



NOPREN

Nutrition & Obesity Network

POLICY RESEARCH  EVALUATION

RURAL FOOD ACCESS

WORKING GROUP

NOPREN is a thematic network of the Prevention Research Centers Program. NOPREN conducts nutrition- and obesity-related policy research and evaluation related to the effectiveness of policies that improve access to affordable, healthy foods and beverages in a variety of settings, including communities, workplaces, healthcare facilities, childcare institutions, and schools.

ABOUT

The Rural Food Access Working Group (RFAWG) convenes researchers to share resources and conduct collaborative research addressing environmental, policy, and economic issues related to rural food access. Rural food access focal areas include:

- Key constructs and determinants
- Needs and opportunities for research and policy recommendations
- Research methods, metrics and common indicators

Key Activities and Findings:

RFAWG facilitates monthly calls for all interested participants, plans and conducts collaborative research projects, and provides a forum for members to solicit expertise and involvement in their research projects.

Activity 1: Building Partnerships

RFAWG members from all regions of the country regularly join the monthly conference calls. Some time on each call is devoted to a brief presentation of the work of one member or other expert to promote greater understanding of current topics research questions and methods related to rural food access. Calls provide an opportunity for networking, sharing expertise, and pursuing common research interests.

Activity 2: Collaborative Research - Developing and Pursuing a Policy Research Agenda

RFAWG seeks opportunities for the collaborative study of rural food access topics based on a framework of research priorities that emerged from an earlier concept mapping study. That study asked rural food access experts to identify and then rate rural food access issues based on their priority for further study and policy development. ([Johnson, Quinn, Sitaker, et al., 2014 BMC Public Health, 14\(1\), 592.](#))

Activity 3: Collaborative Research: Joint research papers and grant proposals

RFAWG members have contributed to collaborative papers and submitted joint grant proposals regarding rural food access: a multi-site Cost Offset CSA USDA grant (funded) and a "Bright Spots" (positive deviance) study in Appalachia.

Activity 4: Supporting Investigators - COCOMO and Community Commons

RFAWG collaborated with PAPRN members to consider adaptations of CDC's Common Community Measures for Obesity Prevention (COCOMO) to address rural needs, and developed a tool to facilitate use of Community Commons to visualize and evaluate environmental and policy changes to prevent obesity.

CONTACTS

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