Building a Healthy Community Together

*A*n engagement and listening session

# Background

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, in partnership with the host organization, is holding this discussion to better understand how specific communities interact with food and how certain food choices lead to health outcomes including diet-related chronic diseases and cancer.

Our shared goal of this session is to convene a diverse audience of local community members and leaders to discuss the diet-related health disparities in our community and the ways we can combat these issues together.

# Goals

Imperative: use participants’ time fruitfully, mindful of what is necessary to relay *out* at the expense of gathering information *in*.

Imperative: participants leave the event feeling terrific about the decision they made to spend time with us and confident their voices are heard.

Imperative: Harvest useful information and data from participants to inform research, education, extension, and program agendas.

Useful: participants leave with new knowledge of USDA, host organization, and community food, health, and pertinent agriculture programs.

Useful: participants leave motivated to stay connected with ASCEND, USDA, host organization, and community food and health programs.

# Venue Setup

* 20-25 x 5’ round tables, with tablecloths and 5 chairs each
* AV – projector and screen, podium and hand-held microphones (2-3)
* A side room or area for a Share Fair with 10 long banquet tables with tablecloths and 2 chairs each
* Registration tables (2 banquet tables with tablecloths, 2 chairs each) at front entrance of venue or room
* Banquet tables outside venue or in back of venue for food service

# Share Fair Concept

To minimize time spent talking “at” participants and maximize engagement with participants, we plan to move much of the information sharing to a fair format. “Exhibitors” can include:

* Host organization and related programs, extension, etc.
* USDA Nutrition Programs – SNAP, WIC, GusNIP, etc.
* USDA Dietary Guidelines combined with “ask a nutritionist” – host organization provides faculty or student nutritionists.
* USDA Rural Partnership Network
* Local grant recipients and community groups relating to nutrition
* Local community organizations
* “Stories for Better Health” booth where participants offer their personal stories of food, health, and community in these areas.
* AmeriCorps, 4H and other youth groups

# Data Collection

A main purpose of the ASCEND Community Engagements is to collect data from specific communities to inform the emerging ASCEND for Better Health agenda. A guiding principle adopted by ASCEND is that data will be collected transparently and be made available to the communities that offer it and to broader audiences. At the Community Engagement, we will collect data in several ways.

* Personal stories will be collected at the Share Fair. Two options will be available to share stories: 1) in live format via a booth with interviewers, and 2) in writing via a hard copy handout with writing prompts. Our vision is to collect personal stories as a source of lived experience for researchers, community organizers, and the public.
* Templates will be used at each table during the World Café Rounds. We will use recorders/hosts at each table. These are note takers, not facilitators.
* Posters will present a question to participants on three topics: 1. Food is...? 2. What would encourage/discourage you from participating in a research study? 3. What is a piece of advice regarding food and nutrition that has been passed down to you?
* Registration information, including contact information, will be collected for future use if participant agrees. One thing we will commit to share is a summary of this convening.
* Post-event survey will collect feedback on the process and ideas participants felt they could not convey through other methods throughout the convening.

# Agenda Draft (will be updated to reflect 9am to 3pm time)

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| 8:00 to 9:00 | Host and USDA Team on hand to welcome and register participants  Share Fair Open |
| 9:00 to 9:20 | Opening comments from Host and USDA leadership |
| 9:20 to 10:00 | World Café Round 1 - Introduction and Ice Breaker at Tables - Develop Shared Understanding |
| 10:00 to 10:20 | Context Talks: Host organization and/or USDA |
| 10:20 to 10:40 | Break  Share Fair Open |
| 10:40 to 11:30 | World Café Rounds 2 – Sources of information |
| 11:30 to 12:40 | Lunch discussion – Share stories on food, nutrition, and health  (food served 11:30 to noon, talk noon to 12:40) |
| 12:40 to 1:00 | Share Fair Time |
| 1:00 to 1:40 | World Café Round 3 – Barriers to healthy eating |
| 1:40 to 2:10 | Food Demonstration – How to prepare healthy meals/recipes |
| 2:10 to 2:50 | World Café Round 4 – What helps you lead a healthy lifestyle? |
| 2:50 to 3:00 | Host and USDA Team offer closing observations |
| 3:00 to 3:30 | Participants Exit  Share Fair Open |