Accessing and Understanding Secondary Data on Food Access Webinar Transcript

Welcome everyone to today's webinar, "Accessing and Understanding Secondary Data on Food Access." My name's Kathryn Colasanti. I'm a specialist with the Center for Regional Food System at Michigan State University and the coordinator for our Michigan Good Food Charter Shared Measurement Project. Just a quick housekeeping note before launching into our webinar for today. Only the panelists have audio but if you have any questions, we encourage you to use either the chat box or the Q and A box at the top of your screen. If you scroll over to the top, that should pop up. We'll save most of the questions of discussion for the end but it may take a few immediate clarifying questions along the way. But feel free to type those in as those occur to you. So now as we get started, I want to go ahead and introduce today's speakers. So we will hear first from Lisa Uganski, dietician -- registered dietician who's been working with the Ottawa County Department of Public Health for 15 years.

And Lisa is also coordinator of the Ottawa County Food Policy Council, a role that she has held since the council began in 2011. And Lisa brings a great passion for making healthy food available and accessible to everyone and has a lot of experience utilizing secondary data on these topics in her work. And we're excited to have her with us today. If you've been with us on any other previous shared measurement trainings, you know by now Courtney Pinard.

Courtney is a senior research scientist with the Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition based in Nebraska. And her work focuses on public health outcomes and has an overall emphasis on measurement and evaluation. And Courtney also has really extensive experience accessing secondary data related to these topics. So a great assets to our webinar today. So before marching in and again, if you've been with us on previous trainings, this is review. But I was just -- I'd like to make sure everyone is starting on the same page. So shared measurement is part of our larger collective impact framework that we at the Center for Regional Food Systems are utilizing in our approach to food systems work in Michigan, as a way to just help ensure that we're all working together as organizations interested in related goals. And with a common agenda so that we can really leverage our impact and have a greater impact on food systems work than we would working in isolation. So our shared measurement project started with a stakeholder engagement phase in the fall of 2014. And through that phase, we were able to identify what areas were our greatest interest among stakeholders and partners involved in food system work in Michigan. So through that conversation, interviews and surveys, three priority areas really emerged and rose to the top. And those are institutional procurement, economic impact, and healthy food access. So of course today, as you know, our focus is on that third priority of healthy food access.

Again, if you've been enrolled in earlier trainings or following our work from other sources, you know our big focus mainly has been on developing a new survey tool to assess food access at the local level. And we're planning to pilot that tool on three communities over the summer. So we see that as one portion of an overall strategy on measuring food access in Michigan. That would be complemented by state primary data collection and also secondary data we're

hoping. So we know we don't have the resources as any one organization or even collectively to do really extensive in-depth surveys in every community in the state. But we hope that we can target key communities with that primary data collection capture a state level snapshot with primary level data collection of the state. And then utilize secondary data publicly available through the accessible secondary data to fill in the gaps. And that's what we're focusing on today. And today's webinar is really complemented by earlier trainings that we've offered. So if you weren't able to participate in any of those, we encourage you to go back to the food systems, set up a regional food systems website. Those recordings and slides are all available. And particularly, I would say that over the end of research process and introduction to food access survey are particularly complementary to what we're sharing today. So with that I'll turn it over to Courtney.

>> Great, so as you may already know, secondary data is data that's collected for purposes other than your specific interests or projects. But it's available for you to use and it may help you answer some of your questions. And typically we think of secondary data as being surveillance data collected by a government entity. But it can also include vital statistics from hospitals and counties, private foundation surveys and databases that they collect and might be willing to share and different levels of government and health departments. Next slide. Okay and so there are differences between primary and secondary data. Primary being the data that you collect for your own purposes. But secondary data has a few benefits in that it's typically readily available and inexpensive or free. You don't have to go through the trouble and resources of collecting it. But it can also have some challenges in that as I mentioned, it's not intended for your specific purpose. You may not have the specific items that you might be interested in so you're kind of having to fit what you're interested in, what's in the context of what is already there. And there may be some additional technical skills in analyzing and interpreting. And you'll see later presentation how in -- especially in recent years, this has become a lot easier. There are raw datasets that we can download and analyze using statistical programs but there are also many tools and websites that do that for you and provide resources in the format of maps in different -- you know, user-friendly modes. And with primary data, you kind of have the flipside that it's very specific to what you're interested in and you have complete control over it. But there is a lot of resources and expertise or even ethical considerations that can go into that. And we like to frame this as chapter 10 on the earlier slide. These two as complementary sources of data. So capitalizing on what's already there using these resources that exist and then filling in the gaps following this with some potentially primary data collection. Next slide. And just a disclaimer. Any of the resources or datasets that we highlight today are not because we're involved with them in any way. We're users just like everyone on the webinar and also that it is not an exhaustive list. So there may be other ones that people want to mention and it's good to share around what resources people are currently using. So with that, I'll pass it over to Lisa.

>> Okay, thank you. Thank you for having me on the call. And like I mentioned -- like she mentioned earlier, I do coordinate the Ottawa County Food Policy Council. And so I'm going to be talking today on behalf of the council on how that group has used primary and

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secondary data. We have gone through strategic planning processes back in 2012 and then again in 2015 to develop our three-year strategic plans. And both times we've done this, we've used both primary and secondary data to help guide our planning processes. And we always start with secondary data and then sort of based on what Courtney just said, based on what we are able to find there honed in on more of the details that we needed by collecting our primary data. I'm not sure if I'm able to advance the slides? Here we go. Okay and so I'm going to talk about six different types of secondary data sources that the Ottawa County Food Policy Council has used over the past six or seven years. This is just a list of what we've used. I'm going to go through each of them in a little bit more detail. The first is our Behavioral Risk Factor Survey that is more specific to Ottawa County. It's conducted every three years here in Ottawa. Our Ottawa Community Health Needs and Assessment Team contracts with an outside agency to collect this information. The most recent BRFS was conducted on -- we have 2008 participants reached through randomly sampled land and phone lines. The nice thing about this data is that the results were compared across the five geographic sections of our county. And we've found that this really allows us as a council to determine where to focus our specific efforts. We don't have as many people on the table as we would love to have, as you can probably relate to.

And we don't have a whole lot of huge budget lines and so it's really helped us again to determine how to focus our specific efforts. And just to show you some examples -- we do get some food access information from our county specific BRFS and what we found in the most recent survey was that, 92% of our adults feel that they always have enough to eat and they're able to eat the foods that they want, 90% of them feel that way which is great. But it really makes us a little bit more concerned about those that are saying that they don't have enough to eat often and sometimes. And so what the county BRFS data allows us to do -- Oops, hang on just a second. Okay, is to dive in a little bit into a little bit more detail and again look at that 8% of people that are saying that sometimes or often that they don't have enough to eat. What you'll see here with the data and what we found as the Food Council was that the groups most likely to experience these food insecurities are those that are younger than 35, those that are Hispanic. Living with a high school -- less than a high school education, incomes less than $35,000 and living in the central region of Ottawa County. What this has really allowed us to do is to again focus our efforts. One thing that ring out loud and clear was the need to be doing more outreach with our Hispanic population. And so one thing we have done as a result of receiving this data is found some funding to make sure that our website is available in English and Spanish because we have a searchable food database and found that it was really important that that was available in Spanish as well as in English. So that's just one example.

Another example that we found using our Ottawa County BRFS data is that really there's inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption all over Ottawa County regardless of demographics. As you can see, almost 71% of Ottawa County adults have an inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption meaning that they're eating fruits and vegetables less than five times a day. So again, what does really let us hone in on? A lot of times, we would say,

"Gosh, we need to be looking at a specific population." And for example in the past three years, we've made the majority of our work focus on the low-income population. And while that's still an area that has need and that we need to be educating and providing nutrition education and taste testing and things like that, this really helped us to step back and say across all of our demographics, there's really an issue with inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption. And as a result, we have some new action steps built into our new strategic plan to make sure that we are addressing fruit and vegetable consumption for all our Ottawa County residents and not just specifically paying attention to the low-income population. They'll definitely still be a part of the work we do but we've learned that we really need to expand our focus. Another example of some of the secondary data we've used is through the Greater Ottawa County United Way. They do a household survey that comes out of their community assessment that's published every three years. So the most recent data we have is from 2015. Luckily for us, they focus on four areas that are education, financial stability, health, and basic needs. And the nice thing about this is we have benchmarks that allow us to gauge progress and to really look at how well our community is engaging around meeting the specific needs of the Ottawa County community. And there's one example that I want to show you of a question they include.

Oh, here we go. So one thing they did ask in 2015 was over the past 12 months, did you or others in your household ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food? So this was really helpful for us in terms of having some data related to food and security in Ottawa County. And what we found when we talked with -- or when we got these results and the analysis -- if you look down to the fourth question, of those who didn't use the food pantry, why did they not go? And the largest percentage of people told us that it was lack of knowledge and awareness of food pantries. We'd heard some of that before but this sort of rang true loud and clear showing us that we really do need to get out there and promote our food pantries more. And we want to make people aware of where they were located and when their hours were and their eligibility requirements. And so one goal in our new strategic plan that we just started in January, is to create a greater awareness of food resources for those in need. And we've just written a grant and hopefully we'll receive some funding to plan and implement a comprehensive marketing campaign for Ottawa County residents that need these food resources.

>> Lisa, I'm going to jump in before you move to the next slide. You have a question related to the BRFS data and fruit and vegetable consumption and whether the question asked, whether it asks the number of servings or number of times of day that fruit and vegetables are consumed?

>> Yes, our question and keeping it consistent with what's asked at the state level, we do ask the number of times per day that fruits and vegetables are consumed. Okay, another source of secondary data that we use with Ottawa County Food Policy Council is the county health rankings. You might be familiar with these. They really are based on that model of population health that looks at a lot of different factors that can make communities healthier places to

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live. The interesting thing about the county health rankings is they use a variety of secondary data sources so I thought this is a good example to use. And when you go on to the website that we got a link here to the site. And I just pulled up Ottawa's information to show you based on health outcomes and health factors. I think it's important to point out that there are a lot of different health factors that go on to these rankings but one of the health factors is actually you'll see the food environment index that's listed at the bottom of this slide with a star next to it. And that's something as a Food Council that we pay attention to. And it's a ranking from zero to 10, the index effectors that contributes to a healthy food environment with zero being the worst, 10 being the best. And as you can see, overall Michigan, the rank is 7.2. The range in Michigan is anywhere from 6.1 to 8.9. Ottawa County falls in it at 8.0. And -- The two things that this index is composed of, it's equally weighted between the limited access to healthy food. And that's really an estimate of the percentage of the population that are low income that don't live close to a grocery store as well as food insecurity and that's an estimate of the percentage of the population that didn't have access to a reliable source of food during the past year. So this index uses secondary data from both the Food Environment Atlas which I'm going to talk about and also Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap which we'll talk about in a minute as well. While Feeding America Map the Meal Gap, if you have never been on that site, it's a great website and it generates two types of data for the -- at the community level and this is information we've used readily for the Food Policy Council as well. It looks at county level food insecurity and also child food insecurity. And it also gives you an estimate of the shortfall of the food budget that these insecure individuals experience. It's the data for the Map the Meal Gap is updated every year through Feeding America. Okay, the maps I'm going to show in a minute reflect data from 2011 through 2013 but like I said is updated every year. And -- for an example, when you go to the website, this is the data we've pulled off for Ottawa County. It's going to show you the food insecurity rate. And what's really nice and what we've really looked at when we've used the secondary data is it estimates the program eligibility among those that are food insecure in your population. So it shows us that about a third of our population is above SNAP and other nutrition program thresholds.

Yeah, they're still food insecure. So that's a population that we've really tried to target our efforts. And again about two-thirds are below that threshold. And also it lets us know that about the average cost of a meal in Ottawa County is about $2.55 and the additional money that is required to meet food needs for these residents is calculated as well and that's available for all counties. Another thing that we've looked at in and sort of focused efforts around is the number of food-insecure children in Ottawa County. So we know that the overall rate of food security is right around 11%. But when you're talking about children, that jumps to 16.6% which is quite concerning as our council that's trying to address these issues. And it's about the same in terms of just a little over a third are likely ineligible for federal nutrition programs as youth and about two-thirds are income eligible. But because of this jump or this, you know, there's more children than the overall population that are food insecure, our council over the past three years have a subcommittee that was specifically focused on addressing food insecurity in youth. And as a result, we've done a lot of work bringing agencies together to support, promote and expand our summer meal feeding programs. We have had some grant money come in to help us identify why people weren't using the food resources for youth.

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And again, far and away, it was because of lack of awareness. And so like I said, we've been doing a lot of community work and community engagements to get partners at the table to help us not only ramp up the efforts of these programs that exist and make them more fun for kids, but also to get the word out there most importantly that they exist in the first place. And help us find ways to take these programs right where the kids are including mobile home parks, including migrant camps. We've a lot of migrant workers in Ottawa County. And so we've had groups -- a group specifically working on these needs for children based on this data that we've found. Another really great source of secondary data that we've used is Feeding America's Hunger in America Study. It's conducted every four years. The most recent data came out 2014. The nice thing about this research is it provides really comprehensive demographic profiles with people that are needing food assistance through the partner agencies of the Feeding America network.

The most recent 2014 data like I said, it involved 60,000 clients and those clients filled out surveys. They also worked with 32,000 different partner agencies across the country through Feeding America in their -- all of their partner agencies. We were really fortunate in that one of the members of our Food Policy Council is the Feeding America West Michigan agency. And they were able for the first time in this 2014 Hunger in America Study to share data specific to Ottawa County. And again, this is the first time they've been able to generate county-specific data. So it's the first data of this kind that we've been able to access. And I'm going to share some of that with you. Okay and so one of the things there were able to get data on for us was the agency's obstacles to distributing healthier food.

So why aren't the agencies distributing as much healthy food as they would like and the highest or the most commonly given answer was that it's too expensive to purchase healthy food followed by the fact that they're not able to obtain them from other donors and from other food sources. And so when we looked at this data, that was sort of one of first things we started talking about as you know, why is this happening and what can we as a council be doing? And so one thing that we've worked on as a Food Council is bringing those agencies together and asking them more questions and trying to get to the bottom of why these things aren't happening. And again, most of the same things that came out in the survey is what we heard face-to-face when we talked with these pantries. But it really impacted our group. We were able to secure funding to start a Holland Food Depot. So now our United Way is funding once a month a truck from Feeding America West Michigan to come to the Holland area and bring the orders for -- excuse me, local pantries in the Holland area. I think we have seven or eight right now that are participating. So they complete their orders online and then once a month, they come right to an agency in Holland that's also a member of the Food Council.

And the Feeding America truck brings the food, unloads it right off the truck and it's already shrink-wrapped into their specific orders and ready to go. So that has saved time and money that was being spent on gas and staff time is now being able to be put for more healthy food being purchased. So we're excited that that's happened and again, it's this kind of data that's

helped us realize what the issues truly are. Another example of information we get from this secondary data source is the top products that clients want but aren't currently receiving at their food resource agencies. As you can see here, the most popular thing that is desired but isn't received is fresh fruits and vegetables. And again, we took this to heart as a Food Policy Council and a group that really wants people eating more fruits and vegetables. And so again, the council's done a little bit more work to take steps to say, "You know, how can we support these efforts moving forward as a council?" We were able to help a local community garden secure funding for a hoop house and it's a community garden that last year put up the hoop house. They were able to extend their growing season and ended up harvesting over 5000 pounds of food that went all to local food pantries as well as a community kitchen meal site that serves meals five days a week. So then this -- the data that we received here helped us move forward and make some of these impactful initiatives to take place. I do want to mention as far as the Feeding America data goes, I contacted our -- our contact at the local office and the data at the county level is only available to them based on population level. And so for example, our Feeding America West Michigan office only received county-specific data for Kent, Ottawa, Muskegon and Newaygo out of the 40 counties that they serve. And so it's based on a number of sites and completed surveys that happen in any given county. But I would recommend, you know, if you're served by a certain Feeding America food bank branch, checking with them to see if they have county-specific data that you could utilize.

Okay, another example of secondary data that we use is the UFCA Food Access Research Atlas that I mentioned is also used earlier when I talked about the county health rankings and the indexes that they use. But the really nice thing about this Food Access Atlas -- it's not easy to say -- is that it gives you an overview of food access indicators for a lot of different census tracts, low incomes specifically using different measures of supermarket accessibility. And it also provides data for populations within census tracts which can be really helpful. And it's nice to be able to get all that information and download it and a lot of times, we've taken that to our planning meetings and it's been helpful to share visuals with our Food Council members that are making decisions. So this shows you an example on the website. You can see -- this is the United States as a whole but it does allow you to zoom in and I'll show you in a second our specific county and the data that we use. But you're allowed to determine sort of the key you want to use and what information that you want to look for. We use this. As you can see the green box is checked and that indicates low income and low access. So these are low-income census tracts. In here, it's using the original food designate measure which is in urban areas where people are greater than a mile from their local -- their nearest supermarket.

In rural areas, it's where they're greater than 10 miles from their nearest supermarket. In this next slide, we'll show you as we zoom in this is specifically Ottawa County to the left on the slide that you're looking at. And if you look down towards the bottom where you see the red star, there are two census tracts right there. And what we discovered when we first pulled this information up a few years ago was that this low-income --actually these two low-income, low axis census tracts were directly adjacent to a huge, very successful, already existing Farmer's

Market in Ottawa County. However, the market had never accepted SNAP Bridge Cards so obviously they had never participated in the Double Up Food Bucks Program. It really was a gorgeous Farmer's Market that was only serving one part of Holland's population. And so we did write a grant to USDA for the Farmer's Market Promotion Program and received about $45,000 to start a Bridge Card Program at that market and promote it to that population living in the food desert literally just blocks from this beautiful Farmer's Market. And part of that grant that we wrote sort of challenged us to give the city a sustainability plan so that when the grant funding ended, the program would not go away. And fortunately, the city of Holland approved their sustainability plan and because the project was so successful, they're now charging vendors 5% of the SNAP fees sales and that has allowed that market to continue accepting Bridge Cards and SNAP donations. The program has continued to grow. Just this past year, there was over $45,000 in just Bridge and Double Up Bucks sales alone because of the success of the program. And again, we continue outreach with those populations. We used this data to look at which populations specifically we should be targeting with those messages for Double Up and SNAP usage. So just to wrap up, I just want to point out a lot of the reasons why we have come to use secondary data as often as we do. Again, we don't have a very large budget and it's a lot less expensive for us to collect this secondary data than it is for us to obtain the primary data. It saved us a lot of time. It's helped us to find our problem. It's helped us focus our efforts on specific populations and on specific areas of the county. Secondary data just allows us much larger sample sizes than what we can access with primary data. And it really has helped us prevent some unnecessary efforts and helped us from sort of recreating the wheel. Sometimes we've thought there's information we wanted and when we went out and looked, it was already there for us so one thing I'd point out is that it's always important to search for secondary data sources first. And once you have that information, you can determine the primary research that still needs to be done based on what's already out there. So I hope that was helpful. With that, I'm going to turn it back over to -- am I turning it over to Kathryn?

>> Yes, thank you. Thank you, Lisa. Yeah, that was a very great overview of not only sources of information out there but how to interpret, respond, and react to that information. So what Courtney and I thought we'd do with this next section of the presentation is first to just circle back to some of the resources that Lisa mentioned and provide a little bit more context or back story and then also mention a few other resources. So let's see. So first with the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System or BRFSS as it's referred to. So this is a CDC survey that is conducted in every state on an annual basis. It began in 1984 so there's a long history of data collection. It's a telephone survey targeted at adults living in households in the U.S. There is also a complementary youth BRFSS survey, Behavioral Risk Factor Survey. I believe its high school age youth that has similar questions but obviously different target populations. So if that's a population of interest to you that would be a good set to look up. There are available raw datasets from these surveys online but you do need statistical analysis software packages to analyze some stats, for example. But there are a number of resources, some of which Lisa mentioned that pull data from the BRFSS survey into a much more user-friendly database like the county health rankings system that Lisa talked about.

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With the Michigan BRFSS, specifically, is implemented by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. And you can find all of their reports on their website, that orange box tells you the navigation steps are kept there. Again, reported annually at the state level and they also report at local and regional levels. And depending on the population of the county, you might get county-specific data or it might be aggregated with other counties in the area. So you can see a little bit from that map on the right of the slide whether or not your county would be reported individually. Like District Number 10, for example, is the Kent County area. Let's see, some of the indicators in the survey of greatest interest are probably general health status, obesity, diabetes and pre-diabetes, and then fruit and vegetable consumption. And again, Lisa mentioned how they used that fruit and vegetable consumption data. Those questions in Michigan are included in odd years of the survey. So for example, that was in the 2015 survey and that data will come out -- it usually comes out in the summer of the following year so summer of 2016. So the local and regional data is generally reported on a multi-year basis so three to five year averages just to ensure that the sample size is sufficient. But the BRFSS includes a lot of demographic measures so it really -- it's a good source for better understanding health status, broken out by age, gender, education, household income, race, ethnicity, marital status, all these different demographic indicators. And in addition to the region shown in that map, I believe they are also now reporting by prosperity regions, emergency preparedness regions, and MEDC regions because every agency in Michigan wants to define regions differently. And so that's a little on the BRFSS and then Feeding America -- we also heard about from Lisa as well. So just to share a little bit of how they come up with the numbers that they report.

This is a good example of a site that is a composite of secondary data. You can search by county as Lisa showed or by congressional district. And then what they present their data on food insecurity is a calculation based on a number of underlying indicators. So what they did is determine a relationship between food insecurity and other measures like poverty rates, unemployment rates, median income, race, ethnicity, and home ownership. And then they take those direct measures -- some of the measures on those indicators from American Community Survey on the county level and then apply that formula of the relationship to food insecurity to come up with the estimate of level of food insecurity in the county. And again those underlying indicators are based on multi-year averages. And then the measure that they present on the money required to meet food needs comes from a determination of a national average of the budget shortfall for food-insecure households which they determined to be $16.28 per person per week. The budget shortfall between food insecure and food secure households and then multiply that by county-specific cost of food index which is based on actual store purchases made at 65,000 stores across the country in October 2013.

So that comes from Nielsen data to better understand how cost prices or food prices are variable across different counties. So just a little bit of context where those numbers are coming from. I also wanted to share a little bit about another resource that Lisa didn't mention. But this is more that I find to be really user-friendly and pulls in data from a whole lot

of different sources and just -- it's pretty easy to navigate. Community Commons is the name of the site. It is free but it does require you to set up a personal login. For our purposes, the relevant section is going to be these food environment reports. So you go first to maps and data and then food environment report and then you start by selecting a state and then a county or multi-county area or you could stay with just the state if that's what you're most interested in. And this is just one example of one indicator.

They have a whole lot of basic demographics, data they pulled in from American Community Survey census data. This comes from BRFSS so again, here's a good example of another data pulling them from other secondary data sources and just presenting it in a really easy-to-understand way. So this is showing you Gladwin County, the percentage of adults with inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption and then a nice chart right there that compares that to Michigan and to the U.S. And then if you see they have at the bottom of the screen, just a snapshot of the map of Gladwin County specifically. But if you click on that, it takes you to the full map and you can zoom out to see all of the state or all of the country and then really compare with other areas that way. Another indicator on Community Commons which is really nice is the households receiving SNAP benefits. I like that one because it's available by census tract. So it's a much finer grain indicator than just at county level because census tracts of course, are much smaller so you can start to see what sub-county variation looks like a little bit. So here we're seeing a map of -- or here, the map is clicked on census tracts two within Gladwin County. So you can see there, the percentage of households receiving SNAP benefits is actually significantly lower than the county as a whole. And then this indicator also provides a breakdown by race and ethnicity. So a good way to just starts to hone in a little bit further. So those are just two indicators that there's a whole lot more available on the Community Commons site both related to food and not related to food so a lot you can explore. And all of their data, you can download into an Excel format. And when you do download that, it's really just these numbers that you're seeing on the screenshot I have on the slide. So you don't -- you don't get the dataset that is used to calculate those percentages. But you can at least then manipulate into your own charts or graphs, if you're interested in doing that.

And then another interesting measure that's on Community Commons is a newer index called Environment Supporting Healthy Eating or ESHE. And this was an index developed with leadership from the African-American Collaborative Obesity Research Network. So it's a similar idea to what Lisa was sharing of the food environment index but whereas that index looks at household level food insecurity and food access challenges, this is trying to get a snapshot of, as the name implies, the environment that supports, or does not, or fails to support people in making healthy eating choices. So it incorporates a whole lot of different measures. One set at the state level and another set at the county level. So the state level looks at sales tax on unhealthy food specifically chips and soda and vending machines or retail stores, quality of meals at childcare and in schools, what kind of a la carte items are sold in schools. [Inaudible] for those using it in nutrition education and policies around commercial advertising in schools. So those are all at a policy level. And at the county level,

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it's looking at grocery store access, Farmer's Market access and then the ratio between healthy retail and unhealthy retail outlets which is called the Modified Retail Food Environment Index. So you can see specifically all the sub-indicators in those categories.

So what that then is all translated into is one specific number. And then that number is used to rank counties both within the state and then nationally. So here we're seeing a snapshot of Southeastern Michigan. And each county you see has a number so that is the number, the ranking of counties within Michigan. So for example, Ingham County ranks 69 of the 83 counties among Michigan. And because this is the comparison within the state level, all the state level indicators would be the same. So then it's really we're seeing here the reflection of differences in those county level indicators from the previous screen. And then the other thing that this tool does is provide a ranking among what they call peer counties. So it takes a certain number of demographic information, points about a county like distribution by age, median income, distribution by race, ethnicity, things like that. And then it develops a list of counties that have a similar demographic profile across the country and then provides a ranking within that set. So again, going back to Ingham County as our example here, ranks 15 of 29 among peer counties nationally. So the index has a lot of different measures and it's -- so it's a little bit hard to understand. I think that what it does in the way it can be useful is just to point you towards how your county or your community compares or contrasts with other counties around. And then it can be a prompt to dig into some of what causes those underlying differences and potentially a strategy for programs and policies to remedy those differences. And then another resource I want to mention is the National Equity Atlas. And this is not directly related to food access but it has a number of indicators that can give a really nice indication of the extent to which communities are segregated by race which as we all know really impacts how people are able to access food and food resources. So I think these equity indicators are really important to consider. Well, the downside of the equity atlas, it currently only includes the hundred largest cities in the country and the 150 largest metro areas. So for Michigan, Detroit is the only city that's included and then I listed here for you the metro regions that are included. But if you are not in one of those metro regions, you can look at state-level data. So you'd be looking at data for Michigan as a whole. But they are continually working to update and expand and I know that they would like to get to be the point of view -- provide data on more regions. But just a couple of examples of indicators on that site.

First neighborhood poverty -- so here we're looking at the Grand Rapids, Wyoming-Michigan Metro Area. And it's showing you the percent of different races, ethnicities living in high-poverty neighborhoods. So you can really see a vast discrepancy between the percentage of blacks and Latinos living in high-poverty neighborhoods compared to white neighborhoods. And then another indicator that I like that I haven't seen elsewhere is what they call disconnected youth. So this is the percent of 16-to-24-year-olds who are not working or not in school, again by race and ethnicity. So to give you an idea of disparities and race but also just the number of youth in your community who might be in vulnerable situations because they're not working or at school. And this is an example of an indicator -- oops, oops, oops,

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oops okay. You can also really easily compare Grand Rapids, the Metro Area with the other 150 largest metro regions in the country to see where Grand Rapids ranks in that. So just another data source to explore and I'll turn it back to Courtney.

>> Okay, great. So NCCOR is the National Collaborative on Childhood Obesity Research and it's a collaboration between NIH, CDC, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and USDA. And they have a couple of resources including the surveillance -- Catalog of Surveillance Systems. And so these are typically going to be in the form of raw data but it allows you -- I pasted it on the left-hand side there -- search fields that you would be able to check off. So if you're interested in the food environment, you could look at the community level diet-related and so on and whether you had specific populations. And then within each resource that you could pull up, they give a lot of good information including what are the key variables, whether it's geocoded, if there's a cost or how to access it, how they do their sampling, any publications that have come out of using that resource. So if you're into accessing raw data that might be a good place to start. They also have their measures registry which I think we've mentioned previously. And that's those survey tools -- primary data collection tools. So this is the other side of it, the secondary data. And then we just wanted to wrap up the last slide here or the second to last slide. Just to regroup on how useful secondary data can be. It's widely available and although any measurement is never perfect, it's a good starting point. And as Kathryn kind of highlighted in the recent examples, smaller regions and populations may not be covered or have higher margins of error. And it's important to consider like on the left side with the NCCOR where they show how the sampling was done and what types of publications have come out, how that tool has been used in the past. So who does it represent and who does it not and how can you apply it to your instances? And then finally, just a point on sharing resources that you're using in your communities with other people in Michigan and in order to really move forward with shared measures -- it's important that we're drawing from similar resources and sharing what's available and then we can compare and contrast and keep moving forward with shared measures. So I think that's the last and if people have more questions, please feel free to type them in.

>> Yeah, thank you, Courtney. So I know we threw a lot at you but hopefully it was a useful overview and feel free to type in any questions for any of the speakers today in either the chat pod or the Q and A pod. And I mean, I'll start since I don't see any right now with a question for Lisa. Since I know you mentioned the county specific BRFS data. Are you familiar, Lisa, with how many other counties are conducting oversampling in their own county in addition to the state BRFS data?

>> I don't know that but it's something I could look into. I'm not sure.

>> Okay, yeah. I'm just curious.

>> It's something we've done for quite a while in fact, I didn't even realize for a while. I think we're just been spoiled by it that it wasn't something that -- do you know what I mean?

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>> Right, right.

>> It goes on in a lot of places but I can find out.

>> Sure, okay. We just got a question of, will the PowerPoint be available? And yes, we will make both PDF of the slides and the recording. We are recording available on the Center for Regional Food Systems website. So I will email everyone that signed up for the webinar once those are posted. Yeah, so feel free to review the webinar yourself or share it with colleagues at that time.

>> And that was good information that you shared too about, Courtney, about paying attention to the sample size. That's one thing I didn't mention but specifically in that Feeding America data we have that was specific to Ottawa County. When you look back at the slides, you might notice there were some places where there weren't numbers and there were just plus signs. That's because the sample size for Ottawa County in some of those was fairly small so the confidence intervals were so large that we couldn't even, you know, have data to share.

>> Yeah, yeah.

>> So that's an important point.

>> Yeah. And that's a really good example too on how you can use primary data then to complement secondary data. So you could even use the same tools that other groups are using and you might be accessing through secondary data and then provide an oversample of a specific population that you're interested in in order to have a larger sample size.

>> Exactly.

>> Lets see, a question about the Modified Retail Food Environment Index Scores by census tract. Do you know of a free source that one can find that or business information to determine it? It is available, I believe, at CDC. I don't have the specific group off the top of my head. But I can find it. Michele where the food MR -- yeah, food retail environment index data is but I'm not sure how old it is. Do you remember, Courtney? Yeah. I want to say yeah, 2011. I think that is the most recent.

>> The Food Environment Atlas, you said?

>> No, the modified MRFEI.

>> Oh, yeah. The food retail environment index?

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>> Yeah.

>> I don't know. They updated it recently, I think but I can't recall off the top of my head.

>> Okay. Okay, we have another question. Is there data available on the accessibility of local farmer's markets and the use of SNAP benefits at these markets? MFMA does do -- Michigan Farmer's Market Association does do a really good job of keeping track of which farmer's markets are accepting SNAP benefits. And they're trying to do a better job of tracking the dollar value of SNAP sales at those markets. But in terms of the accessibility of the farmer's markets, that is not something we have readily available data source for.

>> Yeah, we're working with the Fair Food Network with Double Up Food Bucks evaluation and working with the farmer's markets in getting those numbers on SNAP usage and Double Up usage. So I don't know that those are widely available like you said.

>> I mean, from the state level, there is SNAP data but you would have to go through a process of gaining access to that.

>> Another question, are there resources with links to some or all of these data sources? Yeah, I think we've really been -- get through it in the first round but eventually we'll go back and edit the recordings to make all the links to the resources we mentioned live links. But in the meantime, we can post just a really simple compilation of these links with -- once we get up the slides. Yeah, we can make that available. Another question for Courtney is each state's information available on NCCOR?

>> Yeah, I'm just pulling it up right now. It is noted on one of the tabs whether it's geocoded. So you would have to look at that to know who the sample was and how they did their sampling and whether that's coded. I wouldn't say necessarily in all of the resources, every state is but you would have to kind of look into it based on that information.

>> All right, okay. Let's see, another question about the website at MSUDC address is to watch previous Food Hub [phonetic] webinars. Yeah, I mean maybe when I send out the notification once we post this, I'll also send the link to where all of the Center for Regional Food Systems webinars are posted. But if you go to their homepage and go to resources and then webinars, there's a list -- a chronological list of all of the webinars that we've posted. And then we did earlier an early slide list of our shared measurement training webinars if you're specifically interested in those. And then also if you're looking for the Food Hub webinar specifically, there's a way to click on Food Hub as an activity and that would take you to that sub-list. All right, so I think that takes us to three o'clock. So unless there are any last questions? All right. Well, thank you all for joining us today and for the great questions. Again hopefully it was helpful and I will let everyone signed up know as soon as we do have the recording and the slides posted.

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