

MEDIA OUTREACH

PAIRING  
YOUR MESSAGE  
TO THE RIGHT AUDIENCE



## **WHY CONDUCT MEDIA OUTREACH?**

One of the most efficient and cost-effective ways to inform members of the community about the FSP is through local television, radio, and newspapers. Media outreach takes many forms—from a simple call to a reporter to suggest a story, to a formal press release or organized event.

There are many compelling sides to the food stamp story. It is about the strength of a local community working together to help those who are less fortunate. It is about people facing challenges and doing what is right for themselves and their families. It has all the elements of an interesting story that local media want to cover. Your local media have both a community responsibility and a business interest in providing readers and viewers with valuable information.

### ***Public Service Announcements (PSAs)***

With a little effort and no out of pocket expenses, you can use the media to promote your outreach efforts. Using your store's public address system is a great way to inform your customers of your outreach efforts.

PSAs are public service messages that broadcasters air free of charge as part of their community service programs. The USDA has a number of radio PSAs that are available for download at [www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/radio/default.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/radio/default.htm). The best way to pitch PSAs is to work with your experienced community partners. They can contact the PSA director at your local radio station, present the local problem or situation, and show how you are providing a solution.

### ***Media Events***

Media events are a great way to get your message out to a broader audience at little or not cost. If you are interested in inviting the media to an outreach event, work with partners who have experience organizing media events or consult with your company's public affairs office. Additional information on media events is available in the *Community and Faith-Based Groups Toolkit* online at: [www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/tool-kits.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/tool-kits.htm).

### ***Who should I invite?***

Consider inviting community leaders, including the mayor, local council members, or a notable nutritionist to speak at a news conference. Work with your local food stamp office to select speakers and develop an initiation list. The media usually takes an interest in the human side of an issue. See if you can identify a family that has a positive story to tell.

Media events or press conferences are used to convey information and attract attention. They allow you to deliver time-sensitive news to many media outlets at once.

