

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Project



Part 1: Straight From the Source:

The Lived Experiences of Producers

Featuring: Noah Bloedorn

Main Ideas

- The aim of this project was to take an in-depth look at what happened to the food system during the pandemic.
- The study attempted to identify the best practices and policies during the study time frame that could potentially be used in future times of crises.
- Major trends identified from the study were broken down into categories, including supply chain issues, how operations of different sizes and scales reacted to the pandemic, government policies and relationships, labor issues, and professional networks.
- Producers struggled to access labor during the pandemic, many workers experienced burnout and questioned worker safety.
- Professional networks kept producers connected and thriving during difficult times.

Discussion Questions

1. How and why did the grant team make their focus groups diverse? What were the professions of study participants?
2. What obstacles came about within food systems as a result of the pandemic? What factors contributed to producer success?
3. What does resiliency mean? How can the food system become resilient?
4. How can the food industry learn from the past to prepare for the future?

Tips from the Speaker

1. Prioritize food workers and their safety in times of crisis.
2. Ensure individuals have access to resources on best practices before disaster strikes.

Other Resources

[Lessons from COVID-19 Toolkit](#)

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