



Uprooting Barriers to Equitable Health through Improved Food Choices and Behaviors

Dr. Dionne Toombs, Director, USDA Office of the Chief Scientist

Institute of Health Equity for the City University of New York “Health Equity and Health Disparities Seminar”

May 12, 2021

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE



OFFICE OF
THE CHIEF
SCIENTIST



USDA IS REBUILDING U.S. AGRICULTURE

- Containing COVID-19 Pandemic
- Ensuring racial justice and equity
- Addressing mounting hunger and nutrition insecurity crisis
- Rebuilding the rural economy
- Addressing the impacts of climate change





Leadership

Chavonda Jacobs-Young

Acting Research, Education, and Economics Under Secretary & Acting USDA Chief Scientist

Dionne Toombs

Office of the Chief Scientist Director



Agricultural Research Service

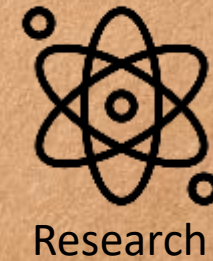
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Research, Education, and
Economics Mission Area

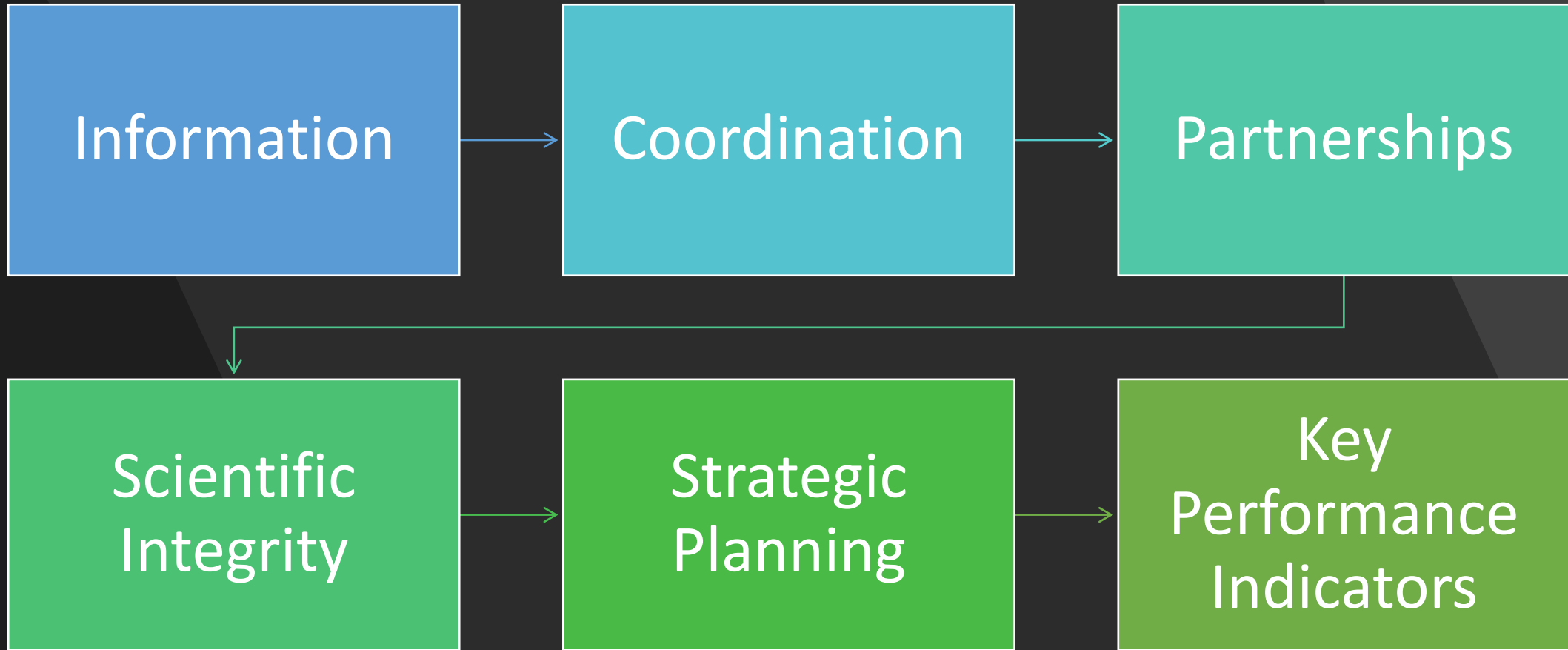
National Agricultural Statistics Service

Economic Research Service

Office of the Chief Scientist



Office of the Chief Scientist: *Responsibilities*





USDA has the dual role of protecting U.S. agriculture and public health.

Agriculture

Public Health

Health Inequities Based on Social Categories

Race

Ethnicity

Gender

Disability

Sexual Orientation

Socioeconomic Status

Where They Live



The background of the entire image is a dark red color, overlaid with numerous glowing, light blue 3D renderings of COVID-19 virus particles. These particles are spherical with prominent, spike-like protrusions on their surface, characteristic of the coronavirus structure. They are scattered across the frame, with some appearing more sharply in the foreground and others blurred in the background, creating a sense of depth and density.

COVID-19 FURTHER EXPOSED HEALTH INEQUITIES



Examine	Examine how economic incentives and behavioral factors influence food choices and diet quality
Address	Address differences in dietary patterns by social, demographic, and economic factors
Help	Help parents foster environments that support healthy choices for pre-school children
Provide	Provide teenagers with the guidance and information they need to learn healthier eating habits
Conduct	Conduct research to discover the mechanisms of metabolic disorders that contribute to obesity
Study	Study the prevalence of trends in rural and urban communities





Agricultural Research Service



Black Women + Diabetes



High rates of whole-body insulin resistance



New potential biomarkers



Increased carbohydrate intake



Feeding Style of Latina Mothers



Consumer Products with ARS Research





National Institute of Food and Agriculture





NIFA Human Nutrition Research Investments

- Community-based nutrition education programs that help individuals, families, and communities make informed choices about food and lifestyles
- Education, resources, and support to help low-income families and at-risk communities improve nutrition
- Research that addresses the science of human health and food
- Resources to help individuals living with chronic health conditions make sound nutritional choices

Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP)

- Administered by NIFA in collaboration with USDA's Food and Nutrition Service
- GusNIP includes support for three competitively awarded grant types
 - nutrition incentive grants
 - produce prescription grants
 - cooperative agreements



Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)

- EFNEP has helped more than **34 million low-income families** since the program began in 1969.
- More than **90% of adults and 80% of youth** improved nutritional behaviors because of EFNEP programming.
- In 2020, EFNEP graduates saved more than **nearly \$550M in food costs** and **46 percent** more participants reported that they were **more food secure** than before the program.





Economic Research Service



Cost Containment and Participant Access in USDA's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC): Evidence From the Greater Los Angeles, CA, Area

Patrick W. McLaughlin, Michelle Saksena, Tina L. Saltone, Meilin Ma, Richard Volpe, Qi Wu, and Richard J. Sexton



An Examination of Veterans' Diet Quality

Dianzheng Dong, Hayden Stewart, and Andrea C. Carlson
December 2019



ERS Human Nutrition Reports

Understanding Low-Income and Low-Access Census Tracts Across the Nation: Subnational and Subpopulation Estimates of Access to Healthy Food

Alana Rhone, Michele Ver Ploeg, Ryan Williams, and Vince Breneman



The Economic Impacts of Breastfeeding: A Focus on USDA's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

Victor Oliveira, Mark Prell, and Xinzhe Cheng



Household Food Insecurity and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Federal Housing Assistance

Veronica Helms, Alisha Coleman-Jensen, Regina Gray, and Debra L. Brucker





National Agricultural Statistics Service



NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE (NASS)



NASS began conducting the 2020 Local Food Marketing Practices Survey in December 2020. First conducted in 2015, this Census of Agriculture special study looks at local and regional food systems and provides new data on how locally grown food in the United States are marketed and sold. The results will be available in November 2021.



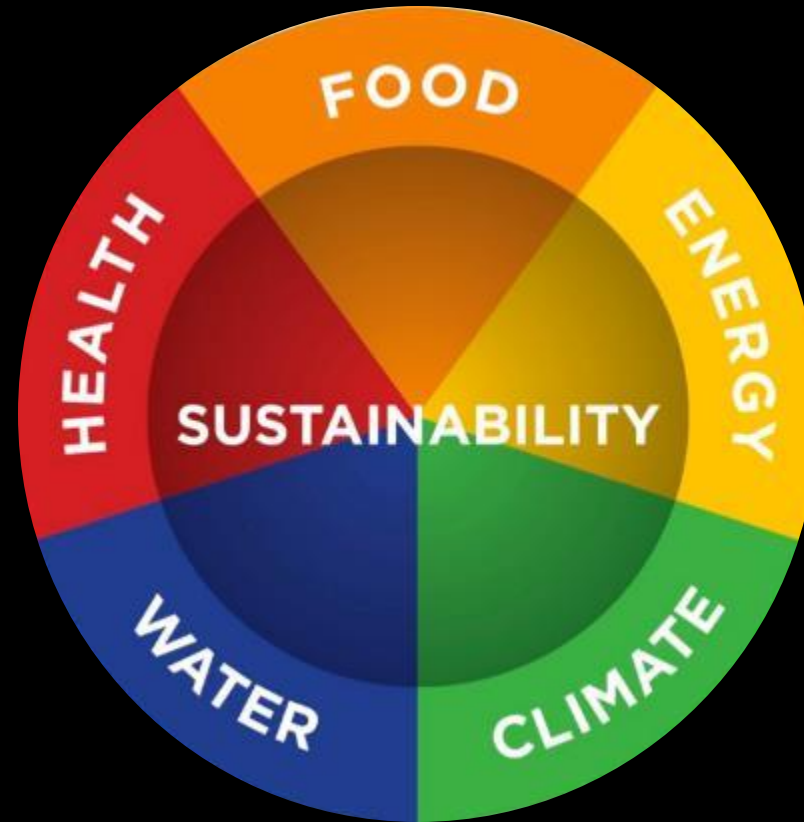
Office of the Chief Scientist





Looking Ahead: Precision Nutrition

The Agricultural Nexus



Recent Nutrition Assistance & Food Security Investment Examples



SNAP Benefits Expansion for Low-Income and Food Insecure Children



Food Assistance for Homeless Young Adults



Summer Nutrition Assistance and Free Meals for Children



Incentives to Purchase Fruits and Vegetables,



Nutrition Assistance Expansion for Seniors



Food Waste Reduction





THANK YOU
&
STAY CONNECTED

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF
SCIENTIST

1400 Independence Ave,
SW Washington, DC 20228
(202) 720-3444



@USDAScience

