



April 23, 2026

Brooke Rollins, Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins,

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) submits this letter requesting that candy be added to the current approved Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Healthy Choice Waiver, allowing DHHS to modify its definition of food as part of Nebraska's demonstration project under Section 17(b) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008.

Nebraska DHHS intends to add candy to the list of ineligible foods for purchase with SNAP. The current waiver prohibits the purchase of sugar-sweetened beverages (also known as soda) and energy drinks with SNAP benefits. The following candy definition will be used:

A preparation of sugar, honey, or other natural or artificial sweeteners in combination with chocolate, fruits, nuts, or other ingredients or flavorings in the form of bars, drops, powder, or pieces, typically/traditionally intended to be eaten by itself in the form in which it is sold. Candy is considered shelf-stable and also includes items that are not in bar, drop, powder, or piece form, such as cotton candy and candy-coated fruit.

This definition does not include baking ingredients or other items that are used in baking or cooking but not intended to be eaten in the form in which they are sold. Baking ingredients include sprinkles, melting wafers, plain marshmallows, sweetened coconut, toffee bits, and baking chips.

Other items that are not considered candy include protein bars, granola, granola bars, cereal, cereal bars, Toaster Pastries, yogurt with candy pieces, ice cream, cookies, pastries, cakes, muffins, and other bakery-style items. These items may contain minor candy additives, but their primary form is non-candy.

Nebraska DHHS would like to add candy to the current waiver to continue improving the overall health of its population, particularly SNAP recipients who are already challenged in accessing healthy foods. Through the restriction, households are expected to use SNAP benefits to purchase more nutritious foods and beverages to improve their health.

Nebraska will update and submit revised communication, evaluation, and monitoring plans that incorporate candy.

Thank you,

Shannon Grotrian

Shannon Grotrian
Director of the Office of Economic Assistance
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services