

FARM TO ALL TABLES:

Understanding how Advocacy Coalitions Influence SNAP-related Policies for Farmers' Markets

by

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Abstract

This MPP essay examines how states expand access to nutritious food for low-income families, focusing specifically on policies related to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and farmers' markets. Coalitions made up of nonprofits focused on hunger, farmers, and health collaborate to impact relevant policies in their respective states. The purpose of this research is to address how and why these policies differ from state to state by answering the following questions: (a) What factors influence the level of support states provide to farmers' markets so they are accessible to low-income households?; (b) What role do advocacy groups play at the state level in setting this agenda? The Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) provides a structure for comparing case studies of Mississippi, Oregon, and Oklahoma advocacy groups and their role in advocating for policies that expand access to farmers' markets. All three states are marked by a lack of direct conflict on the issue, changes driven by shifting federal policies, wide-reaching collaboration within advocacy coalitions, and resource limitations. Lessons of this analysis potentially relevant to other advocacy coalitions include the positive impact of nonprofits dedicated to specific policy areas, active collaboration between nonprofits and state agencies expands access and increases awareness, and a diverse range of advocate groups leads to practical solutions.

Keywords: Food Insecurity, Food Security, SNAP, Advocacy Coalition Framework, ACF, farmers' markets, advocacy groups

Acknowledgements

This research started with a chance visit to an evening with Slow Food Corvallis, where I was introduced to *Fresh & Local, First* and the concept of Double Up Food Bucks at the local market. Until this point, I was unaware of the local and state efforts to expand access to markets for all incomes. Thank you to each of the advocates and public servants in Mississippi, Oregon, and Oklahoma who took the time to discuss the programs in their respective states. I understand how busy this advocacy work is, especially during this unique time of COVID-19, job loss, and increased food insecurity. I truly appreciate the time each of you took to talk for 45 minutes to two hours about the programs you work tirelessly to support. Finally, a big thank you to my committee members - I greatly appreciate your timely feedback, constructive criticism, and guidance.

Introduction

The Farm-to-Table movement aims to promote direct access to farms, produce, and other food products in the local community. Farmers' markets are an essential component of bridging this gap with local farmers. Often community-run, markets offer consumers fresh fruits, vegetables, and other local food products. These markets demonstrate a direct from farm-to-consumer means of purchasing nutritious food (Crow & Henneberry, 2013). While this movement operates at a very local level, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP, is a large federal program. The United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (USDA FNS) funds SNAP through the Farm Bill, but individual states determine how to administer SNAP within federal guidelines and regulations. This extends to how SNAP is accepted at local farmers' markets in each state.

According to the USDA FNS, 3,400 out of 8,742 farmers' markets in the United States accept SNAP Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) purchases, a 38% acceptance rate nationally (2017). Additionally, SNAP participants spent more than 22.4 million dollars at these markets in 2017, representing millions of dollars directed back into local communities (USDA FNS Strategic Priorities, 2018). Still, the total amount of SNAP dollars spent at farmers' markets remains less than one percent of total SNAP spending. Farmers' markets are generally seen as a way to increase access to nutritious food, benefit the local economy, and improve health outcomes (Wolff, et al. 2019). Public health officials, non-profits, businesses, and government agencies are each involved in expanding access to local and fresh food for all income levels, as either advocates or implementers. Together, these actors encompass a network aimed at reducing

food insecurity. This network represents an intersection of public health, social services, economics, and agriculture.

Because of this cross-section of interests, expanding SNAP access to a broader range of options that include markets is a policy change that appeals to a diverse community of stakeholders: nonprofits, public health representatives, farmers, government representatives. There are shared interests among these actors with potential to form a coalition, cut through partisan beliefs, and advocate for food security policies. Coalitions work to expand access to these markets as a means of providing nutritious food to more households, support local businesses and farmers, and increase direct marketing opportunities. State policies regarding SNAP and markets vary from minimal support, to fully funded wireless terminals, covered transaction fees, and incentive programs offering matching dollars to SNAP customers. The purpose of this research is to address how and why these policies differ from state to state by answering the following questions: (a) What factors influence the level of support states provide to farmers' markets so they are accessible to low-income households?; (b) What role do advocacy groups play at the state level in setting this agenda?

I started this research questioning the variables present in states with more expansive policies; specifically, the role of politics, the strength of agricultural interest groups, and food security movement in each state. One means of understanding how varied state policies occur is through the lens of a public policy theory. The Advocacy Coalition Framework is a theoretical approach to examining how advocacy groups interact to affect policy change. For the application of the ACF in this research, I refer to interest groups and non-profit organizations as advocacy groups. The advocacy coalition expands beyond these groups to include government agencies,

individuals, the media, and educational institutions as applicable in each situation (Weible & Ingold, 2018). The ACF conceptual framework offers a method for comparing and contrasting approaches to SNAP within the context of separate state case studies. State-level case studies of SNAP-related policies at farmers' markets can help identify patterns in where and how access to these farmers' markets varies across regions, raising questions about the efficacies in advocate approaches towards expansion.

The following section provides a background of SNAP policies related to farmers' markets, and descriptions of existing literature researching SNAP use at markets, followed by an explanation of the ACF and the case study analysis. Local level advocacy, strength of markets, and collaboration across agencies each combine to make markets accessible to a broader range of households. The results of this study identify commonalities in the different states for expanding this access.

Background and Literature Review

Before delving into the issue of why broad access to local markets matters, it is helpful to establish a common understanding of hunger in this country. From a policy perspective, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) classifies the state of hunger as being either “food secure” or “food insecure.” A food secure household is defined as having consistent access to, and the ability to pay for food. A food insecure household struggles with regular and affordable access to food. Indicators of a food insecure household include: worry about food shortages or spoiling, inability to afford a balanced meal, skipping meals or reducing portions for longer than three months, constant state of hunger, lost weight, or regularly skipping food for a day (USDA Economic Research Service, 2017). The largest component of the federal policy to bridge the gap from food insecurity to food security is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps. SNAP is funded through the Farm Bill and the USDA, administered by FNS, and reauthorized every five years. In addition to federally funded government programs, food insecurity is battled every day by a wide network of non-profit organizations, schools, and public health institutions. This food security issue network coalesces around the shared belief stated in the FNS mission (FNS, 2020; Hecl, 1978):

Our mission is to increase food security and reduce hunger by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthful diet and nutrition education in a way that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence (FNS 2020).

The first strategic priority listed on the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) homepage is straightforward, “provide Americans with access to nutritious food” (FNS Strategic Priorities, 2018). One such option for accessible and nutritious food is farmers’ markets. For the purposes of this research, I use the USDA definition of a farmers’ market, as well as the USDA unit of

analysis in counting the number of markets in the United States, in which a farmers' market is a market featuring two or more farm vendors selling agricultural products to consumers at a fixed, recurring location (USDA Local Food Directories, 2020). Even though increasingly widespread, farmers' markets are often seen as elite shopping options for middle and upper income households (Schupp, 2016). States and local communities recognize these barriers and subsequent policies are aimed at bridging this gap, both to expand the customer base for farmers and increase access to healthy foods. We can trace the advocacy work for these policies to the initial federal policy aimed at supporting local farmers.

In 1976, the Farmer-to-Consumer Direct Marketing Act provided state agencies incentive to support innovative or new ways of supporting local small to mid-sized farmers. The result was increased growth of farmers' market programs in states across the country (Winne, 2008).

Explanations for the bill emphasized this focus on farmers:

“Direct marketing can improve the markets of and financial returns to farmers, assist the economic viability of small-scale farmers, and improve the quality and reduce the cost of foods to consumers.” (H.R.10339)

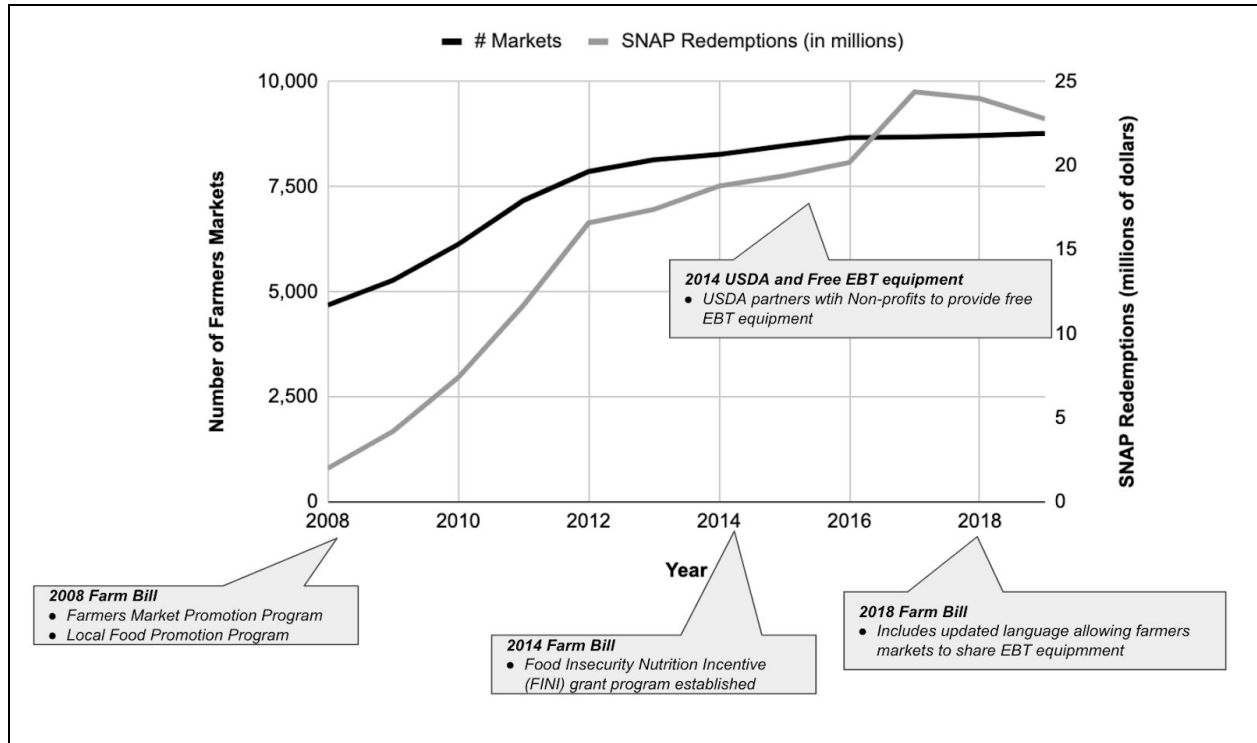
“Shall provide that funds appropriated to carry out this section be utilized by State departments of agriculture and the Extension Service of the USDA for the purpose of conducting or facilitating activities which will initiate, encourage, develop, or coordinate methods of direct marketing from farmers to consumers within or among States.” (ibid.)

The activities referenced in the bill included sponsoring conferences, laws and regulations to establish methods of direct marketing, and providing technical assistance to those interested in pursuing farmer-to-consumer direct marketing. Statements in favor of the bill repeatedly cited supporting small farmers, assisting with their marketing knowledge, establishing direct marketing facilities. The overwhelming focus of the Farmer-to-Consumer Direct Marketing Act

was the economic impact for small to mid-sized farmers, and putting money directly into the pockets of farmers and producers through roadside stands, farmers' markets, and direct sales from farmers. But it also repeatedly mentions the benefits to consumers as well, and the potential for higher quality food at a lower cost. After the bill was passed, the USDA was authorized to work directly with farmers and local activists to increase market growth across the country.

Since 1976, one of the issues farmers' markets and advocacy groups grappled with is how to expand and reach a broad consumer base that includes low-income families. Expanding SNAP at farmers' markets is a policy that traditionally appeals to opposite sides of the social services debate – supporting both local farmers in agricultural communities as well as low-income families. The number of markets grew in the 1980s, from under one thousand in 1976 to over two thousand markets by 2001 (Brown, 2001). By 2008, there were 4,685 markets, according to the USDA. Figure 1 shows the rise in the number of farmers' markets since 2008, along with the number of SNAP redemptions at markets during the same time period.

Figure 1. Number of Farmers Markets and SNAP Redemptions, Overlaid with Major Federal Policies and Legislation



NOTE. Data are from USDA, Economic Research Service using data from USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service, Farmers’ Market Surveys and National Count of Farmers’ Market Directory (2019).

In response to the economic downturn, the 2008 Farm Bill included provisions to expand market access. During this time period, the SNAP redemptions grew at a greater rate, partly due to increased SNAP enrollment with The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (USDA SNAP Provisions, 2009). In an effort to augment federal policies, and even match them, individual states and advocates continue to assess additional ways to expand access to markets, bolstered by the Federal policies outlined in the Farm Bill. These include: (a) Technology: Contracts with vendors for free, wireless terminals at authorized markets and transaction fees; (b) Funding: Double food bucks incentive programs; (c) Awareness: Marketing and education campaigns drawing shoppers to markets and making farmers’ aware of SNAP options (Briggs, Fisher, Lott, Miller, & Tessman, 2010).

The current literature regarding food insecurity and farmers' markets examines the implementation of wireless terminals at markets in order to accept SNAP Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards, frequency of use at markets, and the shopping patterns of SNAP participants (Finneran, 2014; Misyak, Serrano, McFerren, & Johnson, 2014; Schupp, 2017; MDAC, 2020). In case studies, overall farmers' market sales, not just SNAP specific, increase significantly after terminals are implemented (Bertmann, Ohri-Vachaspati, Buman, & Wharton, 2012). Some states offer farmers' markets free wireless terminals, or subsidize the cost of terminals, as a means of increasing SNAP participation at markets as well as market revenue for local farmers. Other states have gone a step further through a blanket contract with EBT wireless terminal vendors (Farmers Market Coalition, 2019).

One of the critical factors necessary to expand the use of SNAP at farmers' markets is the availability of electronic transfer payment technology to process EBT payments. Recognizing this, the USDA began providing farmers' markets the equipment to process SNAP transactions in 2012 (USDA 2019). As the number of farmers' markets accepting SNAP increased, so did the number of SNAP redemptions (FNS 2015). The 2014 Farm Bill included provisions intended to promote SNAP at farmers' markets. One of these was the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) program - recently renamed the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP). The USDA contracted with the Farmers Market Coalition to administer the new equipment to farmers' markets (FMC 2019). This equipment program precipitated increased enrollment of markets and farmers participating in SNAP programs, as shown in Figure 1. As the USDA and states included EBT equipment, education, and incentive programs in the Farm Bill to support accessibility to farmers' markets, SNAP redemption increased with the growing number of

markets in the last decade. The SNAP redemption decline in Figure 1 coincides with an overall decline in the share of population receiving SNAP since 2018. This can be attributed, in part, to overall improvement in the economy, and Federal changes to SNAP policy related to waivers for Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD). It may also reflect national and state-level policies and practices, some of which will be discussed in this paper (Rosenbaum and Keith-Jennings, 2019).

Many states and markets support SNAP by further supplementing benefits to increase the purchasing power of recipients that benefit the farmers serving the markets. For example, in Oregon there are a series of local programs called Double Up Food Bucks (or SNAP Match); in California a similar program is called Market Match. This program also exists in Oklahoma, with Double Up Oklahoma, and Mississippi, with Double Up Food Bucks. However, funding for some of these programs comes from irregular federal grants, local grants, and non-profit fundraising efforts. SNAP incentive funding was initially realized on a larger scale after the inclusion of the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grant in the 2014 Farm Bill. The FINI grant establishes funding for states to provide additional resources at markets, including Double Up Food Bucks and free wireless terminals, or help fund other practices with the intent of expanding access to food for low-income families. Advocacy groups in each state work to raise funding and awareness to fill the gaps partially filled by the FINI grants (Steele-Adjognon and Weatherspoon, 2017).

In states, these advocacy groups, or nonprofit organizations, work alongside government agencies in marketing campaigns, training programs, and research aimed at reducing food insecurity (Edwards, 2012). This is actualized through SNAP-ed programs run by nonprofits and

affiliated with state university extension offices, incentive programs staffed through market managers and affiliated nonprofits, and equipment training through state departments' of agriculture, human services, and advocacy groups at the national and state level (FMC 2020). This close partnership and collaboration between government and nonprofits is a component of policy advocacy and change. One means of understanding and measuring this across states is through the lens of the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF). The ACF provides an underlying foundation for analyzing the policy process within states leading to farmers' market support, or lack thereof.

A Framework for Understanding Policy Change

As a conceptual tool, the ACF lays out a method for understanding the process of implementing policies at the state level and it can be further used to compare how policy advocacy differs across states. The ACF helps explain punctuations of change in a state, but it also can highlight why there may be stasis and a lack of major policy change. Alliances within the policy subsystem form to advance specific policy agendas, and they are often long-term alliances - as with farmers' market organizations, hunger-related advocacy, university extensions, agriculture interests, and human services. These groups interact at the belief system and policy belief levels. When it comes to food security, they not only advocate for change, but also fill direct roles impacting food security at the street-level. The interactions often occur within four main categories: forums, stimuli, conflict between coalitions, and actors.

Jenkins-Smith, Nohrstedt, Weible, and Ingold (2017) define *forums* as the venue in which the coalitions "interact, debate, and possibly negotiate." Interaction occurs through consistent collaboration, working partnerships, and an openness to learning across the coalition. In some

states, forums are realized in committees, working groups, and annual conferences. At a micro-level, partnerships may exist in the form of contracts between state agencies and nonprofits to train, market, and assist markets or farmers directly with equipment. The extent to which individual state agencies coordinate with nonprofit organizations or advocacy groups, and the role of state legislators in working with these groups for funding, contracts, or subject-matter expertise is another example of the role of forums in helping the interests of farmers, food security advocacy groups, and farmers' market organizations affect policy change. The level of coordination may ebb and flow based on events or rising needs within a state.

External or internal events, leading to policy-oriented learning and change, comprise the second attribute of ACF, *stimuli*. The aforementioned forums may not exist without the role of stimuli. Previous research characterizes stimuli as learning across coalitions and exposure to new data and information (Smith & Larimer, 2017). For SNAP policies at the state level, this can expand to USDA policies and changing regulations, economic realities in each state, or political changes. Each of these creates a window for a policy change - or an opening for a forum to identify potential solutions through policy. In 2008 and 2009, this was the recession. In 2014

The third characteristic of ACF is the presence of *conflict between coalitions*. Depending on the presence of conflict related to SNAP expansion in a state, and the predominance of farmers' markets, there may be a low, moderate, or high level of conflict. This conflict can lead to policy-oriented learning across coalitions (ibid.). Competing views increases the likelihood of active and public debate about policies impacting an issue, like hunger. Combined with external events such as the economy or new federal policies, the frequency or intensity of these discussions can create a policy window for change.

The fourth characteristic, or attribute of ACF, is *actors*. Actors are portrayed through the presence of specific advocacy for belief systems. The role of network contacts and interaction across networks is a description of actors. Strategies describing a plan for policy change are a part of this category. With social policy, the presence of resources is a potential avenue for actors to impact - either a lack of money, personnel, and time to support policies, or a strategic effort to bring resources to bear. An actor may be a policy broker, leader, or representative from academia, public sector, private sector, or elected official. Policy brokers may facilitate communication across issue networks and coalitions, particularly when it comes to competing belief systems.

ACF components of forums, stimuli, conflict, and policy actors provide a structure for coding and comparing the case studies and interview results. How do each of these ACF components apply within the context of SNAP and farmers’ markets? Table 1 lists these four themes aligned with core concepts of the ACF.

Table 1. Advocacy Coalition Framework Components and Characteristics

| Advocacy Coalition Framework | |
|---|---|
| <p>Forums Venues where coalitions interact, debate, and renegotiate.</p> | <p>Stimuli Cross-coalition learning, types of experiences and information coalition actors are exposed to.</p> |
| <p>Conflict between coalitions The extent to which actors perceive a threat to their core beliefs.</p> | <p>Actors Belief system, resources, strategies, and network contacts.</p> |

ACF helps explain the relationships between the actors involved in the shaping of policy. It is an expansion of the traditional view of the iron triangle and can include journalists, analysts, researchers (Jenkins-Smith, Silva, Gupta, & Ripberger, 2014). The ACF recognizes the influence

of beliefs in interest group activities, and posits that policy change can occur as a result of stimuli through learning and events, facilitating change in advocacy coalition influence (Tosun and Workman, 2017). The impact of belief systems on policy change is at the core of the relationships among interest groups and stakeholders--but learning does not always result in changes to beliefs.

Jenkins-Smith et al. (2014) describe the fundamental, or immovable, belief as a *core belief*. Core beliefs represent basic values, too deep, and unlikely, to change. In the case of food security policy, these beliefs would be the concepts of individualism versus a collective social safety net. Core beliefs of actors guide decisions about how wide-reaching SNAP, WIC, and other nutrition programs should be and the level of funding needed through the federal government; some core beliefs eschew this social safety net to begin with, in favor of market economics and support through charities. Outside of core beliefs, *policy core beliefs* are one step closer to collaboration and establishing relationships in a coalition. Policy core beliefs apply to any specific areas or subsystems, such as how to address food security - either at the national, state, or local level. They are resistant to change, but not as immobile as core beliefs. Lastly, *secondary beliefs* can be adjusted or swayed based on solid tactics and strategies (ibid.). These beliefs influence specific policy changes, especially collaboration and partnerships across networks. Secondary beliefs are best defined as the tactics for implementing policy core belief strategies. Within ACF, secondary beliefs are most susceptible to change, especially when bolstered by stimuli such as federal policies and the economy. Coalitions initially form around shared core belief systems, but can expand to include shared policy and secondary beliefs. The

diverse nature of the coalitions in this research demonstrate this expansion towards specific policies.

The following sections of this paper first discuss the methods of how the ACF is applied, with a high level comparison of the states within the broader national context of SNAP expansion at farmers' markets, and an introduction to the case studies. After this explanation of the methods, I describe each case study separately - Oregon, Oklahoma, and Mississippi - followed by analysis of their similarities and differences.

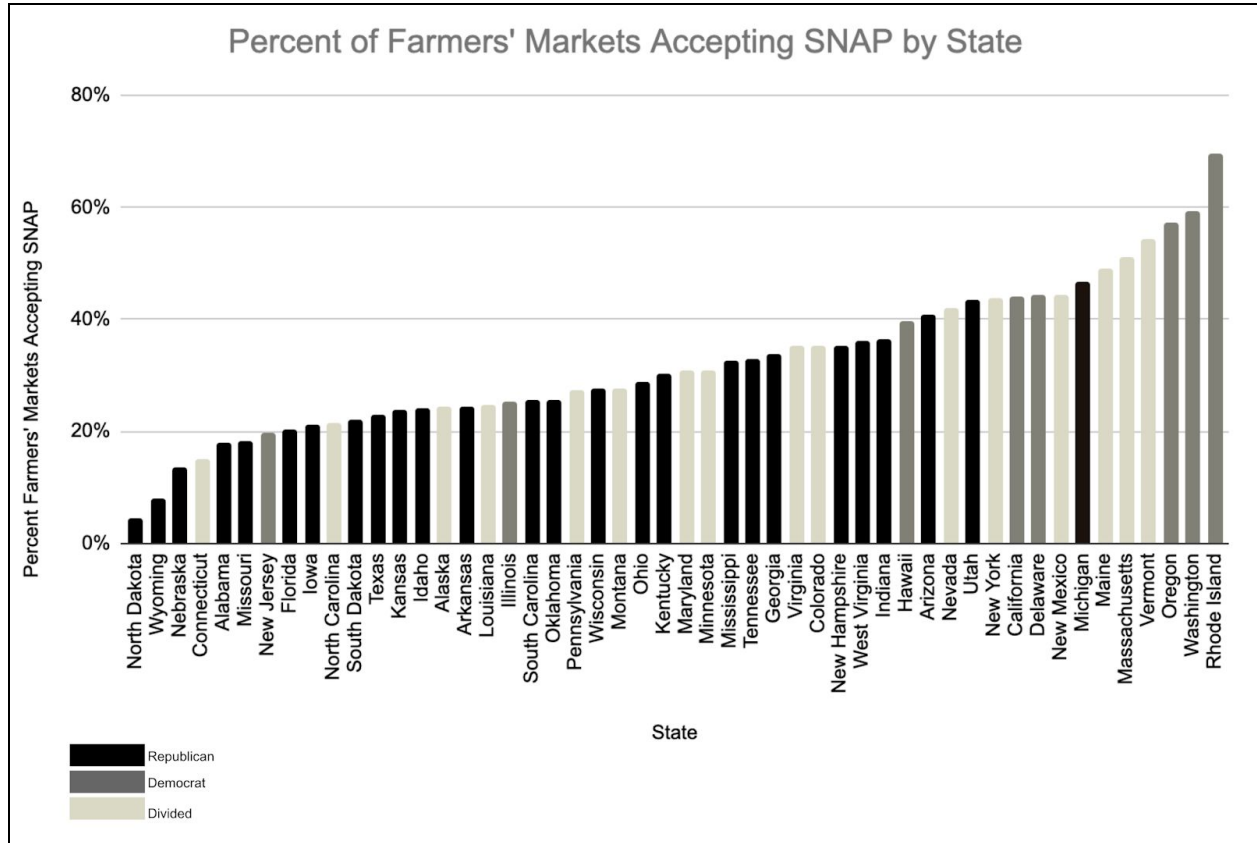
Methods and Data

This research uses a combination of policy analysis and semi-structured interviews coded within the ACF context. One of the first steps involved identifying the attributes of SNAP at markets, and the basic values present in each state. As a part of ACF, I map the subsystem actors and identify the coalitions involved in this advocacy work developing an updated version of the "iron triangle" (Smith & Larimer, 2017). For each state, the policy change hypotheses in ACF assist in drafting questions for the various advocacy organizations and state actors. The research method involved a three-pronged approach, using organizations as the basic unit of analysis: (a) Policy analysis: Identify federal and state policies impacting SNAP expansion at markets; (b) Case study: Compare state agricultural and market data, and policies and select specific case studies for analysis; (c) Semi-structured interviews: Interview farmers' market, food security advocates, and public servants in each of the case studies.

Figure 2 groups states based on data from the USDA website. It demonstrates the disparities across states in the rate of SNAP acceptance at markets. Previous research and analysis points to the positive impact farmers' markets have on the local community. They

provide local employment, support small to medium farmers, and improve sales for the surrounding community (Henneberry, Whitacre, & Agustini, 2009). Policies which impact an expansion of the customer base in these markets could be viewed as additional means of expanding access and overall benefits to the community in which they operate.

Figure 2. Comparison of States



NOTE. Data are from USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service (2019).

For each state, I first compared basic state data and policies related to farmers’ markets (USDA, 2020; FMC, 2020). I chose one state from three different regions of the country; Oregon on the West coast, Oklahoma from the Midwest, and Mississippi in the Southeast. I initially selected these states based on policies, but also took into consideration demographics and census results. All three states have a population density below the national median: Mississippi has a

population density of 63.4%, Oregon's population density is 43.9%, and Oklahoma's population density is 57.7% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). As of the Decennial Census in 2010, Oregon has a higher percentage of the total population in urban areas, at 81%, followed by Oklahoma at 66.2% and Mississippi at 49.4% (Iowa Community Indicators Program, 2020). None of these states represents an extreme - the state with the highest percentage of farmers' markets accepting SNAP is Rhode Island and the state with the lowest is North Dakota. Mississippi and Oklahoma each have a high number of food insecure households, while Oregon's food insecurity is lower than average.

With over 15% food insecure households, Mississippi has one of the highest rates of food insecurity. Meanwhile, agricultural sector output is between that of Oregon and Oklahoma (USDA NASS, 2017). The total number of farms in the state is close to Oregon's total, 34,988 in the former and 37,616 in the latter. Mississippi's SNAP acceptance rate at farmers' markets, the percentage of markets accepting SNAP benefits, is the national median. This is higher than the acceptance rate of some states with divided state governments and Democratic governors. From a partisan perspective, Mississippi's advocacy and SNAP acceptance rate stand out. The state's Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) and Department of Human Services (MDHS) actively promote, educate, and train markets to receive and operate wireless terminals through the USDA's program.

Unlike Mississippi, Oregon's gubernatorial office and legislature are both Democratic. While Oregon does not offer free wireless terminals and no cost transactions through a state contract, there is a high rate of SNAP acceptance at farmers' markets, as well as an active movement for policy change and SNAP incentive programs (Oregon Food Bank, 2019). Over

57% of farmers' markets in Oregon accept SNAP. What does the advocacy coalition in Oregon look like and how has it operated leading to this high rate of acceptance and some unique state policies in support of markets, yet no committed contract to wireless terminals as in Oklahoma?

Oklahoma boasts a contract to provide free, wireless terminals and no transaction fees to farmers' markets. As a state with a consistently Republican legislature and governor, Oklahoma's targeted policy seemed at odds with a policy belief system expected within the state. At the same time, there are 78,531 farms in the state of Oklahoma, the fifth largest among states (USDA NASS 2017). The number of food insecure households in Oklahoma rank among the highest (ibid). Yet the acceptance rate of SNAP at markets is low, especially compared to Oregon. How exactly do these variables converge in this state and impact advocacy related to food insecurity and farmers' markets?

I collected additional state-specific information from state advocacy group websites, press releases, and academic journals. After this initial analysis of information, I contacted relevant state agencies and advocacy groups. I identified 19 contacts through USDA, state, and agency websites. In the end, I interviewed seven total -- two in Mississippi, two in Oregon, and three in Oklahoma. Other respondents recommended three of the seven participants, a form of snowball sampling. For both Mississippi and Oklahoma, I was able to interview one public servant, and one to two advocates. In Oregon, I was limited to only advocacy group representatives as no state representatives responded to requests for interviews.

These interviews and questions focus on organization-level, not individual, views, this does not mean I could completely control for personal bias (Appendix A, Interview Questions). All personal information, including organization names, remains confidential. Each interview

was 45 minutes to two hours. The interview participants provided insight into the processes, belief systems, and challenges associated with implementing SNAP-related policies for farmers’ markets in their respective states. Upon interview completion, I use deductive coding with an ACF coding reference table to analyze interview results. The primary codes in Table 2 use predetermined and emerging themes relevant in the framework (Cresswell, 2018); each sub-code helps further identify recurring themes prevalent in literature. These codes are derived from assumptions and pathways inherent in ACF, as described by Jenkins-Smith, et al. (2017).

Table 2. ACF Primary Codes

| Code | Definition | Sub-codes | Definition |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|
| Forums | Venues where coalitions interact, debate, and renegotiate. | Partnerships Collaboration Degrees of openness | Learning across states, collaborative process |
| | | Norms of conduct | Process for change |
| Conflict between coalitions | The extent to which actors perceive a threat to their core beliefs. | Opposing views | Partisan differences |
| | | Cross-coalition learning | Learning from other states, advocacy groups |
| Stimuli | Cross-coalition learning, types of experiences and information coalition actors are exposed to. | Targeted Policies | Specific policies aimed at increasing access to markets |
| | | Political Disagreement | Partisan differences |
| Actors | Belief system, resources, strategies, and network contacts. | Belief system | Core beliefs regarding access to food, policies |
| | | Network contacts | Interaction across networks |
| | | Strategies | Systematic approach towards policy change |
| | | Resources | Lack of enough workers and limited resources |

I coded responses to each interview question based on the type and number of observations of ACF themes in the responses. I finalized my coding with peer review of the same interviews, comparing the peer feedback to confirm my initial analysis. These themes are repeatable when comparing all three states. The sub-codes are emerging codes based on prevalent themes in literature, ACF, and the initial interview. Each sub-code assists with identifying recurring themes across state and federal actions and policies. To confirm validity of this research, I corroborated evidence through the media, previous research, and state records. As a part of the interview process, I chose to seek participant feedback by providing participants with a copy of the coded transcripts for feedback. None of the participants provided feedback or requested changes.

The next section outlines each of the three case studies: Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Oregon. Because there are very real differences across the states, as well as similarities, I present each state independently in order to more completely capture participant narratives. Following the individual case studies, I address the similarities and differences between the states.

Case Studies: Mississippi, Oregon, Oklahoma

This study uses USDA data from 2017 to 2020 to compare baseline information from each state. Because there are different units of measurement between state data and federal data related to farmers markets, using USDA measurements across the states controls for this variance between data sets and compares the states at a specific point in time. Mississippi, Oregon, and Oklahoma each represent different regions of the country, with opposing political climates, agriculture sectors, and food security challenges. But one element they share is expansive SNAP policies related to farmers’ markets. These are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3. State Policies Related to SNAP and Farmers’ Markets

| State | Policies |
|-------------|--|
| Mississippi | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SNAP Incentives: Double Up Food Bucks (grants) ● Free wireless terminals and transaction fees covered ● No cost EBT only Point of Sale equipment |
| Oregon | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SNAP Incentives: Double Up Food Bucks (\$1.5 million legislative funding and grants) |
| Oklahoma | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Free wireless EBT terminals and transaction fees covered ● Program support (training and technical assistance) is provided through various state food banks ● SNAP Incentives: Double Up Food Bucks (grants) |

NOTE: Data are from the Mississippi Department of Human Services Retailer Farm Bill (2014); and the Farmers Market Coalition (2020).

These three states are a small sample of SNAP-related policies impacting farmers' markets across the country, but they highlight many of the issues that other states may face. What common factors made the difference in policy implementations in Mississippi, Oklahoma and Oregon? Are there other policies, programs, or partnerships influencing each state's approach to SNAP and markets?

Mississippi Case Study

In a list of 50 states, Mississippi is close to the median with 32.5% of markets accepting SNAP based on USDA data from 2020 (USDA, 2020). Mississippi is one of 19 states offering free wireless terminals to interested markets and vendors through the USDA (FMC, 2019). The agricultural sector output in the state is 6.2 Billion Dollars, ranked 17th in the Nation in 2018 (USDA, 2019). While Mississippi ranks near the median in agricultural sector output, number of farms, and SNAP acceptance at markets, it is in the top five states with food insecure households. Within the state, 15.9% of households are considered food insecure (USDA, 2018). Because of this, Mississippi is frequently a part of research and studies related to food security, poverty, and advocacy (Broad et al., 2010).

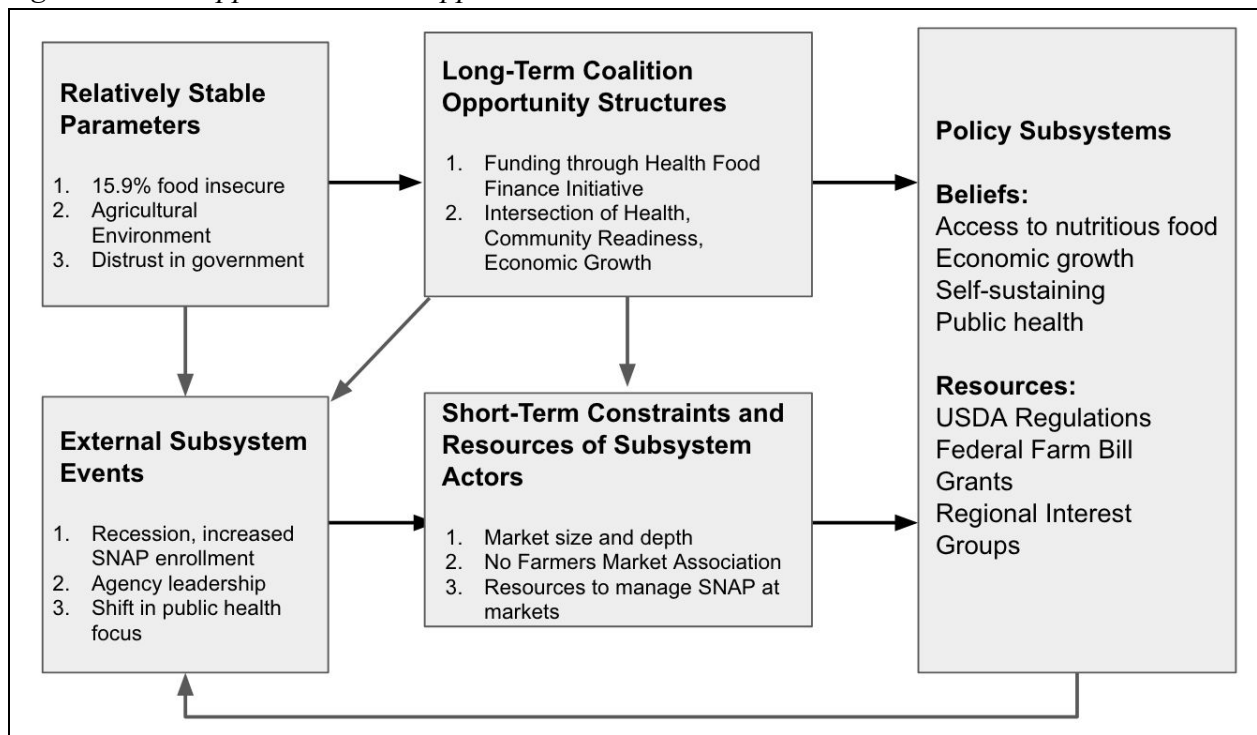
One striking aspect of the subsystem in Mississippi is the role of agriculture and commerce in social benefit programs. There is no Farmers Market Association in Mississippi, and the Department of Agriculture implements policy related to farmers markets, expanding access to fresh and local food, and creating opportunities for Mississippi farmers to sell to a broader range of consumers and low-income households. The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) accomplishes this through work in three main food security

areas, the Women, Infants, and Children Farmers Market Nutrition Program (WIC FMNP), the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, and SNAP (MDAC, 2020).

MDAC acts as a bridge between farmers and food insecure households in coordination with MDHS and advocacy groups in the state. This research focuses specifically on the SNAP-related aspect of expanding access to markets. MDAC works with markets and MDHS to coordinate training and access to the SNAP EBT equipment offered at no cost by the state.

Figure 3 is an ACF visualization of the parameters, events, and subsystem elements impacting this advocacy work within Mississippi.

Figure 3. ACF Applied to Mississippi



The parameters of over 15% food insecure, a strong agriculture environment, and an overall trend of distrust in government have maintained stability over the last decade. The core

beliefs in Mississippi are reflected in the state politics of a Republican Governorship and Congress:

“The environment in Mississippi is to prevent too much involvement of the government in daily life. The conservative politics have an impact.” - MS 2

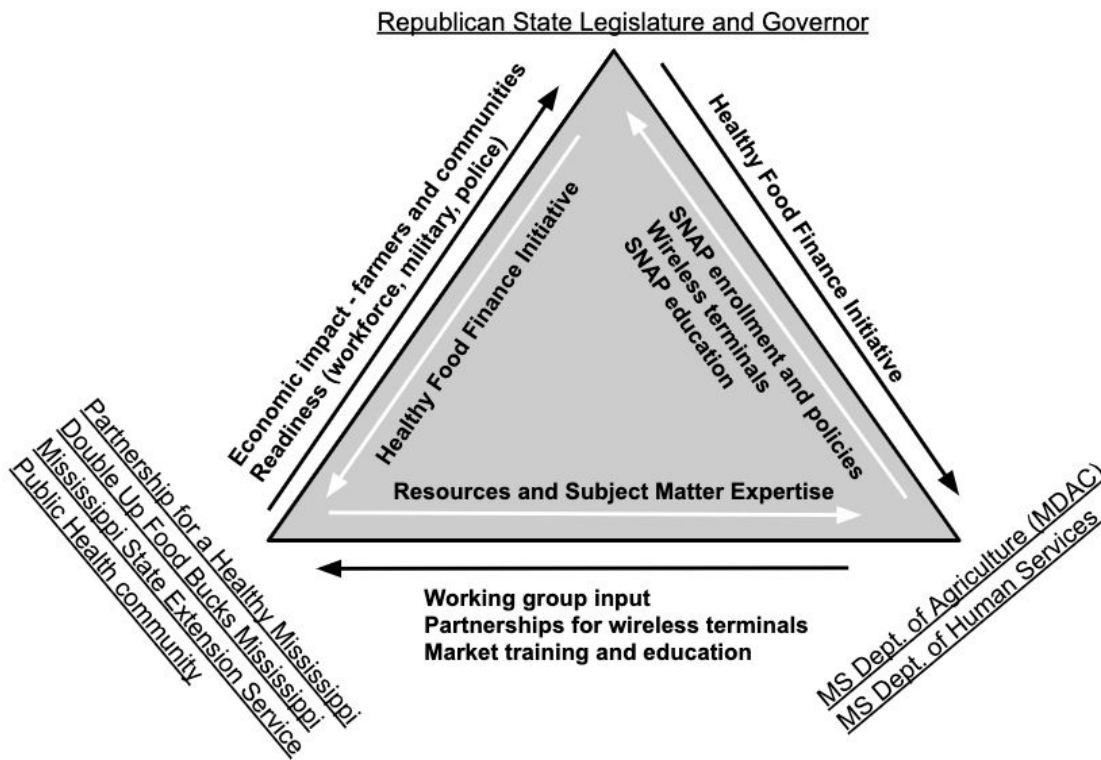
Externally, pressure is applied through economic downturns impacting the state overall, and shifts in policy foci. Even though the core belief system is stable, policy beliefs and secondary beliefs of how to support the most vulnerable in the state are subject to change based on changing leadership, federal funding opportunities, and advocacy work. This remains a relatively stable parameter. Food insecurity is accompanied by other socioeconomic factors related to health, education, and housing.

The foundational coalition dealing with food insecurity in the state also works closely with MDAC, MDHS, and other advocacy groups tasked with impacting related policies. This coalition of organizations coordinating in the state’s policy subsystem is one of the foundations of the ACF.

A coalition within the context of subsystems in public policy consists of advocacy groups, government representatives, agencies, the media, and other interested organizations. Mississippi’s coalition within the context of the food security subsystem is an example of this overlap related to policies and issues related to social services and the economy. With no Farmers’ Market Association, the role of advocacy for markets and farmers shifts to the MDAC. MDHS implements these policies and assists in educating SNAP recipients of where and how to spend their SNAP dollars. One of the largest pieces of this coalition is the activity and role of interest, or advocacy groups, primarily non-profit organizations.

Understanding farmers market policies in Mississippi requires a look at the complete food security subsystem and the coalition favoring SNAP expansion within the context of food security. The diagram in Figure 4 is an adaptation of the “iron triangle” displaying how the issue of SNAP and farmers’ markets policies intersect at the state level in Mississippi (Rhodes 2006). The network demonstrates consistent interaction within the coalition between advocacy groups, state government, and state-level agencies. This revolving system includes working groups, partnerships, lobbying for funding, and policy implementation. It is not necessarily driven by the legislature, but they can create the favorable conditions for funding to address food insecurity, as with the Mississippi Small Business and Grocer Investment Act (H.B. 1328), with buy-in and lobbying from advocacy groups and action from MDAC and MDHS.

Figure 4. Mississippi ACF Flow Diagram



In Mississippi, the public health community and non-profits like the Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi, originally formed with tobacco settlement funds to address public health issues in the state, open the door to keep the conversation about food insecurity active. One means of effective issue-shaping is framing food and hunger in Mississippi through the lens of the economy, either as economic development or readiness for the job market. When asked about belief systems, advocate responses included:

“We try to find ways to tie back to what they [legislators] are interested in: 1. Military 2. Law enforcement 3. Work force.” - MS 2

“The way we got the bill passed for the Mississippi Grocers Task Force is we framed the entire issue as economic development. We didn’t really talk about food insecurity or a food desert.” - MS 2

“But the biggest conversation is “will this help the farmers sell more, will the markets gain more customers.” - MS 1

This approach to policy-oriented learning takes the advocacy group belief of access for all to regular, nutritious food, and frames it in a way that appeals to the core beliefs of those with opposing views about the role of government in food insecurity, by highlighting the essential workforce roles in the state. Expanding the issue and gaining traction continues across the coalition with the focus on economic development.

A key characteristic of policy change, particularly in dynamic communities with competing beliefs is policy learning. Policy learning can occur in collaborative settings like working groups and committees within and across coalitions (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2017). Policy learning can also occur due to stimuli, or an external event impacting the local community such as increased enrollment in SNAP due to a recession, or a federal grant like the FINI grant to expand access to markets.

The forums, or venues, for interaction in Mississippi are working groups, committees, and partnerships. Both of the participants discussed collaboration across state lines with other Southeastern states, including Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama. There is a general sharing of ideas and information, or cross-coalition learning regarding how best to expand access to farmers' markets, improve nutrition, and reduce food insecurity. This occurs with other advocacy groups, for example Feeding the Gulf Coast, and at regional conferences like the Southern Obesity Summit. Most discussions occur independent of legislators and elected officials, taking place within the non-profit community and involved state agency personnel or with local communities.

"Years ago, we started a food policy council. The council did affect policy and got healthy food financing. They changed some policies so county governments could appropriate for farmers' markets. They were instrumental in getting nutrition education done...They applied for a small grant and brought me in to talk about areas where I could see a market develop. One example was a community that had just lost its grocery store, and they worked hard to get that market up and running. Mixed results, but one lady in that town took it upon herself to open her own grocery store. Now it is a process of getting her resources to figure out a food chain. The partnership was instrumental in getting a farmers' market in that community and also helping that lady. That is an example of how we work together with the non-profits." -MS 1

"A lot of these issues are addressed at this summit [Southern Obesity Summit]. The summit focuses on 16 contiguous states from New Mexico to West Virginia. A lot of similarities in these states - conservative, not a lot of money, high poverty, high obesity. We come together and share ideas. This is all a part of the Texas Health Initiative. We are hoping, with the Farm Bill reauthorization, we can be a collective voice. You get to see wonderful ideas in other states." - MS 2

Mississippi state politics have been framed by beliefs and ideals focusing on free-market solutions, with both a Republican Governor and Congress since 2012. Given ideological positions against SNAP expansion, I anticipated the language of conflicting and opposing views

to be more prominent in these discussions. While this was discussed within the context of funding and state priorities for the legislative agenda, there is no active opposition to expanding SNAP at farmers' markets. One of the responses summed up the challenge, saying:

"In Mississippi, it is not a matter of policy, but a matter of capacity and resources, which go hand in hand." - MS 1

Capacity refers to markets large enough to appeal to a broad range of shopping needs. Resources refers to the volunteer base, market oversight, and administrators to manage SNAP at markets. MDAC and MDHC do face the uncertainty of shifting priorities when new directors are appointed by the governor. The biggest challenge along ideological lines may lie among long-time farmers themselves, cautious of SNAP, wireless systems, and the tracking tied to accepting these forms of payment.

"Trying to encourage farmers to be more business minded. Farmers want to farm, the business end trips them up. Figuring out ways to streamline the business end, provide technical assistance, cooperatives to assist farmers." - MS 2

The lack of prioritization can also be seen in fewer resources or funded legislation to educate about and expand access to farmers' markets.

"The farmers markets really need to be a centralized market. This goes back to the capacity issue of farmers markets being able to operate the equipment and the program." - MS 1

In Mississippi, there is more awareness of the unique challenges associated with food insecurity today than a decade ago. This is partly due to increased marketing campaigns at the federal and state level through the USDA, MDHS, and social media, but also targeted education at schools and in local communities. The 2008 Recession is an example of external stimuli (Gritter 2018). More expansive USDA policies increasing SNAP access, and funding grants for

farmers markets accompanied the Farm Bill for almost a decade after the recession. The FINI grant from 2014 - 2017 funded Double Up Food Bucks in Mississippi. Eligible markets also received free wireless EBT terminals during this time. Mississippi, in coordination with the USDA, still provides these terminals to farmers' markets as a means of expanding access for SNAP recipients at markets. Double Up Food Bucks continues to be funded through grants.

The attributes of actors, belief systems, network contacts, strategies, and resources are the most frequently mentioned in interviews. Both organizations are connectors, bringing networks together, reaching out within the community to identify needs and fill gaps to increase food security. They perform these duties under a shared belief system, advocated for primarily by nonprofits:

“So you can see the need, you can appreciate the need, but the public health community, especially the non-profits, they are the ones waving the flag and taking the lead because agencies can't do anything with the legislature anyway.”
- MS 2

While the language of food security from an advocacy standpoint across the coalition focuses on the economy, the core beliefs remain consistent with making sure every household and individual maintains food security and access to nutritious food. The policy beliefs open the door for change and action based on stimuli and learning.

Policies impacting food security and farmers' markets in Mississippi are not marked by high conflict. When the Federal government opens a window to more funding and resources for the state, Mississippi takes advantage of these services to support the most vulnerable. Advocacy groups within the state collaborate with state agencies and the public sector to continue expanding access to nutritious food for the low income population, but at a more moderate pace. Without the stimuli of a recession, as in 2008, or other external event, the political will to make

these changes is largely absent. Because of this, advocacy groups step in to fill the void, coordinating their own conferences and meetings, in which state agency representatives are invited to participate.

Oregon Case Study

The SNAP acceptance rate at Oregon's farmers' markets is 57%, third highest in the nation behind Rhode Island and Washington (USDA, 2020). From 2016-2018, Oregon was just below the national average of 12.3% food insecure households. Of the three states in this research, Oregon is the only state with a Democratic majority in both houses of the legislature and a Democrat as governor. Yet, Oregon's advocates for SNAP at farmers' markets work within a far less broad coalition, compared to that of Mississippi. The biggest distinguishing factor in Oregon, compared to other states in this study is the existence of a farmers' market association and farmers' market-focused advocacy through the Oregon Farmers' Market Association (OFMA) and the Farmers' Market Fund (FMF). OFMA and FMF are key components of the coalition in Oregon.

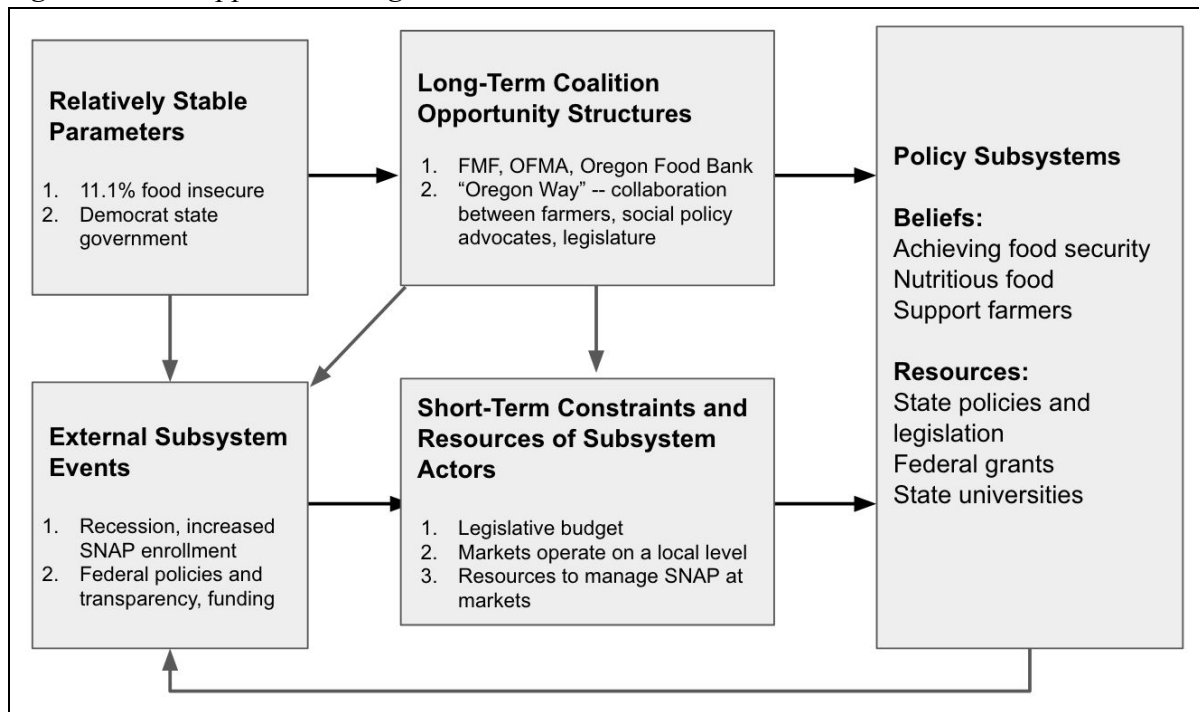
“There is no government employee here in Oregon (unlike other states) whose job responsibilities include supporting farmers markets through the complicated process of obtaining SNAP authorization with FNS and getting their operations up and running.” - OR 1

“The coalition of folks advocating on behalf of this bill was led by Oregon Food Bank and FMF, but also included OFMA, PACSAC (Portland Area CSA Coalition) and the American Heart Association.” -OR 1

“OFMA has been an all volunteer board for about 30 years and they just got their first staff in the last few years. Having that extra capacity and having someone who is really smart and skilled in that role has, maybe, helped ways for this to be a supportive policy environment for farmers' markets. I think that has helped. All the changes at the federal level that are making SNAP more restrictive--there is a push and pull.” -OR 2

From 2014 to 2017, the federal government awarded Oregon a FINI Grant, partially funding the Double Up Food Bucks program. When the grant ended, advocates and markets covered costs through local nonprofits and grants, while continuing to speak to state legislators regarding more consistent funding. Most recently, the Oregon legislature allocated \$1.5 million for Double Up Food Bucks programming across the state (Maluski 2019). Advocates primarily led this charge in Oregon, specifically targeting policies at the legislative level. Figure 5 is an ACF visualization of the parameters, events, and subsystem elements impacting this advocacy work within Oregon.

Figure 5. ACF Applied to Oregon



The long-term coalition opportunities in Oregon, specific to farmers’ markets, involve the ongoing advocacy and prevalent role of the Oregon Farmers’ Market Association (OFMA) and the Farmers Market Fund (FMF), coordinating with hunger relief organizations like the Oregon Food Bank.

Mississippi advocates speak of the role MDAC and MDHS play in a partnership to lower food insecurity in the state. But, in Oregon, these responsibilities are focused among the nonprofit organizations dedicated to farmers' markets. The OFMA, Farmers' Market Fund (FMF), Oregon Food Bank, and Oregon Farm Bureau teamed up to lobby for state legislation in favor of market accessibility. Their mutual efforts coalesce around the belief in helping families and farmers:

"I can only definitively speak for my own organizations, but one of our organizational values, which I believe is shared by all of our partners is this: access to fresh, nutritious food is a basic human right." - OR 1

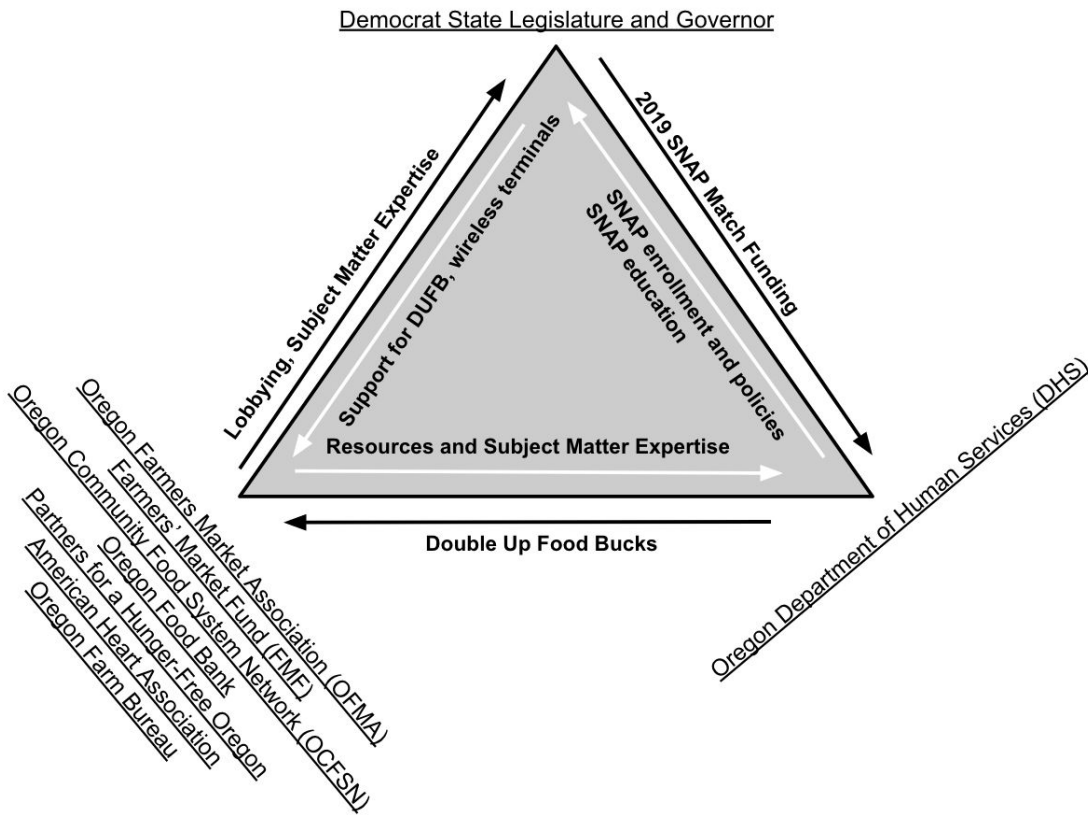
"There are lots of great talking points we have for these programs, but they boil down to: Good for farmers. Good for families." - OR 1

This idea of "Good for farmers. Good for families" brings together the Oregon Farm Bureau, Oregon Food Bank, FMF, and OFMA.

"Part of what makes the collaboration successful is different partners bring specific areas of focus that pertain to their direct work. OFMA really cares about farmers' markets and their success. OFB is focused more on the anti-hunger lens, AHA is really focused on health and nutrition, Oregon Family Farmers care a lot about farmers making money. So I think that the program was successful because it could pull together a lot of different partners who were strongly connected to specific pieces of the mission. Everyone, I think, wants people to have access to food and support small farmers." - OR 2

Figure 4 displays the exchange of information, learning, and partnerships within the state, with the weight of the coalition and work within the advocacy groups themselves.

Figure 6. Oregon ACF Flow Diagram



Rather than a secondary belief structure, OFMA and the FMF place importance on access to local foods for low-income families and both organizations advocate for broad access to the local food network. Their collaboration occurs through the markets, board meetings, and legislative advocacy. The 2019 Bill that resulted in funding for statewide SNAP match incentives is an example of this partnership.

Oregon is not one of the states providing wireless free terminals and free transaction costs to markets through a state contract with a vendor. As a state with a Democratic congress and governor, this seems surprising, yet the state contract programs appear to be less policy driven, and more couched in contract language and limitations.

'I am going to be honest, this is a detail I have taken off my plate. DA does have the money left in budget a couple of years ago, and they bought up a bunch of old

wireless terminals, and they have been giving those out to markets. I know they have rewired terminals, [we are] excited about trying to get the state to get an equipment contract like that. The state, as of last year, had just re-upped their equipment contract, so we are one year into a four or five year contract. It is not going to happen anytime soon. It was not feasible to be a part of our state "ask." The relationship is being built, so maybe by next time we will be poised to get that figured out." - OR 2

Given the existing advocacy work, continued efforts for dedicated funding, and the equipment resources to support markets are likely policy agenda items for the coalition in Oregon. The state legislature already demonstrates an openness to policies related to farmers' markets and food security.

Oklahoma Case Study

Compared to the ability to have a strategy focused specifically on farmers' markets in Oregon's policy subsystem, Oklahoma's advocacy coalition is structured around the broader concept of hunger and food insecurity. Oklahoma experienced rapid growth in the number of farmers' markets in the last two decades, with the bulk of the growth occurring from 2001 to 2004 (Crow & Henneberry, 2013). During this time, the number of markets in the state tripled. Since then, market numbers have remained relatively steady. Today, 26% of these markets accept SNAP. This is below the national median of 30.9%. Yet, Oklahoma has a wide coalition of organizations working to address food insecurity. It is also one of only 19 states offering free, wireless terminals, and no transaction fees for farmers' markets through a negotiated contract with a vendor (FMC 2020).

Like Mississippi, Oklahoma has no farmers' market association. Therefore, the coalition advocating for food security and to expand access to markets includes a combination of local governments, agencies, tribal governments, and advocacy groups. Most of these advocacy

groups focus on first increasing access to food, with farmers’ markets a secondary concern. One non-profit summed up this view of farmers’ markets and SNAP in Oklahoma as:

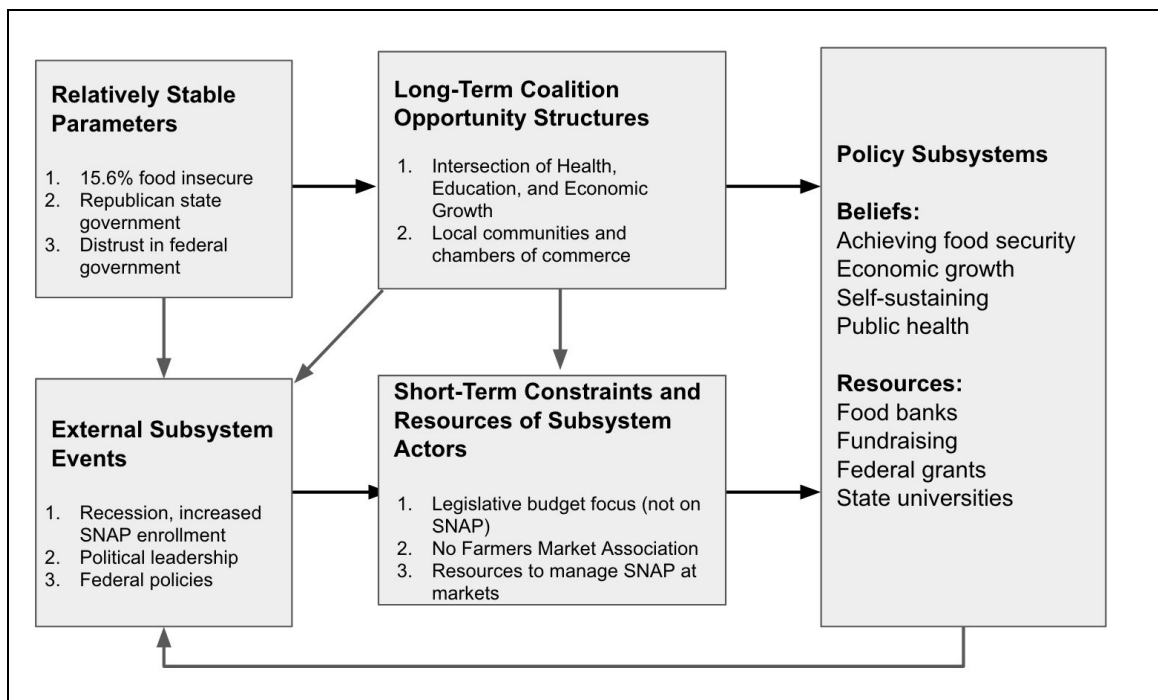
“Our stance is that the first step to improving health outcomes is achieving food security, our first argument is always you have to get people enough food. Then we are trying to shift policy so people can afford and get access to nutritious food.” - OK 2

A state agency representative echoed the shared belief of access to healthy food:

“As related to farmers’ markets, the agency and community partners agree that providing access to fresh, locally grown produce is vital to the health of low income households. SNAP participants and other low income individuals deserve to have healthy food. SNAP is one avenue in which we provide access to food for families.” - OK 1

Figure 7 is an ACF visualization of the parameters, events, and subsystem elements impacting this advocacy work within Oklahoma.

Figure 7. ACF Applied to Oklahoma



A consistent message in each of the three interviews was the potential for key leaders (*actors* in ACF) to make a difference either highlighting or failing to act on an issue. USDA policies offer incentives to states in the form of grants, matching programs, and free equipment, to proactively implement SNAP at markets. One advocate pointed out that state leaders are more likely to support these policies if they come from the same party -- the optics of a federal helping hand versus an economic boost.

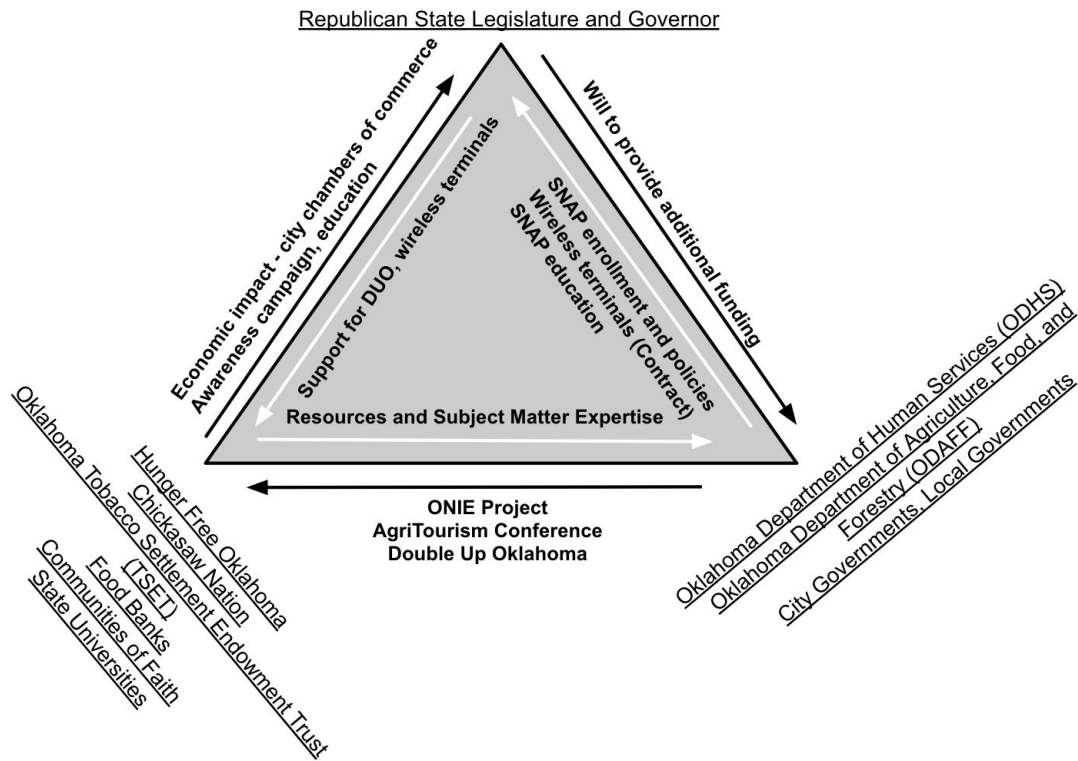
“Previously, a lot of the conversation at the state level was reactionary and primarily due to [the presidential administration’s term - we did not want federal money at the state level. But now there is a shift to the desire in bringing back more federal dollars to the state is a major plus in the work we will be doing.”- OK 2

The foundation of Oklahoma’s coalition advocating for food security, and more specifically, farmers’ market expansion to low income families, is a collection of nonprofits with a mission to fight hunger in the state. As markets have grown and the USDA expanded policies in the last two decades to support markets, these nonprofits have taken on the additional policy agenda of making markets more accessible. Much of this work occurs first at the local level, working with city governments and chambers to accept and implement SNAP at their markets, as well as increase awareness of the program among both farmers and low-income households.

“We have done a lot of work trying to help farmers and markets understand and think about what it is like to be a low income person shopping in a farmers’ market and how to improve customer service for that, and then giving the farmers’ market manager some language to talk to their farmers about some of the benefits of the program and why it is so important. There is a definite need for shifting of ideas in some of the markets, but we are building a good coalition of market managers who, at least, understand.” - OK 2

The network of agencies, non-profits, and local governments working towards these overlapping issues is very similar to Mississippi. Figure 8 provides an overview of how these groups interact.

Figure 8. Oklahoma ACF Flow Diagram



In Oklahoma, the Chickasaw Nation is also a stakeholder, or policy actor, in advocating for low-income families and policies impacting farmers. Both advocates and the agency representative interviewed stressed the role of the Chickasaw Nation in policy action, resources, and strategy.

“Something really important to know about Oklahoma is that the tribes are one of the most important economic indicators of the state. As in, they push and drive the economy, but are also one of the biggest philanthropic, support, and social safety net organizations, so we have 32 tribes in the state, 5 of which are gigantic and have a lot of power. Anytime we talk about statewide shifts in policy we are

involving the tribes. Even though they don't work directly with SNAP, they have a lot of programs that are tangential and support people, so we have to make sure they are represented at the table. They are some of our best partners, we really appreciate the tribal government.”- OK 2

Advocates in Oklahoma work with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (ODHS) and the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry (ODAFF). One of the unique ways Oklahoma's advocacy groups have interacted with these state agencies and even the USDA, has been in the annual AgriTourism Conference. This annual conference is hosted through the collaboration within the coalition aiming to reduce hunger, and improve the agricultural sector. There is even federal involvement, with FNS sending a representative to the conference to assist in helping markets sign up to accept SNAP benefits. Public servants and advocates work together to identify ways of best supporting the needs of the community. Again, there is no real direct conflict or even policies aimed explicitly at hurting one group. Rather, there is an ebb and flow of working within the subsystem to affect change.

“We have been able to create this coalition of other anti-hunger organizations, where we tend to publicly support DHS when it makes a good step, and then, rather than attack them when they make a mistake, we work behind the scenes and help them adjust.” - OK 2

In addition to this close coordination with ODHS and ODAFF, advocacy groups also work closely with cities, counties, and individual markets to increase awareness of SNAP programs like free wireless terminals and Double Up Oklahoma (DUO).

The no cost, free wireless terminal, and no transaction fee program in Oklahoma was one of the reasons I chose the state for this case study. States contract with vendors to operate the wireless EBT terminals, including the no-cost provision is a part of contract negotiations (FMC, 2020). As one advocate stated:

This is a big deal for markets and probably the number one barrier to them accepting SNAP. It is a good program.”- OK 3

When asked about how the contract came about, respondents reported that the decision to offer this service for farmers’ markets was part social policy and part pragmatism. In the case of Oklahoma, the ensuing contract is a benefit to both farmers and consumers.

“Oklahoma has an agreement with our vendor to offer one free wireless EBT-only POS machine to any market or direct-to-market farmers who have an active FNS account. DHS bought their own machines originally and provided for them for free, and the vendor contract requires the vendor to maintain them. In the end, it was cheaper to buy new ones than maintain old ones. FNS transaction costs are too much of a burden on smaller markets.” - OK 1

“Oklahoma has a pretty good policy of getting all farmers’ markets that want it a free EBT machine. It’s not a very complicated process. It’s a partnership between ODHS and the ODAFF. When a farmer’s market approaches us and is interested in that, we have a partner called the Oklahoma Nutrition Incentive and Education Program, who are experts in connecting people to that resource and helping them navigate the application.”- OK 2

Much of the learning in Oklahoma occurs within the state. While Mississippi demonstrated some partnerships with out of state actors, Oklahoman advocates and a state agency representative discussed intra-state changing attitudes towards expanding SNAP benefits to markets. Change was characterized by an understanding of the impact to local economies, rather than as improving access to more food choices. Participants captured these beliefs and how narratives were frequently framed for legislators and other policy actors, in statements, such as:

“Supporting the local economy is a win for the community, no matter how large or small.” - OK 1

“Our last consultant that did the polling for us, healthcare and education, not hunger, are the key priorities, and the economy. So a lot of our marketing and advocacy is trying to tie hunger to those things. It is not on the top of anyone’s minds, so we have to get it in anywhere we can.” - OK 2

“There is also an element, and I have used this when talking to various Chambers of Commerce, for example, of keeping the SNAP dollars in a community ---

economic development and supporting our producers. We have been able to show the amount of SNAP dollars coming into a county, for example, and how that may be going to a big chain grocer, but can also go directly into the community at farmers’ markets if they accept SNAP.” - OK 3

“SNAP at farmers’ markets provides the means for our families in need to access healthy food. But it also promotes economic development and supports the community.” - OK 3

As with the previous states, there is no active voice in Oklahoma opposing policies supporting SNAP at markets. Between federal dollars, and programs, and framing arguments in favor of local economies there is little conflict, but still room for policy learning through education programs, local communities, and individual markets.

Similarities and Differences Across States

Using the ACF to map the recurring themes across interviews, a pattern emerged with similarities across the states. Table 4 provides a total number of observations from interviews. While these interviews make up a small percentage of relevant actors, they are representatives from the organizations heavily involved in the coalition for SNAP expansion at farmers’ markets and the greater food security subsystems in all three states.

Table 4. ACF Recurring Themes in Interviews

| Advocacy Coalition Themes | Mississippi* | Oregon** | Oklahoma*** |
|---|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Forums, partnerships, collaboration, norms of conduct | 8 | 5 | 10 |
| Conflict and opposing views, cross-coalition learning | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| Stimuli through events, learning, targeted policies | 7 | 5 | 6 |
| Actors, network contacts, resources | 10 | 9 | 17 |

NOTES: *n=2 (1 Advocacy Group, 1 State Agency); **n=2 (2 Advocacy Groups); ***n=3 (2 Advocacy Groups, 1 State Agency)

The most referenced themes in Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Oregon interviews were those of *forums* and *actors*. The former in reference to the role of partnerships and collaboration, and the latter discussing network contacts and resources specifically. Conflict and opposing views, as well as stimuli through events, were discussed the least often. Even with these similarities in ACF roles, how each is operationalized in the three states remains different.

A Lack of Conflict

The least prevalent theme across all interviews was that of conflict and opposing views. Given ideological differences between the states, I hypothesized that there would be more of a presence of conflict between coalitions or with elected leaders. In the specific case of SNAP at markets, advocates and state agency representatives alike reported a lack of direct opposition to proposed policies for expanding access to markets. Instead of opposition, there seemed to be more apathy within government and the general public; a focus on SNAP and nutritious food access at markets as more of an ancillary concern or low priority, secondary to tackling the underlying problems of food security. Advocates struggled for windows of opportunity to influence policies in favor of markets and SNAP. This was definitely the case in Oklahoma and Mississippi, where gaining a voice for markets and a budget focus for markets and SNAP remain newer struggles. Oregon passed funding in the last year, but advocates stressed this has been a long road, not due to opposition, but steady work to influence and gain a voice for the issue. The presence of both a farmers' market association and the Farmers Market Fund help get and keep this as an issue on the legislative table, a policy win other states with similar organizations are likely to experience (Briggs, 2010).

It has just been very slow-building of partnerships with all of the organizations that are working on this, and the continued success and steady growth of the program. I don't feel like there is any [event of opposition], we were successful

with our funding request because we put in the work and developed the relationships and had something that made sense. - OR 2

In cases where core beliefs differ, advocates educate about the benefits of increasing the reach of farmers' markets, changing the narratives to focus on the economy, finding common ground for agreement. Both Oklahoman and Mississippian participants spoke of stressing the economic benefit for the local community within their narratives. One advocate in Mississippi frequently tied this access to nutritious food with healthy outcomes from an overall population health perspective. This opens a window to learning, but no real change in belief systems. The learning that occurs in "opposing groups" is an increased awareness of how expanding access at local markets can increase the money brought into the local economy, the workforce, and maybe even lower state budgets for healthcare in the long run.

Stimuli Driven Primarily by Federal Policy

Stimuli for change can be in the form of targeted policies, events, and learning. In each state, participants referenced targeted federal policy and the economic events as past and future stimuli for change. Changes to the Farm Bill, the FINI Grant (recently renamed as the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program, or GusNIP), and easy access to wireless terminals open the window for new policies and opportunities for advocates. Because SNAP is a federal program, the Farm Bill and GusNIP grants are the primary stimuli leading to expanding or contracting access. In Oregon, when the FINI grant ended in 2017, state advocates collaborated to raise funding for DUFEB, and partnered to lobby for the recent funding line through the state legislature.

In Mississippi, one of the forms of stimuli and learning discussed was that of outreach to SNAP recipients, and learning at the recipient level, not just with elected officials and state government.

“For example, if you are a SNAP recipient and we want to educate you and teach you how to make your money go as far as possible with healthy food, you have to incentivize SNAP recipients. People aren’t just going to come.” - MS 2

“We focused so hard on getting access to equipment, and getting farmers markets and farmers to apply. What we didn’t do was push nutrition, healthier eating. We didn’t have the resources and the push to get people to the market, there were some programs, but not a statewide effort. If you increase access to equipment and markets, but don’t also teach people how to eat healthy and why, then you are just going to have a flat curve of transactions, or none at all. We increased access, but did not change the behavior.” - MS 1

Similarly, Oklahoma advocates identify SNAP education as a targeted policy aimed at increasing access through SNAP recipient learning.

“We work with SNAP ed -- using focus group data and evidenced-based practices to expand access to farmers’ markets for low income families. We provide marketing support, recipe cards, materials, and programs educating about healthy food and choices. Our approach is to educate and change behavior.” - OK 3

Both Mississippi and Oklahoma advocates mentioned the increase in farmers’ markets as a form of stimuli. In Mississippi, this was combined with concerns of food deserts and lack of access to grocery stores.

“In the last decade, a number of things -- the number of markets has expanded and increased. Meaning, we have identified more farmers out there in Mississippi. As that was happening, we started more programs to increase access to SNAP (2014-2016) and connecting markets and farmers to equipment, as a way for markets and farmers to increase sales. I would not call it a policy change, but more of a focus. Increase markets - help markets increase customers.” - MS 1

This results in a convergence of stimuli at the intended point of impact. Federal policies influence how states and advocates interact with state legislatures, markets and recipients, while influencing recipient behavior and shopping habits remains a challenge to continue expanding access. The underlying intention of influencing behavior to increase demand at farmers' markets may lead to a policy window for change in favor of expanding access to these markets.

Stronger Together with Collaboration

The role of forums through collaboration and partnerships in each state is as anticipated. Without the presence of coalitions, the likelihood of policies and action related to farmers' markets and expanding access would be slim. In all three states, this is an issue that requires consistent advocacy and action to remain relevant, partly because it is a niche concern within the overall context of food security. The advocates identified through this research may not be all-inclusive, and there is a chance some of those involved in this work at the state-level are not mentioned because they were not prevalent in research or through interviews. However, the main groups involved in each state include a combination of nonprofits, government agencies, and healthcare organizations.

The intersection of public health and food security in the active coalitions present in all three states serves to increase awareness and funding opportunities for SNAP and markets. Oregon stands out because its coalition is primarily led by advocates focused on farmers' markets with the Farmers Market Fund and the Oregon Farmers' Market Association, with backing from the American Heart Association. The active presence of these groups is one reason we see funding passed through the state legislature in support of markets and expanding access. In Mississippi, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce works directly with

farmers and markets to accept SNAP and other forms of expansion. In all three states, food banks and nonprofits focused on addressing hunger are a natural part of the coalition.

“It involves all the hunger related partners. We have a couple of food banks in the state, so they are a big partner of ours when we start talking about this. Working with our state agency partners is another big piece of this, particularly the Department of Human Services, as well as state-level elected officials and even city-level elected officials when we are talking about farmers’ markets happening at the municipal level.” - OK 2

Singularly, Oklahoma participants include tribes as an important ally in advocacy. This is representative of Oklahoma as the state with the highest number of American Indians affiliated with a federally recognized tribe and two of the largest federally recognized tribes, Cherokee and Choctaw (US Census Bureau, 2013; Department of the Interior, 2015).

In each state, forums for collaboration are primarily nonprofit led, sometimes inviting state agency representatives to attend for input and suggestions (Oklahoma and Mississippi). These forums are labeled as working groups, tasks forces, or committees. They establish priorities and recommendations for increasing food security and improving access to healthy food. The desired output of these forums is a concerted push for legislative action and funding, as in Oregon and Mississippi:

“We brought in grocery store owners, food providers, public health community. We had this task force, several meetings, we created a report with nine recommendations. And the number one was that the state pass a food financing initiative - Healthy Food Finance Initiative.” - MS 2

“Statewide, the partners I mentioned above [OFMA, FMF, Oregon Food Bank, Portland Area CSA Coalition, AHA] as part of the DUFEB bill coalition, are the real leaders in these conversations. Also, the Oregon Community Food System Network (OCFSN) has policy committees, and this topic was one of their subjects.” - OR 1

As an issue within the overall context of hunger, expanding SNAP at farmers’ markets is

next within the greater conversation of hunger and food insecurity. Including a direct voice of farmers and market advocates in this discussion keeps this issue on the table as a policy belief.

The Impact of Actors through Resources and Networks

Even with external shocks, or nudges, the most discussed theme was actors - in the form of resources available to markets, network contacts, and political will. In both Mississippi and Oklahoma, the pervasive challenge to expanding markets is not necessarily policy focused, but market focused from a resource or capacity standpoint.

“I think strengthening the farmers is also important, some of these markets, especially with how crazy Oklahoma weather is, they don’t have produce. A couple of summer’s ago, it rained and rained, some markets closed earlier, in August instead of September because they had no crops. One thing I have seen, especially in the conference, is really supporting the producers. Without producers you can’t have a market. That is important and a service we can continue to offer and increase upon.” - OK 3

“While it is fairly easy to get a machine, fairly easy to enroll in DUO, it is an awareness campaign [for farmers] that needs to happen, and it can’t be just us, but needs to be a coalition.” -OK 2

“Some markets did not have a lot available, during this time some had a drought. The markets did not have a lot of capacity in the form of farmers and products...When I say capacity, I mean the market having enough farmers interested in being involved. Having a market manager to administer the process at the market level. And having an adequate amount of fruits and vegetables for people to buy that have EBT.” - MS 1

This was less of a problem in Oregon, which has almost double the amount of markets compared to Oklahoma and Mississippi. The range of produce and environment in Oregon may be a contributing factor to this difference in capacity--depending on the types of produce typically found at markets, they may be more accessible to a wider range of shoppers, contributing to individual market accessibility.

A shared resource limitation to offering SNAP at markets, in all three states was the administrative ability to run the program at the market level. Offering SNAP at markets is often most effective as a centralized market option - wherein recipients obtain SNAP tokens through an EBT terminal operated often by the market manager and volunteers. This availability of resources to run the program is a limiting factor in expanding SNAP access.

“What we need: Funding, interest, and capacity on the part of farmers’ markets to run these programs. Technical assistance and other support in making the transition.” -OR 1

Participants discussed the challenge of relying on a steady supply of volunteers for bookkeeping, keeping track of tokens, and administering the EBT equipment. Even with expansive policies like free terminals and matching incentives, markets still need the resources to operate. For advocates working on the front lines of policy implementation, these realities can limit the reach of the most well-meaning policies.

Conclusion

Based on interviews and comparison of three case studies, the level of support states provide farmers’ markets is influenced by the role of advocacy groups, whether or not states have a farmers’ market association, or similar organization focused on related policy issues, and the continuation of existing contracts or policies already in place. In all states, advocates play an important, if not the dominant, role in keeping these issues on the table, contracting with state agencies to support markets, educating farmers and SNAP recipients, and advocating for continued change. While the ACF was useful for categorizing and analyzing the variables impacting the presence of specific SNAP-related policies in states, some of the categories proved to be less impactful than anticipated. The role of policy-oriented learning was less prevalent.

Rather than changing beliefs, advocates shifted the narrative and messages to align with opposing core and policy beliefs. Stimuli was consistent across all three states, the result of changes in Federal policies and economic realities. Collaboration and partnerships within coalitions are largely successful because of the diverse range of interest groups and stakeholders involved in this social policy advocacy.

Any form of generalization from this research should be exercised with caution, but even this set of case studies demonstrates the significance coalitions play in shaping policies related to farmers' markets accessibility. Each state offers some lessons of how to take advantage of policy windows. Combined, the takeaway for state advocates looking at how to make their farmers' markets more accessible include: (a) nonprofits dedicated to increasing access to farmers' market and direct from farm-to-consumer opportunities, as in Oregon; (b) active collaboration and partnerships with state agencies to expand access and increase awareness, as in Mississippi; and (c) including local councils, the chambers of commerce, and a diverse range of advocates the coalition and policy discussions towards implementing practical solutions, as in Oklahoma.

Future research should expand this by broadening the methodology to include a comprehensive survey as well as case studies from some of the states with the highest rates of SNAP redemption like Rhode Island and Washington. These states may offer additional perspective of approaches to advocate successfully for expanding access to markets.

This research focused on the role of advocacy coalitions within states in impacting SNAP-related policy and farmers' markets. Offering SNAP and associated incentives at markets may remove some barriers, but others still exist. Examining these and potential local policies and

actions to further reduce barriers provides a more comprehensive approach to expanding access to fresh and local food, beyond SNAP. One participant best summed up the limits of SNAP:

“There is always going to be more we can do. I think that is frustrating to some partners. We have a program tied to SNAP, and SNAP is not the broadest catch-all net. There are always going to be some people who are not eligible for SNAP, or don’t feel comfortable participating in it that can’t take advantage of that. There is a lot of frustration that our program only works at farmers markets, when we know that a small percentage of people shop there. Wouldn’t it be great to expand it to all grocery stores, but we can’t raise enough money to do this program, how are we going to do that?” - OR 2

Both SNAP recipients, and those ineligible for SNAP, experience additional barriers in accessing farmers’ markets, in the form of location, price, convenience, and culture. SNAP at markets is one component of access to fresh food. Making farmers’ markets accessible to all requires continued research and action to bring the farm to all tables.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. Please introduce yourself and describe your role in [organization name].
2. Please describe your organization's work related to farmers' markets and SNAP? What policy positions has the [organization/agency/advocacy group] taken with regards to SNAP and farmers' markets in the past decade?
3. Where do most discussions and collaboration regarding SNAP-related policies occur? Who is involved in these?
4. Are there a shared set of beliefs or values among the organizations advocating for or against expanded access? What are these?
5. How does your organization frame arguments in favor of SNAP and farmers' markets?
6. Have policy positions changed, expanded, or constricted in the last decade in your state?
7. Can you describe your organization's role in the history or climate in *this state* regarding SNAP and farmers' markets? Who advocates for and against these policies, what is the public response, and the subsequent reception at farmers' markets?
8. How does your organization or state spread the word about SNAP at markets? Is this word of mouth, a specific marketing campaign, state agencies, or local and county government?
9. Is there a SNAP match, or double up food bucks program in the state and how is it funded? What process or opportunities led to double up food bucks?
10. What about wireless terminals and a state contract to offer terminals at every market? How did this come about, and how was your organization involved?
11. Did any external events lead to changes in SNAP-related policies? Has there been a surge of interest in your organization and why? Conversely, has it been a challenge to gain traction and why?
12. Is there a collaborative element to expanding access to markets? By this, I mean what groups or organizations typically work together? How does your organization involve the agricultural sector, farmers, government agencies, local communities, or national advocacy groups such as the Farmers Market Fund.
13. What factors play into offering more services (wireless terminals, SNAP Match Incentive, outreach to different communities) at markets in your state? *Probe with advocacy groups, policies, grants, larger market, farmer movement*

Appendix B: Verbal Consent Forms



STUDY INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS AND VERBAL CONSENT FORM

Study Title: Influencing State Policies Supporting Farmers' Markets: How States Increase Access to Farmers' Markets for Low Income Households.

Principal Investigator (P.I.): Mark Edwards, PhD

Student Researcher: Meagan Consedine

Version Date: 2/19/2020

We are inviting you to take part in a research study. This research is intended to fulfill the student researcher's project requirements for graduation from the Masters of Public Policy program. Participation in this study is voluntary; there is no penalty for choosing not to participate or for leaving the study at any time. You are free to skip any questions or activities.

Purpose: This study compares how policies in different states support access to farmers' markets for low income households. The purpose of this study is to understand how advocacy groups, government agencies, and other interest groups interact with each other at the state level to impact Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) policy decisions impacting local farmers' markets.

Activities: The study activities will involve the researcher asking you a set of open-ended interview questions, conducted in a private setting over the phone or via a web-based tool (Zoom). These questions will ask you to share your experiences as an advocate, legislator, or government representative, and to discuss how policies related to SNAP have evolved and changed.

Time: You will be asked to participate in one (1) interview session, lasting approximately 45 but no more than 60 minutes. The researcher may also contact you later by phone for additional clarification of your answers or policies if necessary.

Risks: We will make every effort to protect your identity, but there is a risk that information which identifies you could be accidentally disclosed. The possible risks and/or discomforts associated with being in the study include:

- Emotional stress or discomfort at recalling events or experiences related to policy disagreements or difficult decisions that you made
- Emotional distress or professional censure from peers who may disagree with your account of events

To minimize these risks, the researcher will ensure your information is kept strictly confidential and no identifying information is linked to your responses. Additionally, the researcher will contact you to review any quotes that she may use in the final report.

Confidentiality. To help ensure confidentiality, we will take the following steps:

- The audio recording and transcription will not begin until after introductions have taken place to ensure that your name and/or organization affiliation are not recorded.
- All interviews will be transcribed by the researcher and then coded. Data will be reported in aggregate, meaning that themes of multiple responses will be presented rather than

your individual responses. A code will be used on the transcript of your interview instead of your name or organization affiliation.

- Some direct quotes may be used in the final report, but these will not be attributed to you or any individual. In cases where your quote may indirectly identify you, you will be contacted to review the quote and consent verbally to its being used in the final report.
- All audio recordings will be securely stored in a password-protected electronic file at OSU for the duration of the study. Once the final report is completed, all audio recordings will be erased.
- Transcripts and electronic copies of policies and rules will be securely stored electronically under password protection. Password will be known only to the Principal Investigator (P.I.) and student researcher.
- Paper copies of transcripts, policy documents, and other documents will be secured in a locked location, accessible only to P.I. and student researcher.

All data will be stored by P.I. on his OSU campus computer for three years post study termination.

Payment. You will not be paid for participating in this research study.

Contact information. If you have any questions about this research project, please contact:

- **Principal Investigator:** Professor Mark Edwards, PhD, Department of Sociology
434 Bexell Hall, Corvallis, Oregon 97331
Tel (541) 737-5379| Fax (541) 737-5372 Email medwards@oregonstate.edu
- **Student Researcher:** Meagan Consedine, Graduate Student, School of Public Policy
Tel (254) 630-9056 Email consedim@oregonstate.edu

You can also contact the Human Research Protection Program with any concerns that you have about your rights or welfare as a study participant. This office can be reached at (541) 737-8008 or by email at IRB@oregonstate.edu.

Appendix C: State SNAP Comparisons

| State | No Cost, Wireless Provision in SNAP Contract | SNAP "Match" / Double Up Food Bucks | Farms (2017) | Agricultural Sector Output (2018) | Gross State Product (2017), millions of dollars | % Food Insecure Households (2016-2018) | State & Legislative Partisan Composition (2018) | # Farmers Markets (2019) | # Markets Accepting SNAP (2019) | % accepting SNAP |
|-------|--|-------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| AL | Yes | Yes (Non-Profits) | 40,592 | 6,565,492 | 211,197 | 14.7 | Republican | 140 | 25 | 17.86 % |
| AK | Yes | | 990 | 52,720 | 51,479 | 10.8 | Divided | 37 | 9 | 24.32 % |
| AZ | No | Yes | 19,086 | 4,673,267 | 326,446 | 12.4 | Republican | 93 | 38 | 40.86 % |
| AR | Yes | Yes (State Funded) | 42,625 | 10,033,807 | 122,704 | 15.1 | Republican | 111 | 27 | 24.32 % |
| CA | Yes | Yes (State Funded) | 70,521 | 52,842,020 | 2,797,601 | 10.6 | Democrat | 760 | 335 | 44.08 % |
| CO | No | Yes (Double Up Food Bucks) | 38,893 | 8,068,395 | 345,233 | 9.1 | Divided | 161 | 57 | 35.40 % |
| CT | | Yes (Partial, Seniors) | 2,042,220 | 726,181 | 264,510 | 11.7 | Divided | 158 | 24 | 15.19 % |
| DE | | No | 2,302 | 1,595,130 | 72,461 | 10.5 | Democrat | 36 | 16 | 44.44 % |
| FL | | No | 47,590 | 8,337,871 | 976,386 | 11.7 | Republican | 264 | 54 | 20.45 % |
| GA | Yes | No | 42,439 | 10,232,637 | 563,608 | 11.3 | Republican | 169 | 57 | 33.73 % |
| HI | Yes | Yes | 7,328 | 717,911 | 88,448 | 8 | Democrat | 96 | 38 | 39.58 % |
| ID | Yes | Yes | 24,996 | 8,220,187 | 72,294 | 9.8 | Republican | 66 | 16 | 24.24 % |
| IL | Yes | | 72,651 | 18,240,072 | 822,540 | 10.7 | Democrat | 339 | 86 | 25.37 % |
| IN | Yes | | 56,649 | 11,680,701 | 352,273 | 13.5 | Republican | 200 | 73 | 36.50 % |
| IA | Yes | Yes | 86,104 | 29,485,315,000 | 183,930 | 9.2 | Republican | 227 | 48 | 21.15 % |
| KS | | Yes | 58,569 | 17,288,779,000 | 159,108 | 13.8 | Republican | 121 | 29 | 23.97 % |
| KY | | No | 75,966 | 6,950,041,000 | 202,175 | 14.7 | Republican | 139 | 42 | 30.22 % |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|------------|--------------------|---------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------------|------------|-----------|---------------|
| LA | | | 27,386 | 3,509,483,000 | 235,960 | 15.8 | Divided | 81 | 20 | 24.69% |
| ME | | No | 7,600 | 753,123,000 | 61,703 | 13.6 | Divided | 96 | 47 | 48.96% |
| MD | | No | 12,429 | 2,682,804,000 | 399,538 | 11.1 | Divided | 165 | 51 | 30.91% |
| MA | | Yes (State Funded) | 7,241 | 577,376,000 | 542,979 | 9.3 | Divided | 327 | 167 | 51.07% |
| MI | | Yes | 47,641 | 8,460,168,000 | 508,905 | 12.9 | Republican | 343 | 160 | 46.65% |
| MN | | No | 68,822 | 18,208,896,000 | 350,179 | 8.6 | Divided | 200 | 62 | 31.00% |
| MS | Yes | Yes | 34,988 | 6,220,588,000 | 109,375 | 15.9 | Republican | 83 | 27 | 32.53% |
| MO | | Yes | 95,320 | 10,885,657,000 | 303,763 | 12 | Republican | 258 | 47 | 18.22% |
| MT | | No | 27,048 | 4,405,112,000 | 47,079 | 10.3 | Divided | 72 | 20 | 27.78% |
| NE | | Yes | 46,332 | 22,506,602,000 | 119,588 | 11.4 | Republican | 104 | 14 | 13.46% |
| NV | | Yes | 3,423 | 747,950,000 | 158,302 | 12.9 | Divided | 38 | 16 | 42.11% |
| NH | | Yes | 4,123 | 279,549,000 | 81,650 | 7.8 | Republican | 96 | 34 | 35.42% |
| NJ | | Yes | 9,883 | 1,334,289,000 | 602,069 | 8.5 | Democrat | 156 | 31 | 19.87% |
| NM | Yes | Yes | 25,044 | 3,187,803,000 | 94,211 | 16.8 | Divided | 72 | 32 | 44.44% |
| NY | | Yes | 33,438 | 5,684,858,000 | 1,606,601 | 10.5 | Divided | 673 | 294 | 43.68% |
| NC | No | Yes (Partial) | 46,418 | 12,638,843,000 | 540,497 | 13.9 | Divided | 254 | 55 | 21.65% |
| ND | Yes | Yes | 26,364 | 9,434,950,000 | 52,527 | 8.8 | Republican | 66 | 3 | 4.55% |
| OH | | | 77,805 | 10,417,715,000 | 645,747 | 14.2 | Republican | 336 | 97 | 28.87% |
| OK | Yes | Yes | 78,531 | 7,661,471,000 | 188,632 | 15.6 | Republican | 74 | 19 | 25.68% |
| OR | No | Yes | 37,616 | 5,593,462,000 | 227,155 | 11.1 | Democrat | 159 | 91 | 57.23% |
| PA | | No | 53,157 | 7,884,330,000 | 756,269 | 11.1 | Divided | 310 | 85 | 27.42% |
| RI | | No | 1,043 | 92,085,000 | 59,306 | 11 | Democrat | 36 | 25 | 69.44% |
| SC | Yes | No | 24,791 | 2,849,848,000 | 221,690 | 11 | Republican | 133 | 34 | 25.56% |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|-----|---------|----------------|-----------|------|------------|-----|-----|--------|
| SD | Yes | Yes | 29,968 | 10,684,410,000 | 49,813 | 10.9 | Republican | 41 | 9 | 21.95% |
| TN | | Yes | 69,983 | 4,213,915,000 | 349,569 | 12.4 | Republican | 133 | 44 | 33.08% |
| TX | | Yes | 248,416 | 25,324,801,000 | 1,645,136 | 14 | Republican | 236 | 54 | 22.88% |
| UT | | Yes | 18,409 | 1,963,833,000 | 164,917 | 9.8 | Republican | 46 | 20 | 43.48% |
| VT | | No | 6,808 | 827,957,000 | 32,545 | 9.6 | Divided | 92 | 50 | 54.35% |
| VA | Yes | No | 43,225 | 4,404,252,000 | 510,586 | 10.1 | Divided | 263 | 93 | 35.36% |
| WA | Yes | | 35,793 | 10,238,055,000 | 524,323 | 10.3 | Democrat | 175 | 104 | 59.43% |
| WV | | | 23,622 | 899,287,000 | 74,047 | 15.7 | Republican | 94 | 34 | 36.17% |
| WI | | No | 64,793 | 12,033,397,000 | 321,373 | 8.9 | Republican | 312 | 86 | 27.56% |
| WY | Yes | Yes | 11,938 | 1,821,323,000 | 38,037 | 12.6 | Republican | 50 | 4 | 8.00% |

NOTE: <https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/index.php>;
<https://data.ers.usda.gov/reports.aspx?StateFIPS=01&StateName=Alabama&ID=17854>;
https://farmersmarketcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/FNSStates_WithChart_1b.pdf;
<https://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/total-gross-state-product/?currentTimeframe=0&selecteolId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>;
https://www.ncsl.org/Portals/1/Documents/Elections/Legis_Control_011018_26973.pdf