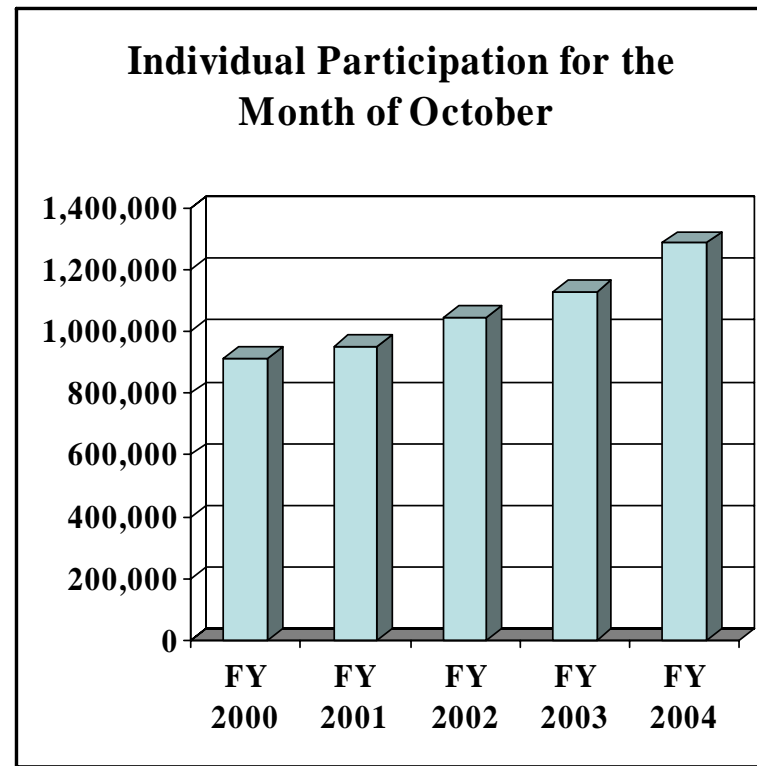
- ✦ DCF adopted federal options to help streamline access to the Food Stamp Program:
    - ◆ Under the semiannual reporting option authorized by the 2002 Farm Bill, DCF eliminated the requirement to report household changes occurring during the certification period, except for income changes that result in the household's gross income exceeding 130% of the Federal Poverty Level for their household size. Previous, more frequent reporting requirements posed a burdensome obstacle for many households and often resulted in the loss of benefits.
    - ◆ The maximum allowed value for a vehicle owned by a food stamp recipient is now \$8,500 instead of \$4,650. DCF aligned their vehicle policy to TANF-funded cash assistance guidelines as an option under the 2001 Agriculture Appropriations Bill.
    - ◆ DCF will launch a project to automatically certify Supplemental Security Income recipients for food stamps in 2005. The certifications will be valid for a three-year period.
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# DCF Food Stamp Program



Since FY 2000, October Participation in the Food Stamp Program in Florida has increased by 41%.



# Department of Health Highlights

## Child Care Food Program:

- ✦ **Outreach:** Provides yearly ad for Child Care Food Program (CCFP) in the statewide Child Care Directory.
- ✦ 30,000 directories are distributed in nine different locations in Florida for a total of 270,000 copies.





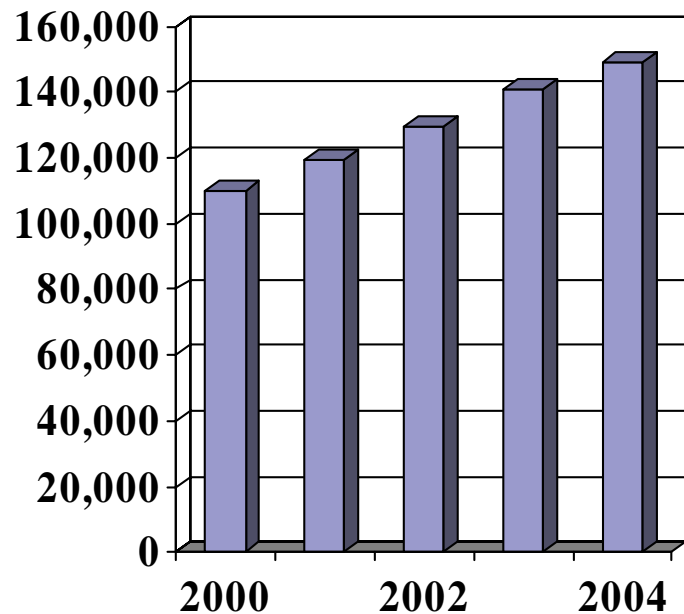
# DOH Child Care Food Program (continued)

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- ✚ **Improved Nutrition Standards:** The Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs at DOH has implemented policies for healthier, more nutritious CCFP meals.
  - ◆ Restrictions on sweet, ready-to-eat cereals
  - ◆ Limitations on amount of sweet baked goods and juice offered
  - ◆ Daily requirement for vitamin C
  - ◆ Twice weekly requirement for vitamin A
  - ◆ Weekly requirements for fruits and/or vegetables served
  - ◆ Recommendations to “mooove” to lowfat milk for healthy children age 2 and older

# Child Care Food Program (continued)

**Average Daily Participation**



- Average Daily Participation has increased by 36% since 2000.
- The number of participating child care sites has increased by 770 (from 4,965 to 5,735).
- The total number of meals served has increased by 33% (from 67,467,965 to 90,011,219).

# DOH WIC Program

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## Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC):

- ✚ WIC continues to focus on early prenatal entry into WIC through targeted outreach efforts and by strengthening referral systems. Recent 2004 data show that the percentage of prenatal women who entered WIC in the first trimester of pregnancy was 48%; this well exceeds the baseline data from 2000, which was at 39%.
  
- ✚ WIC has automated several processes at the local level, thus allowing more time to serve clients. Examples include:
  - ◆ **Automation of the Verification of Certification/Identification (VOC/ID) card**
  - ◆ **Automation of the identification of selected nutrition risks used for eligibility**
  - ◆ **Automation of linkages between the FLORIDA and the WIC data systems to allow WIC staff to confirm automatic WIC income eligibility based on participation in Medicaid, Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), and/or the Food Stamp Program**

# WIC

## Highlights (Continued)

### Outreach

Local WIC agencies conduct various outreach activities in the community to potentially eligible families by providing information about good nutrition, breastfeeding, and WIC services.



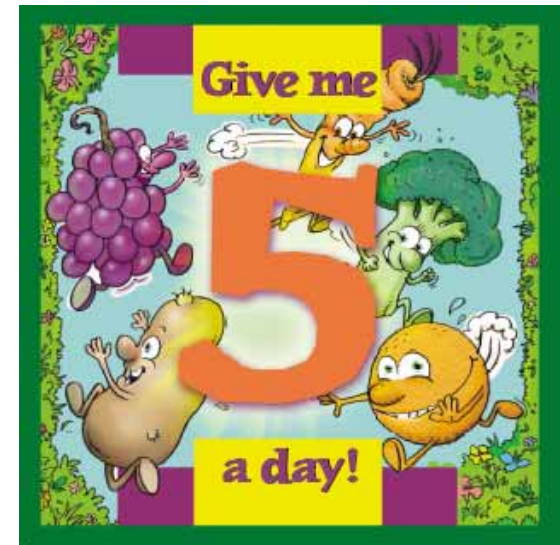


# WIC

## Highlights (Continued)

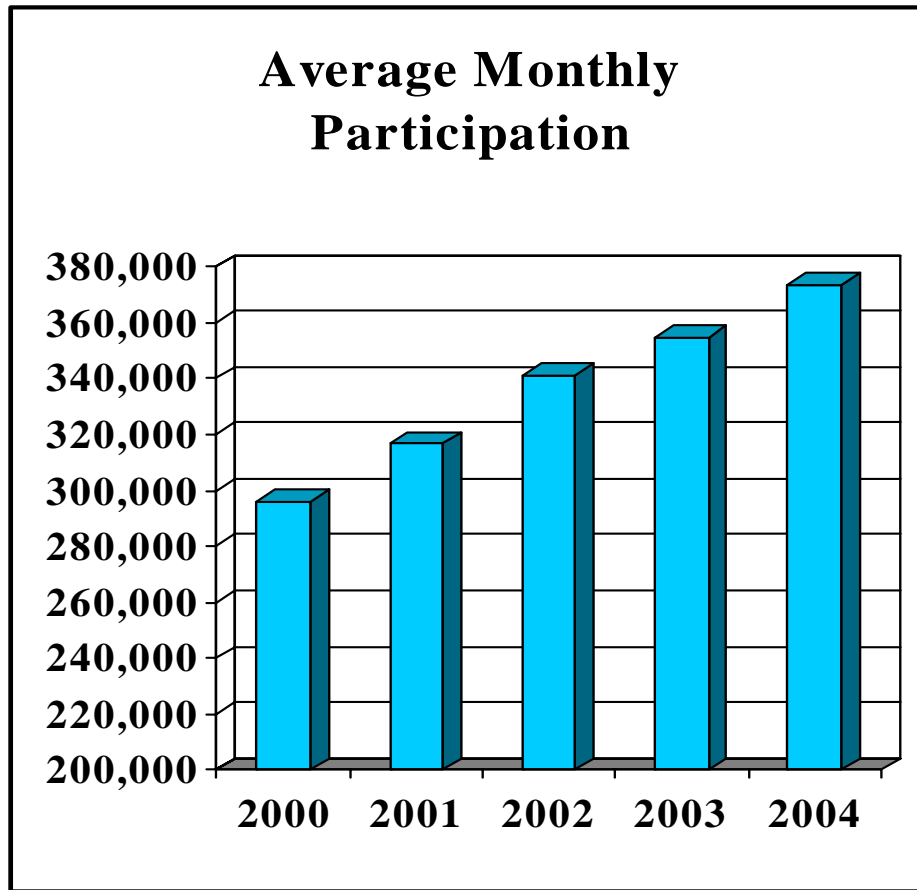
- ✦ WIC promotes healthy lifestyles through **Nutrition Education**. Recent initiatives include:

- ◆ ***Story Time!*** Provision of nutrition education directly to WIC children, using nutrition-related children's storybooks and arts, crafts, and other activities to help the children understand the nutrition concepts.
- ◆ ***Give Me 5 A Day! Children's Book***, written by WIC and Child Care Food Program staff, emphasizes the importance of eating vegetables and fruits, while also promoting physical activity, reading, and counting. For information about the book, go to:



[http://www.doh.state.fl.us/family/wic/Documents/Five\\_A\\_Day/Give\\_me\\_5\\_a\\_day.html](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/family/wic/Documents/Five_A_Day/Give_me_5_a_day.html)

# WIC

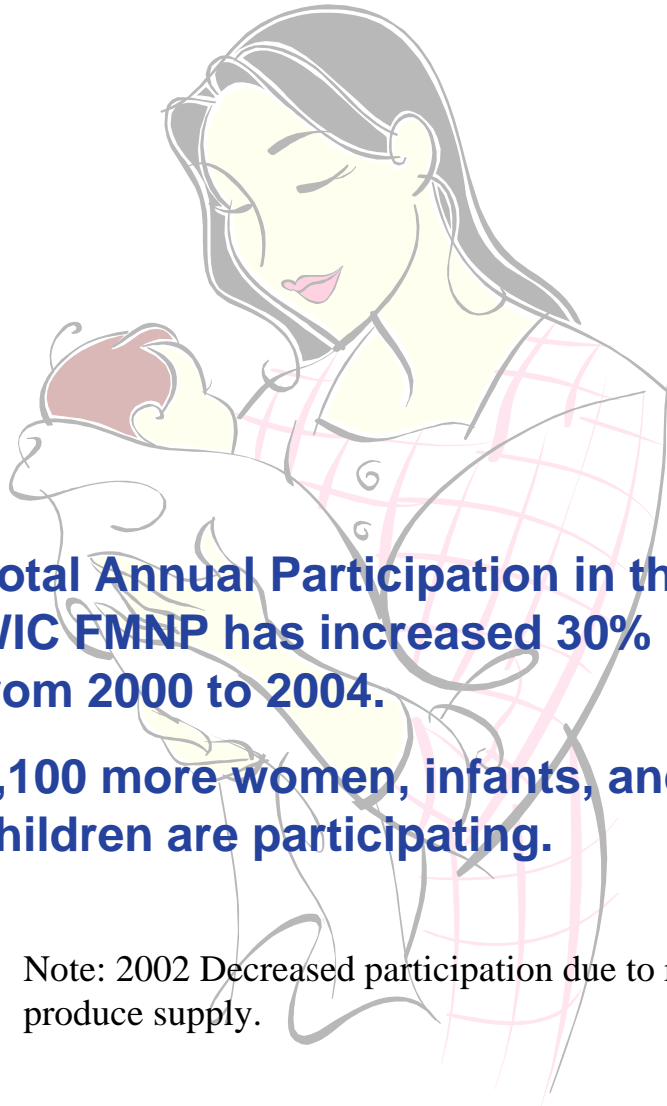


- Since 2000, the first year of the Food Security Team, Average Monthly Participation has increased by approximately 77,000 more WIC clients, or 26%.

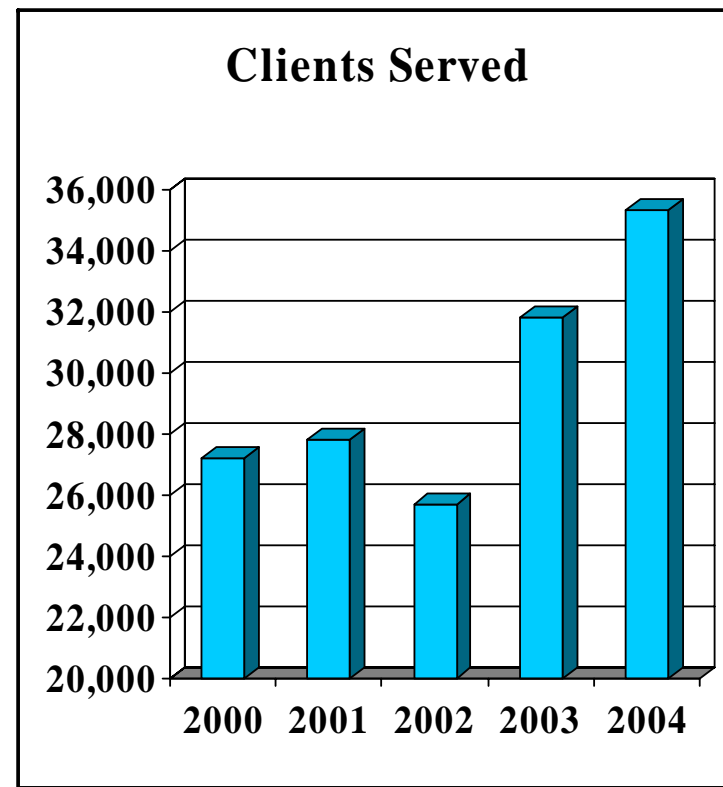




# WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program



- ✦ **Total Annual Participation in the WIC FMNP has increased 30% from 2000 to 2004.**
- ✦ **8,100 more women, infants, and children are participating.**



Note: 2002 Decreased participation due to reduced federal funds available and drought affecting produce supply.

# Collaborative Efforts

- ✦ The five agencies on the Food Security Team work together by sponsoring food security symposiums, sharing program information and outreach ideas, and conducting nutrition workshops at conferences.
- ✦ Through the Florida Interagency Food and Nutrition Committee (FIFNC), these state agencies also collaborated to produce three statewide nutrition campaigns, which deliver consistent nutrition messages to Florida's citizens:



Mooove to Lowfat or Fat Free Milk (2002-2003)



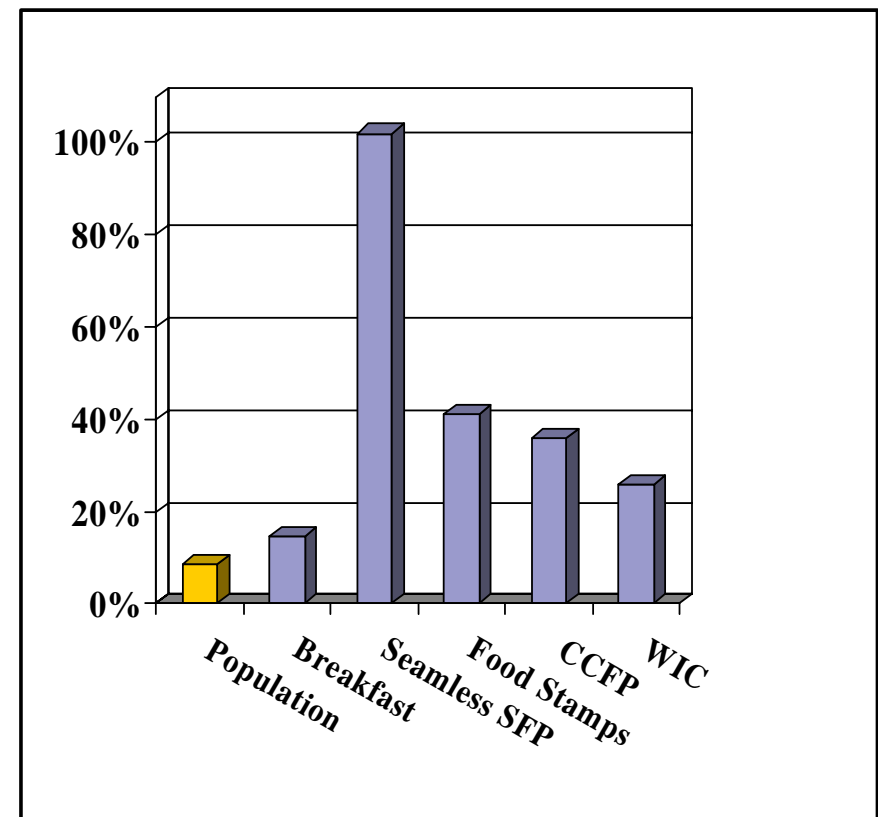
Snack Smart, Move More (2004)



5 A Day the Florida Way! (2003)

# Participation Has Increased Among Food Security Team Programs

- While the total population in Florida has grown 8.7% since 2000, participation has increased by at least 14.7% for School Breakfast, Food Stamps, Child Care Food, and WIC.
- Seamless Summer has grown more than 100% in two years (2002-2004).



# A Collaborative Success:



In summary, through the expanded outreach and coordination efforts of the Food Security Team, increased participation by eligible populations has led to improved food security throughout the State of Florida.



*This report is available  
on-line:*

[www.MGTofAmerica.com](http://www.MGTofAmerica.com)

and [www.flimpact.org](http://www.flimpact.org)

