

WEBVTT

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00:00:09.140 --> 00:00:12.789

Eli Zigas: Welcome everyone. We are going to be waiting a few seconds to

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00:00:12.940 --> 00:00:17.820

Eli Zigas: admit everyone into the zoom room, so just give us about 30 s or so.

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00:00:18.780 --> 00:00:19.840

Eli Zigas: Welcome, welcome

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00:00:30.380 --> 00:00:36.469

Eli Zigas: for those of you just joining. We're just populating the zoom room. We'll get going in just a few seconds. Thank you for joining us today.

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00:00:41.630 --> 00:00:42.520

Eli Zigas: All right.

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00:00:42.540 --> 00:00:44.490

Eli Zigas: I think most people have arrived.

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00:00:45.180 --> 00:01:00.659

Eli Zigas: Good afternoon. I think everyone, unless you're in Hawaii, which we maybe have some people from Hawaii wonderful to see everyone. Thank you all for making the time to join us today. My name is Elizabeth. I'm. The Food and Agriculture Policy director at Spur. We're excited to have you here for

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00:01:00.680 --> 00:01:15.820

Eli Zigas: those of you who are spur members. Thank you for your support. If you're not a member, I encourage you to join, for it does a lot of great work on a lot of different issues, education, policy, analysis, advocacy to make our cities region, and in this case country more prosperous, sustainable, and equitable place to live.

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00:01:15.870 --> 00:01:23.260

Eli Zigas: and your financial support allows us to keep doing this work. So if you're like what you hear, consider becoming a member. If you're not one already.

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00:01:24.020 --> 00:01:42.720

Eli Zigas: we do these events all the time. Tomorrow we have our next digital discourse. It's called is the Price right? Exploring such solutions for addressing freeway congestion relevant to the Bay area and beyond. Whether you're driving alone or in a car pool or riding a bus, you've probably noticed that the bay area is freeways or your regions freeways are just too congested

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00:01:42.730 --> 00:01:55.390

Eli Zigas: yet. Winding roads isn't sustainable environmentally or financially. That's why the bay area is now exploring a user fee for driving on congested freeways, especially in corridors with good public transportation. But can we price roads in a way that advances social and racial equity

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00:01:55.510 --> 00:02:06.800

Eli Zigas: in tomorrow's digital discourse here. How the next generation freeway study is answering these and other critical questions, you can click the link that's going to show up in the chat shortly. There it is, if you want to attend that one

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00:02:06.990 --> 00:02:12.749

Eli Zigas: today. However, we're not talking about freeways or cars. We're talking about food and making healthy food more accessible.

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00:02:15.260 --> 00:02:27.160

Eli Zigas: The Webinar is titled, making snap incentives a snap on the Ebt card, and what we're going to be talking about are some initiatives that have been going some for a while, some that are just ramping up 150.

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00:02:27.170 --> 00:02:37.350

Eli Zigas: They in the country, many organizations, including us here at spur and local governments, run programs often called healthy food incentives, that increase low-income families purchasing power for fruits and vegetables.

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00:02:37.550 --> 00:02:52.149

Eli Zigas: How that money is distributed. Those bonus dollars is really the heart of what we're going to be talking about today, and a transition that all the folks here are going to be speaking about of making that money available on the Ebt card. The electronic benefit transfer card

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00:02:52.460 --> 00:03:06.860

Eli Zigas: that is issued by States as part of Snap, formerly known as food stamps. You'll also hear me refer to it as Cal Fresh. They're like 4 names for it. Snap, cow, fresh ebt food stamps. They're more or less synonymous with some variations.

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00:03:06.880 --> 00:03:20.520

Eli Zigas: And this technology aims to make the program simpler for customers, easier for grocers and more efficient for program administrators. And we're going to hear all about it. So i'm going to introduce the panelists, and we're going to dive into the panel, and then we'll save some time at the end for Q. A.

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00:03:22.330 --> 00:03:25.060

Eli Zigas: You will see that there is a Q. And a box

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00:03:25.520 --> 00:03:26.840

Eli Zigas: on your zoom

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00:03:27.450 --> 00:03:34.740

Eli Zigas: platform. If you have a question you can use that. You can also use the chat that that is part of Zoom as well.

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00:03:35.480 --> 00:03:54.330

Eli Zigas: Our speakers today, Mia Quarterine Mia coordinates the Massachusetts healthy incentives. Program. The nation's first nutrition incentive program, directly integrated with an Ebt system statewide. Hence why we are so excited that Mia is here made us passionate about mission driven process. Improvement supports equitable access to food education and technology.

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00:03:55.110 --> 00:04:11.619

Eli Zigas: Also joining us is Alyssa Avenin, who manages the Washington State Department of Health Fruit and vegetable incentive program which includes snap, incentive and fruit and vegetable prescriptions. In her role. She collaborates with grocery stores, farmers, markets, health systems and a network of state and local organizations invested in food, access, and agriculture.

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00:04:12.270 --> 00:04:31.299

Eli Zigas: Carrie Connolly is joining us from Rhode Island, where she is the deputy director for the Rhode Island Public Health Institute, and holds a secondary placement as project Director at Brown University School of Public Health. She's passionate about healthy, equitable food,

access, and served as the project. Lead for the Rhode Island Retail snap, incentive program, Advisory campaign which you are going to hear more about shortly.

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00:04:31.400 --> 00:04:34.929

Eli Zigas: And some of you heard about this Webinar

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00:04:34.970 --> 00:04:43.350

Eli Zigas: a couple of weeks ago, late breaking addition to our panel. I'm. So excited is we're joined by Margaret Ortiz from the Usda food nutrition service.

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00:04:43.360 --> 00:05:04.490

Eli Zigas: She'll be joining us towards the end of the panel, because there's an exciting new Rfp. That got released, which we will touch on, and I'm happy to introduce her. She's the chief of retailer Policy branch and snap at the Usda. She oversees policy development for retailer participation in the program, including incentive programs implemented by or through partnerships with Snap, authorized retailers.

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00:05:05.120 --> 00:05:11.490

Eli Zigas: And with that again I want to encourage you to to ask questions in the Q. A. As we go along.

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00:05:11.680 --> 00:05:17.980

Eli Zigas: I'm going to give an intro, and then i'm going to ask a series of questions of the panelists, and we're going to dive in.

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00:05:19.420 --> 00:05:38.160

Eli Zigas: So to the start to do some level setting. What? What is ebt integration? What is it that we're talking about? I'm not going to dive in too deep into what our healthy Food incentive programs, if you're not familiar with those, I think that's a that's another back rounder. And we're assuming a base level of you know, these are programs where snap participants

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00:05:38.170 --> 00:05:44.309

Eli Zigas: earn bonus dollars when they buy targeted items in this case for all our States fruits and vegetables.

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00:05:47.560 --> 00:05:51.790

Eli Zigas: I'll speak a little bit in this introduction from a California perspective.

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00:05:52.830 --> 00:06:06.110

Eli Zigas: One way, I like to think about how we came to today, and ev integration is back in 2,006. An advocacy group in California, called now called Nourish California. But then California Food policy advocates work with the Schwarzenegger Administration.

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00:06:06.120 --> 00:06:23.910

Eli Zigas: and they had seen, I think, in other parts of the country the development of incentives, especially at farmers markets, and they like this idea. They were seeing early success that snap customers were excited to be able to get more purchasing power, including for fruits and vegetables, and it reduces hunger, improves health and supports farmers. And

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00:06:23.920 --> 00:06:28.450

Eli Zigas: in California. There was State legislation that was passed, though never funded to pilot

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00:06:28.770 --> 00:06:32.290

Eli Zigas: a a program with grocery partners that would do this

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00:06:33.900 --> 00:06:36.389

Eli Zigas: didn't get funded in 2,006 or 2,008,

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00:06:36.470 --> 00:06:43.830

Eli Zigas: mostly because of the financial crash, and there wasn't money in the State budget, and my understanding from the folks who worked on it, then is they then approached

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00:06:44.190 --> 00:06:49.080

Eli Zigas: Senators in Congress to add something to the 2,008 farm bill.

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00:06:49.220 --> 00:06:55.189

Eli Zigas: which was the healthy incentives pilot, which is okay. We don't have money at the State level. Do this, but the Federal Government

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00:06:55.270 --> 00:07:03.129

Eli Zigas: is willing to to pilot it. So let's do it. And so in the 2,008 farm build there is 20 million dollars set aside to allow a county

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00:07:03.960 --> 00:07:14.750

Eli Zigas: to apply with retail partners to do this and that. Rfp: I don't know exactly the date. Maybe market knows. Maybe me a knows came out around 2,009, 2,010

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00:07:15.160 --> 00:07:21.020

Eli Zigas: a county that we work with in California. Apply, you know, raise their hands that we in California would like to do this, and we lost

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00:07:21.100 --> 00:07:25.129

Eli Zigas: to Massachusetts. And so Massachusetts got the pilot.

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00:07:25.420 --> 00:07:32.969

Eli Zigas: and what Massachusetts did, and me, I think we'll speak about this more is they did it. They They said, we're going to have this in temporary room. It's going to be on the card.

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00:07:33.150 --> 00:07:35.050

Eli Zigas: and by 2012

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00:07:35.080 --> 00:07:37.680

Eli Zigas: it was happening at grocery stores and farmers markets

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00:07:37.990 --> 00:07:45.000

Eli Zigas: subsequent to that there was a surge of interest in these ideas, and many farmers markets started doing this. Many grocery stores started doing this, and I think

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00:07:45.070 --> 00:07:58.400

Eli Zigas: everyone on this call has been involved in programs of various themes. We have been running a paper based coupon program since 2,017, and many people on this call in attendance have been running them for a very long time.

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00:07:58.470 --> 00:08:07.760

Eli Zigas: But I say all that, because ebt integration as a distribution mechanism for incentive programs has been around since 2,012 at grocery and farmers markets.

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00:08:07.980 --> 00:08:20.720

Eli Zigas: and only in Massachusetts, and a lot of what we're talking about today is other States are now trying to replicate either exactly or very similar to what Massachusetts has done.

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00:08:20.740 --> 00:08:23.139

Eli Zigas: and the logic behind it.

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00:08:24.040 --> 00:08:26.530

Eli Zigas: and i'll speak here again just for spur.

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00:08:27.210 --> 00:08:34.039

Eli Zigas: We know these programs work. We know they reduce hunger, they improve, help, and improve health, and they support the agricultural economy.

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00:08:34.429 --> 00:08:47.239

Eli Zigas: We want them to reach far more people than they currently are. Our program reaches thousands of households. But there are millions of people in California alone who receive Snap, and if we want to reach that scale we see 2 obstacles to getting there.

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00:08:47.400 --> 00:08:51.670

Eli Zigas: One of them is technology, and that's what we're talking about today. The second is money.

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00:08:52.480 --> 00:09:09.959

Eli Zigas: and we can cross that bridge in a conversation later. But the the technology piece is key, something that is easy to scale. And, as I said at the beginning easy for customers to use easier for retailers to use any easy for program administrators to use reduces the friction. And in many ways I think a lot of what we're talking about

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00:09:09.970 --> 00:09:14.499

Eli Zigas: is similar to the transition that happened with food stamps when it moved from paper to electronic.

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00:09:14.580 --> 00:09:31.930

Eli Zigas: A lot of us here on this call are excited about moving incentives from paper or or loyalty, cards that are not transferable across retailers to the card itself, and reducing the friction and having an economy of scale and a and a technology that works better for everyone involved.

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00:09:33.510 --> 00:09:43.989

Eli Zigas: So with that background we're gonna ask. I'm gonna ask a series of questions to everyone here about what's going on in their state, what they see in the future, and any advice that they might have.

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00:09:44.240 --> 00:09:44.980

Eli Zigas: So

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00:09:45.060 --> 00:09:47.699

Eli Zigas: before I do that

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00:09:48.320 --> 00:09:49.330

Eli Zigas: I'm going to do

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00:09:49.690 --> 00:09:50.600

Eli Zigas: quick

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00:09:51.300 --> 00:09:53.550

Eli Zigas: set of slides.

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00:09:54.380 --> 00:09:55.460

Eli Zigas: because

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00:09:55.650 --> 00:09:58.260

Eli Zigas: I think it can make it a little bit more

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00:09:58.670 --> 00:09:59.650

Eli Zigas: visible.

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00:10:00.230 --> 00:10:01.580

Eli Zigas: Okay.

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00:10:02.780 --> 00:10:10.020

Eli Zigas: wait to to give you a visual incentives are often distributed by paper or loyalty, card, or even tokens. What we're talking about

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00:10:10.110 --> 00:10:11.330

Eli Zigas: is

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00:10:11.790 --> 00:10:13.000

Eli Zigas: moving them

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00:10:13.510 --> 00:10:26.749

Eli Zigas: to a state issue. Dbt: card. In this case this is California, and I should say it in California, and we can talk about the difference between this and what Massachusetts and Washington are envisioning still allowing to be used at farmers markets in conjunction with the car.

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00:10:27.460 --> 00:10:28.620

Eli Zigas: How it works

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00:10:28.980 --> 00:10:31.530

Eli Zigas: in California You use your calfeh card to buy

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00:10:31.680 --> 00:10:39.739

Eli Zigas: fresh roots and vegetables at a grocery store. Your purchases match penny for Penny. We'll get to the details. The money is rebated back to your account, and then you could spend your dollars on any

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00:10:39.880 --> 00:10:40.720

produce.

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00:10:40.940 --> 00:10:51.490

Eli Zigas: There are a lot of people involved, I think i'm going to bring this up later. But the general point. Here is. There's stamp agencies involved in the technology ebt processors. Third-party processors

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00:10:51.720 --> 00:10:59.889

Eli Zigas: payment platforms, and then retailers. And so this is just a sample of like all the people who touch an ebt transaction behind the scenes.

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00:11:01.140 --> 00:11:06.929

Eli Zigas: and with that we will get to this slide later. I am going to pass it to mia.

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00:11:07.360 --> 00:11:09.009

and ask you

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00:11:09.150 --> 00:11:10.680

Eli Zigas: first, and then everyone.

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00:11:10.760 --> 00:11:19.599

Eli Zigas: Why did you? Your State pursue ebt integration in the first place? And what is the general program design? How does it work in Massachusetts as the originator?

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00:11:20.520 --> 00:11:21.540

Eli Zigas: Please tell us.

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00:11:22.850 --> 00:11:23.830

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: Thanks you like.

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00:11:24.050 --> 00:11:33.560

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: So, as you. I mentioned Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Dta Department of Transitional Assistance worked with Usda on the original hip

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00:11:33.680 --> 00:11:50.299

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: pilot, and I'm going to be talking more today about the hip program which has succeeded the pilot, but just a very quick little bit about the pilot is that it was available in one county in Massachusetts.

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00:11:50.370 --> 00:12:00.610

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: It was available at a variety of different retailers, including grocery stores and and small convenience stores and farmers markets.

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00:12:00.650 --> 00:12:04.820

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: and it provided a 30% match

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00:12:04.860 --> 00:12:11.759

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: on the fruit and vegetables that were purchased. So when somebody swipes their Ept card

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00:12:11.810 --> 00:12:16.630

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: at the point of sale that was providing the hip pilot incentive.

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00:12:17.340 --> 00:12:19.160

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: A certain amount of money

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00:12:19.180 --> 00:12:22.990

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: of their purchase was rebated instantly onto their card.

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00:12:23.800 --> 00:12:41.679

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: and all fast forward now to the program, which began in 2,017 in Massachusetts, and it was expanding the pilot in some ways, and also restricted from the pilot in some ways, so as opposed to being available at such a wide variety of retailers.

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00:12:41.690 --> 00:12:46.559

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: The hip program, which has been in existence since April. 2,017

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00:12:46.820 --> 00:12:55.380

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: is available at 5 different local farm vendor types, as classified by Usda

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00:12:55.980 --> 00:13:02.220

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: and those include direct marketing farmers. That's the who makes up the bulk of the hip program

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00:13:02.240 --> 00:13:03.759

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: from the retailer side.

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00:13:03.780 --> 00:13:05.900

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: In addition, farmers markets.

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00:13:06.040 --> 00:13:12.789

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: delivery routes which include the mobile farmers markets, and a couple other retailer types.

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00:13:13.100 --> 00:13:19.149

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: and instead of being a 30% return, it's instead a one to one match. So

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00:13:19.170 --> 00:13:22.880

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: when somebody goes to a farmer's market and

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00:13:22.990 --> 00:13:26.949

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: makes a purchase with a vendor selling at that market. Who takes it?

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00:13:27.350 --> 00:13:39.269

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: It looks like they slip their card, and they walk out of there with the same amount of money on their card that they arrived with, but now they have a bag of fruits and vegetables in their hand as well.

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00:13:39.310 --> 00:13:48.660

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: There is a monthly cap for households, on how much hip they can earn 40, 60 or \$80, depending on the household size.

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00:13:48.680 --> 00:13:54.619

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: But essentially the the hip program was an expansion of this really successful hip

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00:13:54.650 --> 00:14:02.010

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: pilot in an effort to not only support local families who are experiencing food insecurity.

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00:14:02.160 --> 00:14:04.900

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: but also the local agricultural economy.

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00:14:10.230 --> 00:14:11.430

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: Your me to delay.

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00:14:12.500 --> 00:14:30.710

Eli Zigas: Sorry about that. Thank you, mia. I slotted myself in next to talk about California, and I should say you spur is an advocacy organization, so I can't speak on behalf of the State. Instead, I would like to give them some shout outs. We are deeply involved in the pilot that is happening.

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00:14:30.720 --> 00:14:46.740

Eli Zigas: and we helped push for its creation through legislation. So that effort began in 2,018. Like I said, we were very interested in coming up with a technology solution that helped us get over the technology obstacle and eventually seeking money to make

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00:14:46.750 --> 00:14:55.710

Eli Zigas: incentives of permanent supplement to Cal fresh program. The snap program in California, either with State funding hopefully or Federal funding. If that becomes available.

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00:14:57.320 --> 00:15:16.310

Eli Zigas: Working with nourish California and a many other organizations, we passed legislation through, signed by the Governor and a 9 million dollar appropriation that basically said gave direction to the California Department of Social services that we would like to see California replicate much of what Massachusetts has done.

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00:15:16.730 --> 00:15:30.370

Eli Zigas: and the program design is very similar. You are with some tweaks. So in California you earn on California, grown fresh fruits and vegetables, specifically seeking to have a higher impact on the local agricultural economy.

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00:15:30.670 --> 00:15:31.660

Eli Zigas: We

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00:15:32.180 --> 00:15:42.789

Eli Zigas: right now do not have a cap based on household size. It is the same across the board. \$60 a month. Speak to Why, that is it's mostly a technological issue and a cost issue, especially for the pilot.

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00:15:42.870 --> 00:15:57.910

Eli Zigas: and the way ours is going to be at grocery and farmers markets, and there are 3 nonprofits that are partnered with the State, and there are a number of people from the California Department of Social Services and Osi here, and they are making this happen.

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00:15:58.120 --> 00:16:09.690

Eli Zigas: and we partner with some retailers. So When this is all launched we will have about, I think, 90 retailers and 7 farmers markets, or 90 stores and 7 farmers markets, offering this

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00:16:10.040 --> 00:16:15.710

Eli Zigas: for the rebates to go back on the card and slated to launch

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00:16:15.720 --> 00:16:30.260

Eli Zigas: at farmers markets, and the first set of grocery stores in the next couple of months. So very excited. It has taken a long time since 2,018, and the legislation passed, but we are very excited to be at this moment, so we are nipping it. Massachusetts Seals

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00:16:30.270 --> 00:16:39.099

Eli Zigas: a decade after you guys started, but excited to be at this moment and really excited when that first incentive is gonna go on a a customer's card.

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00:16:39.620 --> 00:16:46.060

Eli Zigas: All right. I will pass it to Alyssa, who is speaking of nipping at heels both Alyssa and Carrier very close to us.

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00:16:46.810 --> 00:16:47.899

Thanks, Eli.

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00:16:48.220 --> 00:16:57.809

Alyssa Auvinen: So at the Washington State Department of Health we've been administering snap incentive programs with grocery stores and farmers markets since 2,015

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00:16:57.830 --> 00:17:07.449

Alyssa Auvinen: so kind of just talking about how we got here. We've actually been talking about Ebt integration as a scalability tactic, I think, since 2,017,

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00:17:07.480 --> 00:17:13.370

Alyssa Auvinen: and and before my time here at the Department of Health, and kind of like

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00:17:13.430 --> 00:17:21.400

Alyssa Auvinen: what you, I said, we do see that there's potential for scalability here, especially in the grocery space, and

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00:17:21.880 --> 00:17:33.000

Alyssa Auvinen: that this will probably reduce administrative costs in the long term for us as a department, and with our other partner, our retail and farmers market partners.

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00:17:33.280 --> 00:17:48.840

Alyssa Auvinen: I also just wanna do a quick note. One of the reasons why we're doing Ebt integration or piloting Ebt integration is really from a snapshot's perspective. So we think that it will be easier for snapshot to use in the long term.

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00:17:49.030 --> 00:17:54.949

Alyssa Auvinen: and we actually had our state's food policy Forum, which is kind of like a State Food

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00:17:54.980 --> 00:18:04.400

Alyssa Auvinen: Council back in 2,019. In a recommendations, report that they may, they provided to our State Legislature, they said. One way to address

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00:18:04.420 --> 00:18:16.189

Alyssa Auvinen: barriers to accessing healthy food benefits is through ebt integration with the snap incentive program. So we are taking that recommendation in this pilot project.

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00:18:17.770 --> 00:18:34.439

Alyssa Auvinen: Another reason why we're kind of working on Ebt integration right now, I would say it's really because our State Snap Agency, the Department of social and health services, which is a separate and different agency from where snap incentives have been administered at. My agency do. H.

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00:18:34.490 --> 00:18:47.569

Alyssa Auvinen: Is is really because the Shs is willing to work on this pilot project. I just want to give a kudos to them. They've been working on this pilot project planning since 2,000 and

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00:18:48.180 --> 00:19:00.079

Alyssa Auvinen: 2021, almost 2 years, and that's been throughout the pandemic, as they've been dealing with pept and all of the other things that have come with the pandemic and getting food benefits to folks. So kudos to them.

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00:19:00.330 --> 00:19:14.729

Alyssa Auvinen: I'll go really quickly over what our program design is, because it's very similar to California and Massachusetts. Essentially, shoppers can spend a dollar of their snap benefits on fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables

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00:19:14.740 --> 00:19:31.570

Alyssa Auvinen: at any participating pilot retailer, and then they get a dollar put back onto their snappy bt account that can be used towards future purchases for snap eligible items at any snap retailer. So for our pilot project. We're going to be working with select farm vendors

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00:19:31.580 --> 00:19:46.859

Alyssa Auvinen: that sell at a farmer's market and call it the Pesco Farmers Market in South Central Washington, and 3 grocery stores of various sizes, including an independent grocer, a food co-OP, and a large supermarket chain.

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00:19:49.410 --> 00:19:53.150

Eli Zigas: Great, thank you, Alyssa, and last but not least on this Kerry.

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00:19:54.440 --> 00:20:00.599

Kerri Connolly: Thanks, Eli. So we started pursuing Gbt integration in a very different

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00:20:00.610 --> 00:20:24.969

Kerri Connolly: way, and we are really riding the shoulders of all of you guys to do this work, but we at the Red I'm Public Health Institute ran: we run a small mobile produce market called Food on the move, and we received Gus Nip and Finney grants through the Usda to fund that where we offer that 50% incentive. And we saw we did. A robust evaluation really saw the impact that it that it was having

142

00:20:24.980 --> 00:20:37.850

Kerri Connolly: on folks. And so we kind of came to the table with a lot of state partners, a lot of community organizations. We did a 6 month strategic planning, and in that we also had the Rhode Island Food Dealers Association.

143

00:20:37.860 --> 00:20:56.599

Kerri Connolly: and so they flat out, told us from the start that they will not do a gift card or tokens, or anything like that, so we really didn't have a choice to kind of consider anything else in the matter. So we went straight for the integration piece of it. And that's you know, when I started knocking on on everyone's door here to figure out what that meant.

144

00:20:56.610 --> 00:21:03.290

Kerri Connolly: So that's how we kind of got to to the idea of abt integration. And so now

145

00:21:03.320 --> 00:21:08.420

we did get funding for it in the State selection budget, and we're hoping to go live

146

00:21:08.520 --> 00:21:23.239

Kerri Connolly: this spring. Our program design is fairly similar, but with some slight differences we are grocery store, only we're not currently doing farmers markets with this round of state funding.

147

00:21:23.710 --> 00:21:25.650

Kerri Connolly: I think that's just because we don't

148

00:21:25.900 --> 00:21:41.029

Kerri Connolly: for 2 reasons. One Rhode Island doesn't have quite the robust farm industry that California does. And then to most of our farmers markets are run through an organization called Farm Pressured Island, and they're great partners with us, and have been at the table.

149

00:21:41.040 --> 00:21:51.529

Kerri Connolly: But they're still using the token system. So they're kind of hoping to get their systems up to date on there and then potentially be involved with us for the next round of funding through the State.

150

00:21:51.540 --> 00:22:03.020

Kerri Connolly: So that's one little difference, and then we also do a 50% rebate. So for every \$1 they get 50 back on the ebt card to be spent on any snap eligible item.

151

00:22:03.030 --> 00:22:16.020

Kerri Connolly: And then we are currently have a \$25 cap, so they could spend \$50 and get up to \$25 on fresh fruits and vegetables, excluding canned and

152

00:22:16.040 --> 00:22:17.540

Kerri Connolly: present at this time.

153

00:22:17.670 --> 00:22:20.329

Kerri Connolly: So those are the kind of main programmatic differences

154

00:22:21.070 --> 00:22:27.380

Eli Zigas: great, and to help everyone wrap your head around this. We will be posting this after

155

00:22:27.600 --> 00:22:39.489

Eli Zigas: the event. But if you want to screenshot this, this is a summary of the program designs across the 4 States, and I saw there was a question in the in the chat that someone sent us

156

00:22:41.230 --> 00:22:46.680

Eli Zigas: That was about. Where is this available? So i'll take that down, which is.

157

00:22:47.010 --> 00:23:01.039

Eli Zigas: if it's tied to the Ebg card. Then I assume it will be offered at all snap retailers. And so the distinction here that hopefully that chart is trying to make is, you can earn it at participating retailers that people can get the earned, the bonuses that are rebated to the card.

158

00:23:01.050 --> 00:23:07.100

Eli Zigas: But in all these States the design is that the rebates you get are on your card, and they are effectively

159

00:23:07.260 --> 00:23:23.510

Eli Zigas: to the customer in the store regular snap dollars. So the State is keeping track of who's paying for them if it's State funds, or if it's Federal funds. But for the customer in the store you could go into any snap participating retailer, and spend that money that you earned like a regular snap benefit.

160

00:23:24.200 --> 00:23:32.540

Eli Zigas: So that's the differences you can only earn right now and select retailers who are participating. But then you can redeem or spend the bonus dollars that were rebated to your card wherever you spend.

161

00:23:33.210 --> 00:23:34.310

Eli Zigas: Okay.

162

00:23:34.510 --> 00:23:53.640

Eli Zigas: we're going to move to the next question, which is, what's the status of your project? Your ev integration project? Are there any milestones coming up, or that you've recently

reached? How much money is being earned by snap participants, or how much do you anticipate being earned within a 12 month period within a year? And again we're going to do the same order in order of seniority. Mia

163

00:23:53.650 --> 00:23:54.689

Eli Zigas: to you first.

164

00:23:56.570 --> 00:23:58.320

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: Thanks. So

165

00:23:58.340 --> 00:24:06.179

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: a hip has been operational since April of 2,017, as a program. It did start with Federal Finnie funding not known as Gusnip.

166

00:24:06.230 --> 00:24:08.190

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: and has it.

167

00:24:08.290 --> 00:24:16.370

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: The the funds were exhausted fairly quickly. The demand for the program was very high, and the State began funding the program.

168

00:24:16.470 --> 00:24:27.580

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: Just some dollars for you in this fiscal year. We have a July to June fiscal year. So from July to December of 2,022

169

00:24:27.620 --> 00:24:28.560

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: I

170

00:24:28.790 --> 00:24:42.190

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: There were 8.1 million dollars of hip incentives processed. So that's again 8.1 million of fruits and vegetables purchased from local agricultural retailers, and also

171

00:24:42.420 --> 00:24:46.269

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: 8.1 million dollars of those fruits and vegetables going home with families

172

00:24:46.500 --> 00:24:54.020

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: since April 2,017. The total amount processed in hip is 44.5 million dollars.

173

00:24:54.460 --> 00:25:00.509

We've also hit some other big milestones that are really exciting. For example.

174

00:25:00.880 --> 00:25:17.809

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: it is a challenge to identify where hip retailers are located, because farms sell all over the place. We were able to launch a website in 2,021 that vendors actually populate with their own sales information like their sales locations so that people can find

175

00:25:17.830 --> 00:25:18.750

hip

176

00:25:18.810 --> 00:25:21.460

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: access points all across the State. That's very exciting

177

00:25:22.680 --> 00:25:38.250

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: sort of to a question that I saw in the chat, answering that many farmers do have their own snap processing equipment. They are enrolled directly with Usda as a snap retailer, and with us as a hip retailer, and that means that they need it. Snap processing equipment.

178

00:25:38.510 --> 00:25:47.150

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: So with funds from Usda, we were able to administer a snap equipment grant, and gave equipment out to over 100 vendors Recently we just finished that up.

179

00:25:47.530 --> 00:26:04.900

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: and we are just now in the process of adding over 120 new vendors from this past year. So we are looking at around 300 vendors for this upcoming season, which is really exciting. 185,000 households have been served by the program.

180

00:26:04.990 --> 00:26:06.420

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: and

181

00:26:06.910 --> 00:26:08.219

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: i'll leave it right there for now

182

00:26:10.740 --> 00:26:12.469

Eli Zigas: fantastic. Thank you, mia.

183

00:26:13.570 --> 00:26:31.149

Eli Zigas: for us in California. I think the milestone that is very much on our radar is is the launch of california's updated system. We have a different Ebt contractor than Massachusetts. Massachusetts has conduit as their contractor, and we have a contractor called Fis.

184

00:26:31.160 --> 00:26:36.210

Eli Zigas: and so we'll be the first State that goes live with Fis, and

185

00:26:36.270 --> 00:26:53.450

Eli Zigas: because it's been 10 years since this happened in grocery stores, there's been a lot of work for the other players in the grocery store payments, ecosystem who have updated this system. I You saw the the the slide briefly, but there are folks here on the line from

186

00:26:53.950 --> 00:27:05.419

Eli Zigas: from 5 surf to payments, platform and world pay, and then cash register companies like Ncr. And Doomac payments, platforms, also Ncr. And

187

00:27:05.590 --> 00:27:16.120

Eli Zigas: data Cap, All those parties have had to update software and systems databases to manage this. And so we have done some testing.

188

00:27:16.700 --> 00:27:25.149

Eli Zigas: and we've hit that milestone where there are test transactions going back and forth, showing that the systems that have been implemented are are working or nearly certified.

189

00:27:25.180 --> 00:27:43.619

Eli Zigas: And we're going to be moving to a live card test where there is a machine in a grocery store or at a farmer's market, that is, as running real tests and going live with customers potentially earning rebates hopefully as soon as end of February, and then rolling out to more and more of the pilot locations in the

190

00:27:44.030 --> 00:27:49.319

Eli Zigas: 2 months after that, so i'd say February to April. We're hoping to have

191

00:27:49.860 --> 00:28:02.489

Eli Zigas: customers earning earning rebates in California, and there is approximately 5 million dollars remaining in the budget that has been set aside for the bonus dollars themselves, the incentives themselves. And it is a big question.

192

00:28:02.750 --> 00:28:12.089

Eli Zigas: We know the massive. We have Massachusetts data of an Ept integrated project at farmers markets, and we'll be curious if it's similar in California.

193

00:28:12.100 --> 00:28:35.630

Eli Zigas: We don't have data for grocery at a one to one match in California with California grown. So there's a number of variables. We'll be very curious to see what the burn rate is, how much people earn, how quickly, how often they hit the cap, and so I would say, we don't really know how how much money we need for 12 months for, say, an average household or a certain size retailer, but we will learn a lot in the pilot.

194

00:28:35.640 --> 00:28:38.490

Eli Zigas: and we've got 5 million. That will hopefully get us through

195

00:28:38.540 --> 00:28:39.450

Eli Zigas: 12 months.

196

00:28:40.070 --> 00:28:41.830

Eli Zigas: and with that I will pass it to

197

00:28:42.680 --> 00:28:43.530

Eli Zigas: Carrie.

198

00:28:46.910 --> 00:29:01.510

Kerri Connolly: Alright, so, status update, we had a we had a big year. Basically we've been advocating for this for 3 years now, and in this last General Assembly budget Our year runs from January to June, and our session runs from January of June

199

00:29:01.520 --> 00:29:09.589

Kerri Connolly: we received an 11.5 million dollars appropriation, and that was due to the massive flux of arpa dollars that we received.

200

00:29:09.800 --> 00:29:15.000

and 10 million of that is required to be spent on the incentive itself.

201

00:29:15.090 --> 00:29:32.509

Kerri Connolly: So I give so much credit to Dhs, our department of Human services which runs the snap program. They have been working tirelessly with by us to get this operationalized on a really quick timeline. In 6 months we are hopefully

202

00:29:32.520 --> 00:29:49.790

Kerri Connolly: ready to start testing at least on the Fis side. This coming February in the next couple of weeks. So we're excited for that we have 3 retailers, large chain retailers that I can't say out loud because they are signing the Mo this week

203

00:29:49.840 --> 00:29:57.009

that are at the table now. So we're hopefully going to get a fourth on board as well. We're in late conversations.

204

00:29:57.050 --> 00:30:01.079

and those retailers i'll use the

205

00:30:01.170 --> 00:30:15.090

Kerri Connolly: not to get too technical. But the third party processor pfizer, which will be not ready to go live until March. So we're not anticipating actually to be live in retailers until early spring. But it's

206

00:30:15.280 --> 00:30:24.239

Kerri Connolly: really phenomenal that it operationalized in about 8 months to this point. So lots of exciting work this past year.

207

00:30:25.370 --> 00:30:30.489

Eli Zigas: Fantastic, very quick movement in Rhode Island and Alyssa.

208

00:30:30.810 --> 00:30:32.149

Eli Zigas: What's going on in Washington?

209

00:30:32.350 --> 00:30:46.370

Alyssa Auvinen: Yeah, I think we are right, like you said, elaborating coattails of California and Rhode Island. So we have been in like pilot planning stage for almost 2 years.

210

00:30:46.390 --> 00:30:51.869

Alyssa Auvinen: and in terms of upcoming milestones we

211

00:30:52.490 --> 00:30:58.380

Alyssa Auvinen: are hoping that we'll be able to launch the pilot with select farm vendors at the beginning may

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00:30:58.510 --> 00:31:15.569

Alyssa Auvinen: so in just 4 months. So there's a lot that needs to happen between now and then, but we did just have our first kick off with the farm vendors today, and hopefully a lot of question. A lot more questions come in from them after after today.

213

00:31:15.580 --> 00:31:30.900

Alyssa Auvinen: and we had our first kick off with the 3 grocery retailers that we hope to work with a couple of weeks ago. So we think that the grocery retailers will probably come on later in the summer, because, like Kerry

214

00:31:31.310 --> 00:31:44.989

Alyssa Auvinen: said, all of our grocery retailers also use the seam of third party processor. And so it's just kind of lining up all those timelines to make sure that the retailers and third party processor and our State Ev

215

00:31:45.920 --> 00:31:48.679

system can play well together.

216

00:31:50.580 --> 00:31:56.890

Alyssa Auvinen: You Layer. We also answering the how, how much money do we have to be?

217

00:31:56.900 --> 00:32:14.219

Alyssa Auvinen: It's Funny this is a question, because I actually had this as a as a question out to folks at spur a couple of weeks ago, like how much should we be budgeting for this like truly,

because honestly, a lot of this is a guessing game. This is such a drastically different way of operating snap incentives than what we currently do.

218

00:32:14.380 --> 00:32:19.479

Alyssa Auvinen: but from some of the estimates that we've looked at

219

00:32:19.690 --> 00:32:20.450

with

220

00:32:20.740 --> 00:32:27.720

Alyssa Auvinen: some of the farm vendors, and then with the grocery retailers, we're anticipating it could be 2 million dollars

221

00:32:27.960 --> 00:32:35.720

Alyssa Auvinen: for like a 12 month period, with just those 3 pilot grocery retailers and

222

00:32:36.000 --> 00:32:46.110

Alyssa Auvinen: with the farm vendors. So to give you a kind of scope and scale of what that looks like. Our pilot's super small compared to what we do with our normal day to day snap incentive programs that

223

00:32:46.460 --> 00:32:59.659

Alyssa Auvinen: run on paper. We work with over 200 grocery stores and 120 farmers markets. So we are talking 2 million for just our small local pilot compared to what

224

00:32:59.710 --> 00:33:00.490

you know

225

00:33:00.890 --> 00:33:03.950

we'd love to see eventually, I think, on the State wide scale.

226

00:33:05.370 --> 00:33:13.029

Eli Zigas: And someone asked the question, Are these cooperative grocery stores and or conventional grocery stores, and I would say.

227

00:33:13.300 --> 00:33:24.619

Eli Zigas: there's a lot of conventional grocery stores involved. I don't know if anyone's specifically working with a co-OP. Alyssa, you're nodding one of our pilot retailers. We hope to be a food goal.

228

00:33:24.650 --> 00:33:34.890

Eli Zigas: Yes, and and they they range in scale. So there are some very large groceries who are involved, and then conventional groceries are sort of smaller mid-size chains

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00:33:35.270 --> 00:33:46.869

Eli Zigas: independently on kind of thing. Okay, we are running short on time. So i'm going to ask all the panelists this last question, and maybe you could do it super fast, just like Bullet Point version, which is.

230

00:33:46.880 --> 00:33:55.979

Eli Zigas: if someone in the audience wants to do what you've done in Massachusetts, or do what the rest of us and the other States are trying to do in in their own state.

231

00:33:56.670 --> 00:33:58.220

Eli Zigas: What advice would you give them?

232

00:33:58.540 --> 00:34:00.710

Eli Zigas: Maybe top 3 thoughts.

233

00:34:01.170 --> 00:34:02.250

Eli Zigas: rapid fire.

234

00:34:02.420 --> 00:34:05.889

Eli Zigas: and I will pass this this time in reverse order to carry

235

00:34:05.940 --> 00:34:06.750

Eli Zigas: first.

236

00:34:07.660 --> 00:34:26.540

Kerri Connolly: My best piece of advice is to get a a coalition with all the people to table like from the start. Don't. Try to bring people in once you've already designed the program. Get get their voice that we have the retailers. We had the food bank. Anybody who touches snap

recipients? We asked, snap recipients and used all that to design the program. So that's my advice.

237

00:34:26.630 --> 00:34:27.509

Eli Zigas: It's all right.

238

00:34:27.600 --> 00:34:28.459

Eli Zigas: Alyssa

239

00:34:29.010 --> 00:34:38.059

Alyssa Auvinen: that was going to be one of my bullet points. So i'll skip that. I also would just add to this advice around

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00:34:38.380 --> 00:34:49.149

Alyssa Auvinen: kind of thinking about the timeframe Eli's talked about. You know, this being 10 years in the more than 10 years in the making in California, and I think we just need to be realistic that, like

241

00:34:49.179 --> 00:35:06.990

Alyssa Auvinen: for many of us, this is not our full time project, and for many of our State snap agencies they don't have full time. Staff dedicated to this. So be patient. I know we're trying to help kind of lead the way with some of the technical pieces or the some of the panelists states here are trying to lead that. But

242

00:35:07.020 --> 00:35:14.290

Alyssa Auvinen: be patient. There's a lot of project management communication and a lot of organizations and businesses that that need to be involved.

243

00:35:15.400 --> 00:35:18.050

Eli Zigas: Great me, I'm going to toss it to you, and then i'll

244

00:35:18.340 --> 00:35:19.319

Eli Zigas: do at the end.

245

00:35:19.560 --> 00:35:23.050

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: Sure. So a couple of things one is to consider equity

246

00:35:23.230 --> 00:35:40.350

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: and inclusion and all aspects of your programming, and that includes for us, looking at Hip as both an opportunity to address food insecurity, but also to address economic mobility issues in communities with the historical

247

00:35:40.390 --> 00:35:44.310

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: under investment. And so you know.

248

00:35:44.550 --> 00:35:46.479

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: and using your data honestly

249

00:35:46.540 --> 00:35:52.690

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: collecting the data and using it on both sides of that equation, Every dollar

250

00:35:52.760 --> 00:36:01.950

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: that is a fruit and vegetable purchase. For someone really does have that double, or has the potential to have this double impact in terms of equity

251

00:36:02.060 --> 00:36:04.119

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: on both the vendor and the client side.

252

00:36:04.270 --> 00:36:07.480

The other thing that I would say is.

253

00:36:08.350 --> 00:36:13.910

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: this is a little bit in the weeds, and so i'll just hint at it here but that a one to one match

254

00:36:14.180 --> 00:36:17.600

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: leads to a situation where customers

255

00:36:17.660 --> 00:36:25.520

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: don't really see the difference between the snap and hit, or they want, they see a real difference between Snap and he.

256

00:36:25.540 --> 00:36:32.010

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: They want to be able to use their hip, regardless of whether or not they have a snap balance, and so

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00:36:32.060 --> 00:36:37.250

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: but i'll just leave it right there. We don't actually see that as a problem. If we're trying to increase

258

00:36:37.290 --> 00:36:52.969

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: food security and somebody put in the chat nutrition security. We think that it would make sense for people to be able to access those fruit and vegetable dollars at any point in the month, regardless of when or whether or not they've used their their snap bounds.

259

00:36:53.630 --> 00:36:58.170

Eli Zigas: And so we had to clarify that that's sort of like. You would have a fruit and vegetable allotment.

260

00:36:58.190 --> 00:37:01.889

Eli Zigas: as opposed to earning it with purchases, and then spending it.

261

00:37:02.350 --> 00:37:03.859

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: I think

262

00:37:03.880 --> 00:37:05.310

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: it's a complex

263

00:37:05.670 --> 00:37:09.379

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: topic, and I don't think we'll get into it just now.

264

00:37:09.510 --> 00:37:11.200

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: but I will say that

265

00:37:11.450 --> 00:37:23.789

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: the the earning you know that language can still exist. But I will say that on the ground customers are not using that language. They're using a different kind of

language, which is that they want to use their hip. They want to access their fruits and vegetables.

266

00:37:24.860 --> 00:37:25.950

Eli Zigas: Great. Thank you.

267

00:37:26.000 --> 00:37:27.279

Eli Zigas: I think

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00:37:27.610 --> 00:37:30.370

Eli Zigas: my 2 cents on this question would be.

269

00:37:30.540 --> 00:37:34.769

Eli Zigas: These projects are not possible without your State Snap Agency.

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00:37:34.780 --> 00:37:54.730

Eli Zigas: They run the Ebt system, and there's a lot that goes into it, you know, represents that agency. But for the rest of us and those of you who are not part of an agency. You need to work with the agency, because this will not exist without them, and they will be the ones administering it. And then the program also doesn't exist without retailers, and especially if you're going to do a pilot

271

00:37:54.740 --> 00:38:12.109

Eli Zigas: you want to as best you can identify some retailers as part of the coalition that Carrie talked about pretty far in advance, because it can be a heavy lift for them. And so you want them committed. You want them, understanding what the lift is, and if you don't have a willing retailer to be like, yeah, i'll be the guinea pig. I'll go first.

272

00:38:12.220 --> 00:38:23.309

Eli Zigas: and they are good business reasons, I think, to do it. But if they're not on board, you don't have a project, and so, having all of those at the table, they also can help on the technological side, bring partners to the table.

273

00:38:23.340 --> 00:38:25.730

Eli Zigas: That's my 2 cents.

274

00:38:26.120 --> 00:38:31.210

Eli Zigas: and then the the third cent I will ask. A segue is, find some money

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00:38:31.380 --> 00:38:46.309

Eli Zigas: because it costs money to do this. These are multi 1 million dollar projects, and I don't think there's a way around that, especially the incentive dollars themselves. You know those. If you start reaching a lot of people or your retailer works with a lot of reaches, a lot of people. You will start burning through cash quickly.

276

00:38:46.510 --> 00:39:04.629

Eli Zigas: So you need money. There is technological costs, upfront costs there, and there's also cost for incentives. And how fortuitous is it that Usda, in this past 12 months committed to offering 25 million dollars to help with these kinds of projects. And then just last week issued an Rfp. Request for proposals.

277

00:39:04.640 --> 00:39:17.969

Eli Zigas: and that will offer money to do this kind of thing, and rather than me keep talking about it, I will hand it to Margo, who is going to give a brief overview of some money that's available if you or someone you know, is interested in doing a project like this. So, Margaret, please.

278

00:39:18.770 --> 00:39:20.240

Marga Ortiz: Thank you, Eli.

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00:39:20.290 --> 00:39:29.869

Marga Ortiz: So yes. Last Thursday, up in Evanes posted the request for applications. We called the Rfa for the Electronic Health incentive

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00:39:30.030 --> 00:39:38.960

Marga Ortiz: project called Ehip. And so we really appreciate the opportunity to make everyone aware of the grant, and briefly go over the Rfa with all of you today.

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00:39:39.330 --> 00:39:58.039

Marga Ortiz: So, as stated, this opportunity provides up to 25 milliondollars to integrate incentives into state a Bt. Systems, all 50 States, the District of Columbia, as well as the Us. Virgin islands and Guam, which also administer snap, are eligible to apply. We will be

282

00:39:58.050 --> 00:40:02.829

Marga Ortiz: awarding one to 3 grants in the form of cooperative agreements.

283

00:40:02.930 --> 00:40:15.020

Marga Ortiz: and what cooperative agreements means is just that the grantees will be working closely with Fns on the finally on the final system, design and technical specifications.

284

00:40:15.890 --> 00:40:28.159

Marga Ortiz: So, although the Food and Nutrition Act allows for several categories of eligible incentive food. For purposes of this grant the incentives can only be used for fruits and vegetables

285

00:40:28.190 --> 00:40:36.660

Marga Ortiz: that decision was made, because that category has been shown to be the easiest to identify through the retailer pos systems.

286

00:40:36.890 --> 00:40:40.819

States may propose one of 2 models.

287

00:40:40.910 --> 00:40:50.069

Marga Ortiz: One is, I believe what is the model that everyone is using here, I believe, which is that you can

288

00:40:51.760 --> 00:41:02.029

Marga Ortiz: provide incentives for qualified fruit, vegetable purchases that can then be used for any snap eligible item at any authorized store.

289

00:41:02.280 --> 00:41:16.669

Marga Ortiz: But we also providing the option for somebody to propose a solution to giving incentives for the purchase of call, purchase, of qualifying for some vegetables that can that would then only be used for additional

290

00:41:16.700 --> 00:41:19.910

Marga Ortiz: purchases of qualifying fruits and vegetables

291

00:41:20.030 --> 00:41:38.350

Marga Ortiz: at participating stores. And we do know that this latter model does require additional technical requirements, and so we would encourage applicants if they want, if they, by interested in pursuing that that they first confirm the feasibility of that model with their States

292

00:41:38.470 --> 00:41:40.250

Marga Ortiz: ebt processor

293

00:41:41.360 --> 00:41:55.239

Marga Ortiz: priority, we will be given to the applications that ensure the incentives reach marginalized, and our high food and security communities, such as tribal nations and the surrounding communities, rural communities.

294

00:41:55.250 --> 00:42:09.180

Marga Ortiz: Persistent poverty counties defined by the usda ers poverty area measures, and also low income and low access census tracks as defined by the Usda er as food access research, atlas.

295

00:42:09.980 --> 00:42:18.099

Marga Ortiz: the Grant funds must be used primarily for the Ebc. The Ebt system, integration costs

296

00:42:18.110 --> 00:42:37.620

Marga Ortiz: and the incentives themselves. The funds can also be used for retailer pos system costs, but only for independent retailers that are located in the priority target areas that I just mentioned. And this is to help them provide incentives that can electronically track

297

00:42:37.680 --> 00:42:41.969

Marga Ortiz: be tracked through the retailer's pos system

298

00:42:43.430 --> 00:42:47.210

Marga Ortiz: for identifying the the eligible fruits of vegetables.

299

00:42:48.710 --> 00:43:01.759

Marga Ortiz: There are no cost sharing or matching requirements, but F. And Us. Does support collaboration among local State regional national partnerships that leverage assets to most effectively reach the goals associated with the solicitation.

300

00:43:01.770 --> 00:43:20.509

Marga Ortiz: We will note that all costs except the actual incentives, are legitimate State agency expenditures under the Normal 50 50 Federal reimbursement rate for snap administration cost,

and the States may also utilize American Rescue plan Act funds for these costs at a 100% reimbursement rate.

301

00:43:22.360 --> 00:43:38.299

Marga Ortiz: and quickly, because this question has already come up, and because all of you are here right now for the States that have already contracted to integrate incentives into their evt system. This grant still provides

302

00:43:38.350 --> 00:43:57.320

Marga Ortiz: additional finding opportunities for you as well, and what those opportunities are, are to make system additional system changes that will probably be likely to meet whatever requirements F and S. Establishes that could be different from what was established under the State funded programs.

303

00:43:57.350 --> 00:44:02.109

Marga Ortiz: It could pay to expand the project to retailers in the target areas.

304

00:44:02.280 --> 00:44:11.619

Marga Ortiz: It can also be used for maintenance and operations of the existing state. Ev. She incentive projects, and it can be used for the incentives themselves.

305

00:44:12.410 --> 00:44:14.250

Marga Ortiz: So

306

00:44:14.440 --> 00:44:30.959

Marga Ortiz: I know that most of you probably Haven't had a chance to look over the Rfa. But we, once you do encourage you to submit questions to the Grant officer. Her information is in the Rfa. And her name is Carla Garcia.

307

00:44:32.850 --> 00:44:48.819

Eli Zigas: Fantastic. Thank you so much, Margaret. So glad you could join us hopefully. That is a seed that got planted in many people's head that needs to be watered, grown, and submitted very quickly. So good luck, everyone digesting that, and figuring out what to do with this amazing opportunity.

308

00:44:49.210 --> 00:45:02.459

Eli Zigas: And with that I am going to turn us to Q. A. Again. If you have a question that you Haven't answered, You. Haven't asked. Please use the question and answer function that's in zoom. You can see that probably at the bottom of your screen.

309

00:45:02.470 --> 00:45:15.220

Eli Zigas: It's a Q. A. Box, and that's how we're seeing them. We've gotten a lot of questions so far, and I will just tell you. Now we do not have enough time to answer all of them. I will try and answer. Get us to answer many of them, and we may try and take some of them.

310

00:45:15.550 --> 00:45:24.509

Eli Zigas: and do some follow up and post the Q. A. Afterwards, because there are some really good questions, and hopefully the other panelists be willing to help with that. So one, that's a

311

00:45:25.010 --> 00:45:38.730

Eli Zigas: prerogative of the facilitator here that I want to answer is from Elise. I'm honestly last name wrong. Go on interested in hearing more about the rationale for fruit and vegetable earning the incentive. But then the incentive can be spent on any snap. Item. Our program is.

312

00:45:38.810 --> 00:45:53.169

Eli Zigas: you earn on fruits and vegetables, and you redeem on fruits and vegetables in retail right now, and we see that it's important to increasing fruit and vegetable consumption was their consideration to limit the incentive to only fruit and vegetable reason I want to tackle this question is because we also, currently our paper program. Double up food box. Is that model

313

00:45:53.180 --> 00:46:07.090

Eli Zigas: you earn on fruits and vegetables you spend on fruits and vegetables, and there are a few rationals. For why? That is not the State design. One is when Massachusetts did it in 2,012. Their design was earned on fruits and vegetables. Redeem on snap.

314

00:46:07.310 --> 00:46:10.850

Eli Zigas: Technologically, the way that works

315

00:46:11.000 --> 00:46:19.889

Eli Zigas: is one way, and if you wanted to restrict it to fruits and vegetables. It would require a lot of additional programming that has never been done. So you would be. You would be

316

00:46:19.920 --> 00:46:21.439

Eli Zigas: pioneering new ground.

317

00:46:21.520 --> 00:46:23.669

Eli Zigas: which is not to say you couldn't do it.

318

00:46:23.720 --> 00:46:31.800

Eli Zigas: but it would be a heavier lift. So more money, more time, and perhaps some pushback, especially from retailers and processors who are like Well.

319

00:46:31.960 --> 00:46:44.729

Eli Zigas: why are you doing something different than Massachusetts now that, said the Rfa. That Margaret just talked about allows it. So it's a possibility. So one is technical, but also technical in terms of time and money. The other was, we got

320

00:46:45.300 --> 00:46:47.280

Eli Zigas: very loud and clear message

321

00:46:47.470 --> 00:46:53.049

Eli Zigas: from a number of anti-hunger advocates, and in and our State snap agency that

322

00:46:53.760 --> 00:47:05.889

Eli Zigas: it was important to them that people needed food and money for food, not just fruits and vegetables, so they understood the the public health argument for increasing nutrition and purchased fruits and vegetables. They also wanted to see people

323

00:47:05.960 --> 00:47:08.230

Eli Zigas: to be able to stretch their food budgets further generally.

324

00:47:08.320 --> 00:47:27.529

Eli Zigas: And so they said, we like the Massachusetts model. For that reason it does both, and the hip study shows that it does increase fruits and vegetable consumption. So you don't need it on both ends to get fruit and vegetable consumption increase, and those are the 2 primary reasons I don't know if anyone has anything they want to add for. Why your State has pursued this model

325

00:47:28.670 --> 00:47:29.250

same here.

326

00:47:29.970 --> 00:47:42.129

We also surveyed snap participants, and we got over a 1,000 responses, and far and away was the program model of spending on fruits and vegetables with snappy bt and getting

327

00:47:42.140 --> 00:48:01.560

Alyssa Auvinen: money back that can be used for any stamp. Eligible item was the preferred model. So it also, you know, if we're trying to center a snapshot by kind of moving forward with this type of work, you know. I think we need to be cognizant that they can make shopping choices for themselves.

328

00:48:04.190 --> 00:48:04.850

Eli Zigas: Great.

329

00:48:05.000 --> 00:48:15.690

Eli Zigas: Thank you. I'm going to move to another question from Paul Berkbeck. Can you talk about any challenges or insights? And implementing this with the Ebt provider? What was the cost to add this? And how was this cost paid for?

330

00:48:16.730 --> 00:48:19.379

Eli Zigas: Mia? I don't know if you want to speak about

331

00:48:19.610 --> 00:48:25.689

Eli Zigas: historically hip, or whether there have been any more recent costs, I will add.

332

00:48:26.600 --> 00:48:29.390

Eli Zigas: I think it's an interesting question, because

333

00:48:29.840 --> 00:48:41.410

Eli Zigas: the the Ebt provider for Massachusetts is conduit, as I mentioned before, and for California. The contractor is Fis. Those are the 2 main contractors around the country that work with most States

334

00:48:42.170 --> 00:48:43.750

Eli Zigas: doing it the first time

335

00:48:43.940 --> 00:49:00.269

Eli Zigas: is a bigger lift than doing it subsequently, and I can't speak for those companies, and they they might have different perspective. But I think whatever number we share now, you should take it with a grain of that was for some of the first States.

336

00:49:00.300 --> 00:49:08.759

Eli Zigas: and I would encourage your state if it's considering this is once it becomes more common it could be worth writing this into your bid

337

00:49:08.800 --> 00:49:25.370

Eli Zigas: the request, for when you have an Ebt contractor bid for the State's services once both once it's more common, it could be folded into the overall cost, and maybe not be a new line. Item, change, order, kind of thing. The short answer I would offer is.

338

00:49:25.380 --> 00:49:30.979

Eli Zigas: I think, in Massachusetts and I not 100% sure. In California. We're looking, we talking low. 7 figure

339

00:49:31.280 --> 00:49:38.250

Eli Zigas: amount, maybe high, 6, and Alyssa or me. I'd love for you to come in and listen to Kerry. If you have

340

00:49:38.460 --> 00:49:39.750

Eli Zigas: ranges in there.

341

00:49:40.260 --> 00:49:49.170

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: I can just say very quickly that both the implementation of the hip pilot and to the original hip program, or before my time at Dta. So i'm

342

00:49:49.180 --> 00:50:09.139

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: having to pull through reports to find exact numbers on how that landed. I know that the hip pilot cost 4.4,000,055 of that was supposedly for system work and a certain amount for the hip program as well again. I couldn't. I couldn't speak to you know.

343

00:50:09.690 --> 00:50:12.239

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: as you. I was saying, how much of that would be

344

00:50:12.310 --> 00:50:15.439

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: required to be repeatable for your state.

345

00:50:17.830 --> 00:50:25.000

Kerri Connolly: I'll say we're looking as like a one time fee about \$500,000.

346

00:50:25.020 --> 00:50:40.570

Kerri Connolly: But I will say there is monthly charge on, so for every transaction that's run there is a charge by Fs for that transaction. So your budget needs to reflect that long term as well.

347

00:50:40.650 --> 00:50:43.769

Kerri Connolly: and usually they have a minimum. If, like you don't hit

348

00:50:43.870 --> 00:50:49.220

Kerri Connolly: X amount of charges that month, you still have to pay it like a minimum for that.
So

349

00:50:51.690 --> 00:50:52.600

okay

350

00:50:52.850 --> 00:51:03.909

to the exact cost, because that's that. The Ebt process or Ebt system contractor is with Dshs or State Snap Agency, but agree with

351

00:51:03.940 --> 00:51:07.359

what Carrie said to think about one time cost, and then

352

00:51:07.450 --> 00:51:10.009

transaction Ongoing transaction costs

353

00:51:12.920 --> 00:51:31.250

Eli Zigas: great. Thank you all. We have a question from Jamie Bugle. You all are operating at the State low for snap and sign ups. Are there any examples in your State or counties or cities running electronic incentive programs separately from yours? For example, in in Wisconsin is unlikely the Legislature would budget funds for this, so incentive programs are usually run locally.

354

00:51:31.270 --> 00:51:35.129

Eli Zigas: and I want to start by answering this a couple of ways.

355

00:51:35.450 --> 00:51:40.629

Eli Zigas: Everyone should know we are. We are all here talking about Ebt integration. We

356

00:51:40.710 --> 00:51:53.659

Eli Zigas: many of us on this call have colleagues who want to see their programs expand statewide, and for a variety of reasons, are not looking primarily at the Ept system to do that. So I think there are avenues using

357

00:51:53.920 --> 00:52:03.619

Eli Zigas: sort of trans retailer loyalty cards, or having a lot of retailers just work really Well, to offer these programs doesn't necessarily need to be ebt to scale.

358

00:52:03.630 --> 00:52:21.370

Eli Zigas: So you could. You could pursue that avenue Once you do start talking about the Ebt system. You are talking about your State Snap Agency, and so you need their buy in. Now, whether you need the Legislature to fund it, or perhaps your State agency could say, yeah, we want to do this in one county, and we're going to apply for a grant that Marca just told us about

359

00:52:21.520 --> 00:52:34.339

Eli Zigas: is possibly an option. So you need the the buy-in of the agency You Don't necessarily need the money from the state it could come from somewhere else, potentially. That's like that's my quick answer to that.

360

00:52:34.490 --> 00:52:36.450

Eli Zigas: Does anyone have anything they want to add.

361

00:52:39.620 --> 00:52:54.120

Kerri Connolly: Hmm, I I'll just add, I think this addresses a question from Rachel that was in the chat to. If If States are now funding the incentives? Or is it still a mixture of private Gusnip State funding? I can only speak for Rhode Island, but

362

00:52:54.150 --> 00:53:03.520

Kerri Connolly: for our statewide program it is just the state appropriation that is funding the program. Currently, we do not have a Usda funding for that, and I don't.

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00:53:03.590 --> 00:53:10.889

Kerri Connolly: I don't see us going to apply for a Usda funding, with the exception of potentially Margaret Grant

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00:53:11.000 --> 00:53:20.909

Kerri Connolly: going forward for that level of funding, just because the gust of Grants usually cap out around half a 1 million dollars, and right now we have 11 and a half state appropriation.

365

00:53:22.280 --> 00:53:25.699

Eli Zigas: Same in California. It's all state funding for our Ebt pilot.

366

00:53:26.030 --> 00:53:26.629

Right now.

367

00:53:28.470 --> 00:53:29.290

Eli Zigas: Okay.

368

00:53:31.390 --> 00:53:49.670

Eli Zigas: there is a question from Ben Feldman, from the farmers Market coalition. It's a question for Mia based on data on snap usage at farmers market. The hip model is clearly one that works to bring snap dollars to farmers markets and direct market farmers from your perspective. How much of this is because the incentives are integrated into the snap card. And how much is because it's only available from those retailers.

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00:53:51.360 --> 00:53:54.629

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: So i'm not sure. I understand the question entirely like.

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00:53:55.050 --> 00:54:08.209

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: Why are people actually shopping at the farmers markets with their evt cards? Is that essentially it?

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00:54:08.530 --> 00:54:28.040

Eli Zigas: I think there's some concern. If this is available also at grocery. Then people might not go to the farmers market as much to use the benefit, because it's exclusively at farmers markets. And so how much of how much of that exclusivity that this benefit is only available at farmers market is what's driving so many people to shop with. Farmer vendors versus

372

00:54:28.090 --> 00:54:35.709

Eli Zigas: people wanted to do that, anyways, and so they happen to be there. But maybe they won't leave if the grocery store down the street also has a similar offer.

373

00:54:36.040 --> 00:54:39.549

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: sure, so that's a question that of course, there's not

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00:54:39.670 --> 00:54:40.790

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: real

375

00:54:41.400 --> 00:55:00.609

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: like data on, because it hasn't been done differently at the hip program level. I can share just a couple of bullet points that might help answer that question, which is that we have certainly heard that customers are trying farmers markets or other farm locations for the first time.

376

00:55:00.620 --> 00:55:03.429

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: because this additional benefit is available there.

377

00:55:03.650 --> 00:55:12.169

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: We've also heard that many customers are excited to be able to support their local agricultural retailers, because before it was not in their budget.

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00:55:12.220 --> 00:55:13.640

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: And now it is

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00:55:14.070 --> 00:55:19.929

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: so, you know, I think, with Hip in Massachusetts we have this.

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00:55:20.190 --> 00:55:35.710

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: the perspective that the program really has these 2 goals at the same time, which is to support the local agricultural economy and to support food security for low income residents. And that requires us to make some compromises with how we run the program.

381

00:55:36.110 --> 00:55:39.320

Customers would like to have the benefit

382

00:55:39.520 --> 00:55:54.740

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: at not just local farms and farms would like the products to be limited to entirely a 100% locally grown items and not have a mobile farmers market that's able to sell lines, for example.

383

00:55:54.860 --> 00:55:57.080

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: So there's there's some different

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00:55:57.360 --> 00:56:04.199

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: goals a lot of times, these 2 align and overlap, and sometimes they're a little differing.

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00:56:04.310 --> 00:56:07.609

Mia Kortebein, MA DTA: so unfortunately that's the best I can do to answer that question, I think.

386

00:56:09.550 --> 00:56:11.009

Eli Zigas: Great. Thank you, mia.

387

00:56:11.020 --> 00:56:34.510

Eli Zigas: We are bumping up against time, and it is too bad because we have a lot of questions. There. 23, we Haven't answered, and we only got to 10. I apologize for that. I hope you all panelists I might follow up to see if we can get some answers of these in writing that we can then post along with the recording, and I would also encourage people if you want to this is contact information

388

00:56:34.520 --> 00:56:43.780

Eli Zigas: for all the speakers. Here again. This will be posted along with the the slide deck in a few days on on Spurs website. But if you want to screenshot it now, or write down

389

00:56:43.790 --> 00:56:57.309

Eli Zigas: our hope was that this answers a lot of the big questions. We I, a number of us who work on ebt integration are are working on a community of practice and trying to spread the knowledge that's been built up

390

00:56:57.320 --> 00:57:06.160

Eli Zigas: here and there. If you're interested in that, let us know. I don't know we're working on capacity building for that. But there's another resource for for follow up.

391

00:57:06.290 --> 00:57:22.670

Eli Zigas: and I would just like to thank my fellow panelists for making the time doing this, and I really want to thank everyone who joined. There are over 100 people. 100 people attending this right now, which is fantastic to see, I think, shows there's a lot of interest and a lot of questions.

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00:57:22.680 --> 00:57:28.279

Eli Zigas: and a lot more work to do. So Thank you, Alyssa, Carrie, mia, and Marga.

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00:57:28.410 --> 00:57:36.460

Eli Zigas: Really, thank you so much for your time and all the work you've done, and thank you all for attending and looking forward to continuing the conversation in other ways.

394

00:57:36.570 --> 00:57:37.939

Eli Zigas: Have a great afternoon.