HER NOPRENN
Resilient Food Systems & Nutrition Work Group

25 January 2024
Meeting Agenda

- Welcome
- Key takeaways from kickoff meeting
- Speaker 1: Annelise Straw
- Speaker 2: Elisa Muñoz
- Closing logistics
A few quick introductions ...
The Local and Regional Food Systems Resilience Playbook

Annelise Straw, USDA
The Local and Regional Food System Recovery and Resilience Project 2.0

A project led by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service along with cooperating researchers and community partners.

https://lfscovid.localfoodeconomics.com/
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USDA Agency</td>
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<td>Data Warehouse</td>
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<td>Resilience Playbook</td>
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<td>Land Grant Universities</td>
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<td>Action Teams</td>
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<td>Consumer Food Insights</td>
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<td>National Webinars</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>Communities of Practice</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>Network Members</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>Average Webinar Participants</td>
<td>125</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unique Resources</td>
<td>&gt;180</td>
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<td>Resource Hub Visits</td>
<td>&gt;50,000</td>
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### Why A Resilience Playbook?

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<th>The Rationale:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Can we synthesize what we've learned and &quot;stay ready&quot; for the next go-round?</td>
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<td>Resilience as a fraught term among partners – necessary to define.</td>
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<td>Our stakeholders were clear they work best when conceptual frameworks are paired with concrete examples.</td>
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<th>The Product:</th>
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<td>Web-based &amp; interactive</td>
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<td>Pairs high level analysis and insights of LRFS disruption response with concrete examples of resilience in action.</td>
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<td>Is integrated into the broader project website, resource hub, and local food system data tools.</td>
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<th>Useful For:</th>
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<td>Community leaders in a position to mobilize and coordinate disruption response.</td>
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<td>Disaster response professional looking to learn how to support and leverage LRFS in emergency response and feeding.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LRFS leaders looking for opportunities for self assessment and understanding of full systems perspectives.</td>
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What We Did

1. Analysis of 1.0 outputs and findings: Resilience in action
2. Conducted additional research with climate-impacted LRFS stakeholders and emergency response experts
3. Developed a framework for equitable resilience for LRFS
4. Developed the playbook and associated tools based on observed challenges and opportunities for engaging LRFS during disruption
Who Uses This and How?

If you are a....

**Food Systems Leader** who is interested in building cross sectoral connections and relationships...

**Disaster Response Professional** who works outside of local and regional food systems...

**Individual Stakeholder** thinking about the challenges and opportunities your business might face during a disruption...

**Local Government or Policy Professional** who coordinates community planning and disaster response...

**Food Studies Educator** developing curriculum on local and regional food systems and looking to foster systems-thinking...
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Observed Challenge/Need</th>
<th>Playbook Resources</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lots of ad hoc coordinating efforts, webinars, and google docs</td>
<td>• How to organize and run a LRFS network response call worksheet</td>
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<td>• Links to example agendas, note taking documents</td>
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<td>Lack of general understanding and engagement with formal federal and state emergency response efforts</td>
<td>• Webinar and write up with federal, state, Extension and community leaders explaining roles and functions</td>
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<td>• Overview of how emergency feeding efforts can effectively engage LRFS</td>
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<td>Simultaneous social, climate, and public health crises confound response efforts and can create inequitable and unjust cycles of ‘resilience’</td>
<td>• Case studies and findings from wildfire, storm, and island community LRFS efforts.</td>
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<td>• Framework developed by BIPOC leaders to showcase practices &amp; equity-centered LRFS efforts.</td>
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<td>• Development of equitable resilience framework and principles.</td>
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<td>Confusion and lack of clear guidance for how to find and secure financial resources for response and recovery efforts</td>
<td>• Chart explaining different types, sources, uses and timelines of funding (rather than infinite list of federal grants).</td>
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<td>• Map of federally funded Recovery and LRFS projects showing where investments are made.</td>
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<td>• State government study on funding innovations.</td>
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Key Pillars of Resilience supporting LRFS in times of disruption:

- Equitable Response and Recovery
- Supporting Local and Regional Supply Chains
- Maintaining Markets
A Framework for Equitable Resilience

Resilience Playbook Project Team 2022
Elizabeth Ansell (Wallace Center)
Ellie Bonati (Wayne Center)
Lilian Brown (Colorado State University)
Tomas Delgado (New Children’s Farm to School Network)
Liv Frolund (FirstShare CSA Coalition)
Courtney Long (Iowa State University)
Traci Mow (USDA)
Jasmine Ruff (Black Food Justice Alliance)
Jann Rous (University of Kentucky)
Samantha Saffir (Iowa State University)
Shannon Silsby-Brown (Good Food Virginia Islands)
Arnelle Straw (USDA)
Deb Trocha (NJ Cooperative Development Center)

The COVID-19 pandemic illuminated the many ways people working in communities and governments are developing comprehensive approaches to preparing, responding, and recovering from disaster and disruption. The playbook captures some, but certainly not all, of these approaches to provide guidance to future food systems leaders for when similar disruptions inevitably occur. The COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing climate crises show us that disruptions are inherently unpredictable and affect each community differently. Therefore, we know a top-down, prescriptive approach to disaster preparedness won’t work. It’s also critical to understand how systemic injustice impacts people’s ability to prepare, respond, and manage disruptions in the food system.

Addressing inequality is a key aspect of disaster preparedness and response, but also a core component of building vibrant, robust, and equitable food systems.

Throughout the Local and Regional Food Systems playbook, we use the term resilience because it communicates that the strengths and vulnerabilities of communities change across time and place. The term resilience is often associated with examples of individuals and communities persisting through adversity. We recognize that the term can also normalize and perpetuate the conditions that create inequality and adversity in the first place.

Below is an outline of the playbook’s approach to understanding resilience as a concept, emphasizing the process of achieving and maintaining resilience of any system (food system, educational system, ecosystem, etc.). Understanding resilience as a dynamic, relational, and evolving process, and not something to “achieve” allows us to focus on a learning process, rather than a destination.

The processes necessary for fostering resilience look different for every community and change over time. No single program, policy or model will work everywhere all the time. However, systems are strongest when their resources, connections, and information are readily accessible by everyone impacted by them, and all needs of all people are met. Therefore, connecting with stakeholders across multiple sectors, organizations, and places to amplify expertise and resources is fundamental to quick problem solving, adaptation, and other resilience processes.

It is important to acknowledge that within disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts, it is nearly impossible to ensure everyone is included.
KEY PRACTICES & PRINCIPLES FOR ESTABLISHING EQUITABLE AND RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS

Resources and relationships must incorporate different scales of operations and diverse stakeholder groups to make sure that response efforts are aligned and efficient.

LRFS leaders must identify systemic barriers to ensure that those most impacted by a disruption can access resources and information.

Impacted communities must have access to resources, markets, and expertise to ensure flexible, redundant, and innovative adaptations in times of disruption.

Share with and learn from related food system networks across market channels, regions, or other factors to introduce new expertise, examples, and resources in times of disruption and growth.

Ongoing and regular community dialogue is necessary to develop shared visions for vibrant, equitable food systems and identify and evaluate areas of change, growth, and needed adaptation.

Guiding Questions for Discussion

- Considering the current state of knowledge, resources, strategies, and relationships within our local or regional food system:
  - Which of these principles are strong or well realized?
  - Which of the principles are we in the process of enacting?
  - Are there any principles that are not at all present, and what can be done to address that absence?
  - What are examples of what these principles look like in action for our community?
  - Can we identify examples of a clear absence of one or more of these principles in our local or regional food system? Whose perspective or experience should we learn from to understand and address the issue?

Visit our website for more details about the project and resources for LRFS.

https://lfscovid.localfoodeconomics.com/
Impacts & Innovations
The Local and Regional Food Systems Resilience Playbook

Direct to Consumer

Equitable Response & Recovery

Impacts and Response in LRFS
- Diversified direct to consumer operations with underdeveloped produce and livestock growing in the field face distinct challenges in planting their business to ensure their product finds a market when their normal markets are shut down or unreachable.
- Geographically remote (e.g., rural, Islands, and other remote communities) LRFs producers are especially vulnerable to market disruption due to limited access to alternative markets.

Resilience in Action

Thinking Inside the Box Innovation Brief: Farmers markets and CSAs pivoted to food box programs and curbside and drive-thru models to continue market access while also continuing SNAP/EBT payment and nutrition incentive program access.

What is a Sliding Scale? A tool developed by Underground Alchemy: This resource explains how sliding-scale CSAs are tools for building economic justice while simultaneously ensuring fair compensation to producers.

Supporting Local & Regional Supply Chains

Impacts and Response in LRFS
- Long-standing and well-known market infrastructure and locations (e.g., farmers market pavilions, roadside stands) are displaced or shut down due to evacuations and/or public health restrictions.

Resilience in Action

Alternative Farming Market Models Innovation Brief: By leveraging social media as a key communication platform and partnering with municipal and NGO partners, farmers markets and other direct to consumer outlets rapidly established alternative market locations and drive-through models.

Institutions and Wholesale

Supporting Local & Regional Supply Chains

Impacts and Response in LRFS
- Institutional and wholesale markets experience both supply chain shortages and demand financial woes in times of crisis.
- Consumers reliant on cafeterias, restaurants, and other wholesale outlets are significantly impacted by reduced food access points when these outlets close.
- Food producers who have invested significant time and money into growing mid-tier markets may be left with abundant product and no clear way to get it into the marketplace because of inflationary and lack of diversity within consolidated food supply chains.

Resilience in Action

Access Point Innovation Brief: Schools can become central distribution points for various types of food share programs ranging from Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares, local food boxes, or grocery bags by partnering with philanthropic organizations, city governments, and non-profit community organizations.

From Food Hubs to CSA Innovation Brief: Because of their investments in mid-sized infrastructure and value chains, food hubs and wholesale value chains provide essential built and soft infrastructure for farmers and communities in times of disruption. This infrastructure helps to create and grow market channels for farmers and establishes avenues to get food to people in need.

Food Hub Infrastructure in Hawaii: On Islands and in other geographically remote communities, mid-sized value chain infrastructure can adapt to the unique geography and context of the communities.
Stories of Resilience

Navigating COVID-19 Relief for Farmers
Farmer-focused resource to navigate the challenging financial circumstances sparked by COVID-19.
https://lfsCOVID.localfoodeconomics.com

Investing in the Future of School Food
Highlights how investment in farm to institution infrastructure is a wise for LRFS supply chains and markets.
https://lfsCOVID.localfoodeconomics.com

Wildfire Relief Fund for Oregon Farmers
Community-based organizations are often the first to respond to natural disasters as they have a deep understanding of the needs...
https://lfsCOVID.localfoodeconomics.com

State Investments and Innovations in Meat
This case study provides examples of state-led meat processing investments and capacity building from IA, KY, and CO.
https://lfsCOVID.localfoodeconomics.com
What Role Does Local Food Play in Emergency Feeding Operations?

While this playbook focuses primarily on local and community-based responses to disaster and disruption, these grassroots efforts can also coordinate and engage with formal emergency response efforts for even greater impact. This video explains emergency response systems at different scales and describes how local and regional food systems interface with federally coordinated disaster response, strategies, and innovations for emergency feeding. Panelists described how different organizations and locations respond to and coordinate around disasters at the federal, state, and local levels. The conversation serves as an introduction to how emergency management systems intersect with local and regional food systems.
Network Response Calls Planning Tool

The planning tool at right and linked below was created to help users prepare for future disruptions. It can also be used early in the emergency recovery process to determine how to connect, what to cover, and with whom. It is designed to help food systems leaders craft, promote, host, and manage calls connecting stakeholder networks during an emergency. This could either be individuals or organizations who are currently convening networks of food systems stakeholders, or in contexts where a new network could help with information sharing and coordination in the wake of a disruption.

By responding to the prompts and questions in the worksheet, users will be able to design valuable and organized network calls to ensure that their response to an emergency is coordinated and consistent. Users will receive a copy of their responses via email to use as a guide and reference for next steps. Responses to this form will not be tracked or followed up on, as the data collected is intended only for community use as a planning tool.

Click at right to use the network call planning tool or use the link below.
LRFS Data Visualization

LRFS Data Warehouse
Next Steps

1. Share the Playbook with your stakeholders and networks.

2. Connect with potential user groups, assess their willingness and interest in using the Playbook, provide support in doing so.

3. Reach out to us with any questions, comments, or suggestions! Annelise.straw@usda.gov
Thank you!
How can DSNAP meet people where they are when disaster strikes?

Elisa Muñoz, New Orleans Food Policy Action Council
HOW CAN DSNAP MEET PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE WHEN DISASTER STRIKES?

NEW ORLEANS FOOD POLICY ACTION COUNCIL
IMPORTANCE OF STUDY

In Louisiana, food access and security cannot be separated from disaster relief. We are seeing an increase in the frequency and intensity of storms, and while emergency food is essential, it often does not meet all of the needs of those impacted and can be difficult long-term. This project has the potential to model how a community driven plan for DSNAP can help alleviate the impacts of disaster.

In order to get an idea of how people experience DSNAP in Louisiana, **FPAC sought to hear directly from communities who have been impacted.**
METHODOLOGY

Survey Creation
FPAC collaborated with partners and organizations across the state to create a 27 question survey that would allow us to understand DSNAP user experiences. Questions would provide insight to the application process, utilization of benefits, challenges and barriers faced, and demographic information.

Eligibility Criteria
Individuals who have applied for DSNAP following a major disaster in the last five years. This excluded any individuals who already received SNAP as they do not endure the same DSNAP application process.

Survey Compensation
We offered an incentive of $10 for participation.

Collection Sites
- Survey Monkey
- Alexandria Farmers Market operated by Louisiana Central
- Red Sticks Farmers Market in Baton Rouge, operated by Big River Economic and Agricultural Development Alliance (BREADA)
- Main Street Farmers Market in Baton Rouge, operated by the Big River Economic and Agricultural Development Alliance (BREADA)
- The Crescent City Farmers Market, operated by Market Umbrella in New Orleans (Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday markets)
- Lake Charles Ward 3 Martin Luther King Center
**METHODOLOGY CONTINUED**

**Collection Method**
Surveys were initially collected online via Survey Monkey. The survey was advertised at local businesses, farmers markets, social media, and sent to our partner organizations. This method was very successful until a boost in social media sharing led to clear spam responses. We cut out the spam data, and reformatted our survey to an in-person format.

**Adjusted Method**
We condensed our questions from 27 to 13 by cutting out demographic and compensation questions. We then tabled at farmers markets and community centers around the state. The only difference with this format was the ability for individuals to speak more openly and provide more commentary that they could on the online survey. A $10 incentive was offered in the form of cash or market tokens as an appreciation for their time.
We asked a variety of questions about the process of applying for, receiving and using D-SNAP in order to understand the challenges and impacts at all stages of a disaster and relief/recovery. Some were multiple choice, others open-ended.

Questions included:
- How did you hear about DSNAP?
- Were you given enough time to apply between finding out about DSNAP and the application deadline?
- Thinking back and looking forward, what would have made or could make the DSNAP application easier for you?
- Did you have difficulty receiving your card? (due to displacement/change of address, P.O box unavailable, etc.)
- Did you have difficulties using DSNAP?
- Was there a store that accepted your card within 5 miles of your home?
- Thinking back, what would have made it easier for you to access food using your DSNAP after the disaster?
CHALLENGES

As we developed this study, FPAC felt it very important to gather feedback and insight from a region that is often hit the hardest by disaster and climate-related weather events—the area South of New Orleans that we are calling the “Bayou Region.”

However, many challenges arose when obtaining DSNAP data from disaster-impacted communities in Southern Louisiana.

- Many residents are not aware of DSNAP, or are not aware that it is separate from SNAP
- After Ida, channels of communication that could be used to inform residents of potential DSNAP eligibility were damaged or out of operation
  - Many residents in these communities rely on physical media such as newspapers or bulletin boards
  - Power outages spanned two months in Southern parts of the parish, leaving no Wi-Fi access or a means to easily use a cellphone

While it is clear information regarding DSNAP is not reaching the majority of residents in this region, we faced more barriers based on the current state of these communities.

It has been two years since Ida, and most community centers and libraries have not been prioritized in recovery efforts. Southern Lafourche Parish has been without access to a public library since August of 2021. Libraries serve as a center in the community that aids with internet access and providing information to the community.

Due to the lack of information and thus participation in DSNAP in this region, and the lack of community structures to advertise the opportunity to participate in this survey, data was limited and difficult to obtain.
RESULTS

87.7% of applicants felt they had enough time to apply for DSNP between finding out about it and the application deadline. The majority of participants (38.5%) heard about DSNP through word of mouth.

57.9% of applicants had at least one difficulty when applying for DSNP, with 29.8% facing two or more difficulties.
RESULTS

When asked the question “Thinking back and looking forward, what would have made or could make the DSNAP application easier for you? Would pre-registering make it easier?”, we found that

- About 50% of applicants agree pre-registering information into the system before a disaster would make the application easier.
- Another common suggestion was more clarification around the entire application process, including adding clear information about application due-dates, and eligibility guidelines so that ineligible applicants do not have to waste their time trying to reach DCFS for an interview, only to be denied DSNAP.
- Many applicants suggest making the option to apply in-person widely accessible and to increase the number of on the ground staff.

When asked the question “Thinking back and to the future, what would have or could make it easier for you to access food using your DSNAP benefits after a disaster? Would expanding online food services/delivery options be helpful,” we found that

- 47.4% of applicants expressed a desire to expand online and food delivery options. Many expressed the wish for their local store to be able to deliver via an online platform.
- Many applicants want to see an increase in the number of stores that accept DSNAP, especially smaller, local stores.
- Many applicants voiced the desire to make the hot food waiver the norm, as well as expanding the hot foods allowable such as grab and go meals, as many do not have electricity following a storm, making it nearly impossible to cook.
OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- **The ability to use DSNAP with online retailers** in order to better accommodate those who have a lack of access to reliable transportation in the aftermath of a disaster.

- **Clear process** and delineation between pre-registration and registration for benefits. There is conflicting information about the need to pre-register within states and around the country. The newly produced USDA report on D-SNAP shows that pre-registration is helpful, but currently, pre-registration is not used in Louisiana.

- **Clear eligibility guidelines** prior to the application process to avoid confusion and unnecessary applications.

- **Multiple modes of applying for DSNAP.** On the ground, in-person application sites as well as call centers and an online option is crucial. Individuals without cellular service or internet, both of which are often not accessible following a disaster, are unable to apply. Our elderly population is always at higher risk for this.
OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- **A national standard** and clear process for timeline and process for DSNAP approval during and after a disaster. Currently, timelines and processes are unclear and not standardized which causes confusion and uncertainty.

- A system to allow for **non-SNAP authorized mobile retailers to become temporarily authorized** in order to provide food and meals to people in disaster stricken regions who may not have access to kitchens, power, and the ability to prepare meals for their families.

- **Robust and transparent data collection** including applications received, benefits issued and benefits redeemed. This data should be disaggregated from regular SNAP usage in order to have a better understanding of who, how and where DSNAP benefits are needed and utilized. This data should be mandatory and publicly available.

- **Increased funding for state agencies** that process SNAP and DSNAP in order to increase capacity for responsiveness, communication, and efficiency. Most offices are trying their best but are not adequately funded or resourced to provide comprehensive services.
NEXT STEPS

- We will be releasing a report in early March, including recommendations
- Advocacy, Advocacy, Advocacy!
  - Farm Bill priorities, Louisiana State Legislature
  - Appropriations

THANK YOU TO CENTER FOR SCIENCE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST FOR SUPPORTING THIS IMPORTANT WORK
LOUISIANA FARMER CLIMATE CONVENING

January 21-22 Louisiana Small Scale Agriculture Coalition (LSSAC), of which FPAC is a founding member, hosted over 150 farmers at Chicot State Park in Ville Platte, Louisiana. It was a rousing success of farmers coming together to connect, share and learn.
Kickoff Meeting Takeaways (Nov. 2024)
Topics of Interest

1. Federal benefits during and after disasters: challenges & opportunities (WIC, SNAP, etc.)
2. Building resilience within food production and sourcing
3. Landscape of food system resilience work
4. Rural networks
5. Small and mid-scale farm resilience
6. Developing & operationalizing research-practice partnerships
7. Environmental justice
8. Global resilience initiatives
9. Supply chain interdependencies
10. Commercial determinants of health & resilience
11. Hidden groups, groups with vulnerabilities

Please put other topics of interest in the chat!
Other Ideas

Project
Where do federal food dollars go?
- Gap analysis
- Online tool

Networking
Mixer event
- Smaller groups/breakout rooms
- Key topics

Resource Sharing
Create a platform for members to share resources
- Google document
- Slack

Please put other ideas in the chat!
Next Meetings

- What is the best day of the week for you to attend WG meetings?
- What is the best time of day for you to attend WG meetings?

***No July or December meeting***
NOPREN hosts monthly expert-led webinars the 2nd Monday of each month at 9am PST/12pm EST for its members as a way to share the latest research and evidence in the field of nutrition and obesity policy.

Monday, February 12
9am PST/12pm EST

Topic: Resilience
Thank you!

Please reach out with any ideas, suggestions or feedback
Next Meetings

Feb. 15th   Mar. 21th   Apr. 18th   May 16th   June 20th

Aug 15th   Sep. 19th   Oct. 17th   Nov. 21st

***No July or December meeting***