

NOPREN Rural Food Access Work Group

Conference Call Notes, January 20, 2015, 2:30-3:30pm EST

1. Welcome and introductions

2. Presentation by Beth Hopping, PhD candidate, UNC School of Public Health: “The NC LOCAL Food Project: Can promoting local food purchasing in grocery stores increase local and healthful food purchasing in low-income and rural communities?”

Powerpoint was emailed to RFAWG group with meeting agenda. Please contact Esther if you need it sent to you.

3. Discussion: New ideas for presenters and topics, and follow-up on previous suggestions (see attached)

- We need to come up with system for collecting, disseminating grant opportunities. Use listserv to send out opportunities. Hilary Seligman will also look into creating a place on the NOPREN website where we can place announcements like this.
- Demia Wright from CDC mentioned a funding opportunity for research in high obesity areas (Contact Demia at amy7@cdc.gov for more info). It is funding universities with extension services to work with counties with high obesity. Seven current grantees, many working on food access issues. This should be on our radar screen.
 - More info from Demia was obtained after the call: The program is called “Programs to Reduce Obesity in High-Obesity Areas (DP14-1416)”. Here is the background from the FOA announcement <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/highobesitycounties/index.html>, and here is the final list of grantees <http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/about/2014-foa-awards.htm#programs> (Auburn University, AL; University of Kentucky; South Dakota State University; University of Tennessee; Texas A&M University; West Virginia University). Almost all the counties these universities are working with are rural, and almost all grantees are working on food access/healthy food retail. They just started in October so are still doing assessments and deciding on interventions.
- Marilyn Sitaker described that there are different economic development grants coming out of agency for children and families, that look at developing local businesses and viability. (such as Funding Opportunity Number: HHS-2014-ACF-ANA-NE-0779). Not food specific, but it encourages people with those grants to partner with grantees from other agencies to do joint projects. So initiatives to build local communities through agriculture and food system development could partner to look at health and social impacts of projects. Supports trans-disciplinary research, and explores questions we are interested in for lit review on local economies. In organizations that do more contracts than grants, it’s hard to find places doing cross-disciplinary research.
- Future Presenters: Stephanie Pitts described that a Wisconsin group just put out Farmers Market assessment methods. Darcy Freedman is developing a mobile app for farmers market measures. Stephanie will contact Darcy to inquire about being a future presenter. Stephanie

also recently attended Change Lab meeting. Christine Frye from CL could come on and speak about rural obesity.

- Please send out any other speaker ideas.

4. Local Economies Subgroup Update (Marilyn) *[standing agenda item]*

Marilyn: brief update. Our paper was accepted to American Jnl of Entrepreneurship, and published. Local economies group could look into grants previously mentioned, if there is time and energy

5. Retail Subgroup Update (Courtney) *[standing agenda item]*

Courtney: Her center is working on characterizing rural retail food environment in northeast Michigan. Working on coming up with metrics. For the Retail Subgroup, there are obstacles due to the need to prioritize funded projects and making time to do studies. However, more and more research at her center devoted to rural retail. Do we want this to be a separate group with separate calls?

Sheila: a paper is coming soon to talk about take-away foods in retail setting. This was a research gap in rural areas. There's not much data to paint a picture of various types of ready-to-eat foods in rural food environments. There will be a study coming out soon, and she will send it out when she has it. It is worth not just looking at packaged foods, but also at other types of prepared/takeaway foods in grocery stores and convenience stores. The landscape is different in rural areas. Some of Joe's work addresses this. It might be useful for our group to informally or formally assess.

6. Other announcements and updates *[standing agenda item]*

Next call: Due to the concurrent NOPREN meeting in the third week of February, we are unable to have our call on our regular Tuesday schedule. Instead, **we are hoping to hold the February call on Weds. Feb. 18 at – 2:30 EST. However, this time is not yet confirmed** – we are checking on use of a conference call line at the NOPREN meeting site. We will send an update soon! **Subsequent calls will be held at our regular time, the third Tuesday of each month at 2:30-3:30pm EST (11:30 PST).** Conference call information: dial 866-541-4407 and use passcode 1855494.