

HER NOPREN Summer Speaker Series for Students
[USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\) Overview](#)

Recorded June 17, 2020

[Link to Call Recording](#)

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About Our SNAP Panelists

Sara Bleich is a Professor of Public Health Policy at the Harvard Chan School of Public Health in the Department of Health Policy and Management. She is also the Carol K. Pforzheimer Professor at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study and a member of the faculty at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Her research provides evidence to support policies to prevent obesity and diet-related diseases, particularly among populations at higher risk. Sara is the past recipient of several awards including one for excellence in public interest communication. Sara was recently appointed as a White House Fellow (2015-2016) where she was a Senior Policy Advisor to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the First Lady's *Let's Move* initiative. She is currently an appointed member of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Roundtable on Obesity Solutions. She holds degrees from Columbia (BA, Psychology) and Harvard (PhD, Health Policy).

Wesley Dean is a Senior Analyst at the USDA Food and Nutrition Service. He is a sociologist who focuses on the public health dimensions of the food and nutrition system. He has more than 14 years of experience in examining the human dimensions of food safety, animal agriculture, nutrition policy, household and community food security, and evaluation of work force development programs.

Tracy Fox has over 30 years of experience working at the federal, state and local/community levels and the private sector on food and nutrition policy, strategic planning, legislative and regulatory processes, consensus building, collaboration, and advocacy. Ms. Fox provides strategic advice and counsel to clients on childhood and adult obesity prevention, early care and education, food insecurity, child nutrition and health, rural health, and transparency in the food system. Past and present clients include Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#) (RWJF), American Heart Association, American Cancer Society, The Food Trust, [Share Our Strength](#), [Partnership for a Healthier America](#), National Head Start and public relations firms. Ms. Fox has been appointed to or led expert advisory groups and initiatives to build consensus and develop recommendations on local and state policies to prevent obesity, rural hunger, healthy school foods, labeling and marketing, sugary beverage intake, and nutrition standards. She has worked with the RWJF for over 10 years as part of their \$1 billion childhood obesity investment and has actively engaged and strategized with leadership and other stakeholders to ensure their investment is driving real and lasting change. Since moving to Culver, Indiana in 2014, Ms. Fox has developed an expertise in rural health and wellness issues and challenges facing rural communities. In addition to policy consulting activities across the country, she serves on the boards of [Feed the Truth](#), [Healthy Eating Research](#) Advisory Committee, Marshall

County Board of Health, as well as the boards of Culver Boys and Girls Club, United Way of Marshall County, Garden Court Senior Living Inc., Culver Main Street Corporation, Culver Visitors Center, Purdue Extension, Marshall County Food Council. She is also co-manager of the Culver Farmers' Market. Ms. Fox a retired Commander in the US Navy.

Angela Odoms-Young is an associate professor in the Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition in the UIC College of Applied Health Sciences and an IHRP Fellow. Dr. Odoms-Young's research is focused on understanding social, cultural, and environmental determinants of dietary behaviors and diet-related diseases in low-income and minority populations. Her current projects include studies to evaluate the impact of the new WIC food package on dietary intake, weight status, and chronic disease risk in 2-3 year old low-income children and vendor participation; identify strategies to improve program participation and retention among WIC eligible children; evaluate the efficacy of a community-based participatory weight loss intervention in African American women; and examine community engagement approaches to promote food justice. She has contributed to several Institute of Medicine reports, including the Review of WIC Food Packages: Proposed Framework for Revisions: Interim Report, published in November 2015. Dr. Odoms-Young serves on the executive committee of the Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC), which awarded her the 2015 Katherine Kaufer Christoffel Founder's Award. Prior to joining UIC, Dr. Odoms-Young served on the faculty of Northern Illinois University in Public Health and Health Education. She completed a Family Research Consortium Postdoctoral Fellowship examining family processes in diverse populations at the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a Community Health Scholars Fellowship in community-based participatory research at the University of Michigan School of Public Health.

Maya Sandalow is a Policy Associate at the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), where she works on SNAP access and health equity. Prior to joining CSPI, Maya was a Research Associate for the Georgetown University Health Justice Alliance and interned with the food assistance team at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. She also served for two years as an AmeriCorps member at a San Francisco Department of Public Health primary care clinic, where she led produce prescription programs and connected patients to public benefits. Maya holds a Master of Public Health from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and a bachelor's degree from Claremont McKenna College.

Angie Tagtow is an entrepreneur, systems thinker, leadership developer, solution-based innovator, and a change maker. She is the Founder and Chief Strategist of Äkta Strategies, a consulting firm that designs authentic solutions for systems change. She has more than 25 years of experience working at local, state, federal, and international levels in agriculture, food, and nutrition policy; public health; and food and water systems. In 2014, she was appointed by President Barack Obama to serve as the Executive Director for the USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion in which she co-led the development and launch of the *2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. Angie is a registered dietitian and served as a Senior Fellow and Endowed Chair at the

Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, University of Minnesota College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences, and as a Food and Society Policy Fellow with the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. She was the founder and CEO of a successful consulting firm that provided program and policy development, strategic planning, capacity building, communication, and education services to diverse clients that worked toward advancing sustainable, resilient, and healthy food and water systems. She co-founded a non-profit focused on health and food systems in addition to forming a statewide community of practice that promoted evidence-based strategies to increase access to healthful food. Angie has worked with the Iowa Department of Public Health in several capacities including as a Nutrition Consultant in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children Program, a food systems consultant with the Iowa Community Transformation Initiative, and strategic advisor with the SNAP-Ed Program. Angie has served in professional leadership positions within the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Iowa Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior, and the American Public Health Association. In addition to launching the *Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition* in 2005 in which she served as the managing editor for 11 years, she has published numerous peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, and reports. Angie has been honored by many organizations for her leadership and professional contributions to nutrition, public health, and food systems. Angie is a graduate of the University of Northern Iowa and Iowa State University and resides on a reconstructed tallgrass prairie in central Iowa.

QA During the Session via Chat

Q - Is the Thrifty Food Plan adequate to base SNAP benefits off of? For TFP (Thrifty Food Plan)

A - Learn more here - <https://healthyeatingresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/HER-SNAP-Brief-042220.pdf>.

Q - Are there restrictions on purchasing on SNAP (tobacco was mentioned, but are there others?) and do these vary by state?

A - SNAP stores are authorized by the federal government. WIC stores are authorized by the state. WIC has a prescribed food package - <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/background-revisions-wic-food-package> and <https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/whats-your-wic-food-package>. Learn more about what you can buy with SNAP at the USDA site - What can SNAP buy? - <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/eligible-food-items#:~:text=Households%20CANNOT%20use%20SNAP%20benefits%20to%20buy%3A&text=Any%20nonfood%20items%20such%20as,Hygiene%20items%2C%20cosmetics>. The products you can buy with SNAP do not vary by state. They could vary if FNS were to approve a waiver request from a state, but these requests have not been granted in the past. Here is a historical article discussing the NYC attempt to restrict

soda - explaining USDA's rejection of this waiver

- <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/20/nyregion/ban-on-using-food-stamps-to-buy-soda-rejected-by-usda.html>

Q - Is there any information on how COVID-19 has impacted the enrollment and qualification requirements for college students?

A - COVID related legislation has not changed the College SNAP rule - which is generally restrictive for college students but there are bills introduced trying to address this - The Emergency EATS Act <<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/6565/text>> and the End Pandemic Hunger For College Students Act <<https://edlabor.house.gov/imo/media/doc/End%20Pandemic%20Hunger%20for%20College%20Students%20Act%20of%202020.pdf>> have been recently introduced to ensure low-income college students who meet all other eligibility standards not denied this vital federal nutrition assistance during this pandemic. Here is a report from Urban Institute regarding college food insecurity

- https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/92331/assessing_food_insecurity_on_campus_0.pdf.

Q - Can someone briefly talk about the USDA's harvest boxes? Are they part of the SNAP program? Are they a good thing, bad thing, neutral?

A - During COVID, the USDA has used this program through the Agricultural Market Service (AMS) to distribute food from farms to families using a box medium

- <https://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food-to-usda/farmers-to-families-food-box#:~:text=Through%20this%20program%2C%20USDA's%20Agricultural,produce%2C%20dairy%20and%20meat%20products.> There is also this public - private partnership

- <https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2020/03/17/usda-announces-feeding-program-partnership-response-covid-19>. And - more on meals to you

- [https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2020/05/05/meals-you-serve-5-million-meals-week-rural-](https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2020/05/05/meals-you-serve-5-million-meals-week-rural-children#:~:text=Meals%20to%20You%20boxes%20contain,school%20over%20two%20school%20weeks.)

[children#:~:text=Meals%20to%20You%20boxes%20contain,school%20over%20two%20school%20weeks.](https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2020/05/05/meals-you-serve-5-million-meals-week-rural-children#:~:text=Meals%20to%20You%20boxes%20contain,school%20over%20two%20school%20weeks.) This is dated but discusses the initial reactions to the proposed American Harvest Box - <https://scholarworks.uark.edu/jflp/vol15/iss1/5/> and Tracy has an op-ed on this - <https://www.inquirer.com/philly/opinion/commentary/white-house-harvest-boxes-food-stamps-philly-20180219.html>

Suggested SNAP Readings & Resources

- [USDA SNAP](#)
- [USDA FNS Research & Analysis](#)
- [USDA SNAP ERS](#)
- [USDA CNPP](#)
- [USDA SNAP-Ed](#)
- [USDA SNAP-Ed Toolkit](#)

- [HER SNAP Brief](#)
- [FRAC SNAP Resources](#)
- [CBPP SNAP Basics](#)
- [CBPP Food Assistance](#)
- [Bread for the World – Racial Equity for US Federal Nutrition Assistance Programs](#)
- [CSPI SNAP Resources](#)
- [Bleich SN, et al. Strengthening the public health impacts of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program through policy](#)
- [Fleischhacker S, Moran A, Bleich SN. Legislative and executive branch developments affecting the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#)
- [Poppendieck J. *Breadlines Knee-Deep in Wheat.*](#)
- [Urban Institute. Evidence-based Strategies to End Childhood Food Insecurity and Hunger in Vermont.](#)
- Suggested SNAP-Ed online examples - <https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/msu-extension-launches-online-nutrition-program>;
and <https://www.irontribune.com/2020/06/16/healthy-family-2020-teaching-the-basics-snap-ed-classes-go-online-to-continue-healthy-cooking-classes/>