**Filename: HWSHOW TRT: 3:59.000 SOC**

From the KBIA Health & Wealth Desk, I’m Katelynn McIlwain.

According to the Missouri Climate Center, there have been more than 100 reported tornados in Missouri this year – leaving many Missourians in need of help.

But as KBIA’s Rebecca Smith reports, the state **doesn’t appear** to be taking full advantage of a program that could provide food assistance after such natural disasters.

**Filename: 07XXSNAP\_V2 TRT: 3:33 OC: “...provides nine.”**

Sloanville is a small, tightknit community in the Missouri Bootheel.

*(:XX) These people have lived out here their whole lives… they are very rural, very independent people.*

But Angie Rogers, who directs the Scott County 911 Emergency Services Board, says on May 16th – things changed.

*(:XX) So, you have colonies of families, family plantations, if you want to say… that ended up being completely blown away.*

This community of several hundred people was decimated by an EF3 tornado. Rogers says for the first few days, they focused on rescue and sheltering people. Then came the next challenge – feeding those who’d lost everything.

*(:XX) Their stoves are gone. Their everything is gone. They have no pots, they have no pans, they have no running water. It's literally in crumbles around them.*

Rogers says some local churches and non-profits began providing hot meals. And the Southeast Missouri Food Bank began sending water and boxes of shelf stable food. But that’s not enough for people trying to rebuild their lives and their pantries…

That’s where programs, such as the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or D-SNAP, is supposed to help. It’s money states can apply for once a disaster is declared by the President.

Salaam Bhatti is SNAP director for the Food Research and Action Center, a national advocacy group,

*(:XX) D-SNAP, is something that's available to other families and people… who have gone through the disaster, who are not participating in SNAP. This provides them with one month worth of SNAP benefits to help replenish their food stock.*

But since 2017, Missouri hasn’t utilized anything other than the basic waiver, which allows people to report lost food beyond the normal 10-day limit following a natural disaster.

A Missouri Department of Social Services spokesperson would only say that each event is assessed on its own merits, such as level of damage and impact on households.

But many neighboring states HAVE utilized the program after similar disasters: Tennessee, Oklahoma and Iowa all operated D-SNAP in 2024, Arkansas in both 2024 and 2025 and Kentucky has offered D-SNAP in response to two different natural disasters THIS year.

And it could get harder for states to offer such benefits in the future, as the Trump administration seeks to transition much of the administrative cost and burden of regular SNAP to the states. According to the Missouri Budget Project, this **could** cost the state an additional $200 million or more dollars each year.

Again, here’s Salaam Bhatti with The Food Research and Action Center.

*(:XX)You'll have that impacting rollout for D-SNAP. You may even have an impact where the state does not request D-SNAP. So, we could be on the brink of a disaster for D-SNAP.*

Bhatti says current social programs are vital to meeting food needs in Missouri – about 1 in 10 Missourians is enrolled in SNAP. But this could change, as the state takes on more of the program costs. More money will be needed to fund it – otherwise SNAP benefits could be cut or eligibility restricted.

(:XX) *And people should know that food banks, food pantries, churches, cannot make up the gap that would be left if SNAP is gone.*

Bhatti says for every meal that a food bank can provide, SNAP provides nine.

I’m Rebecca Smith. KBIA News.