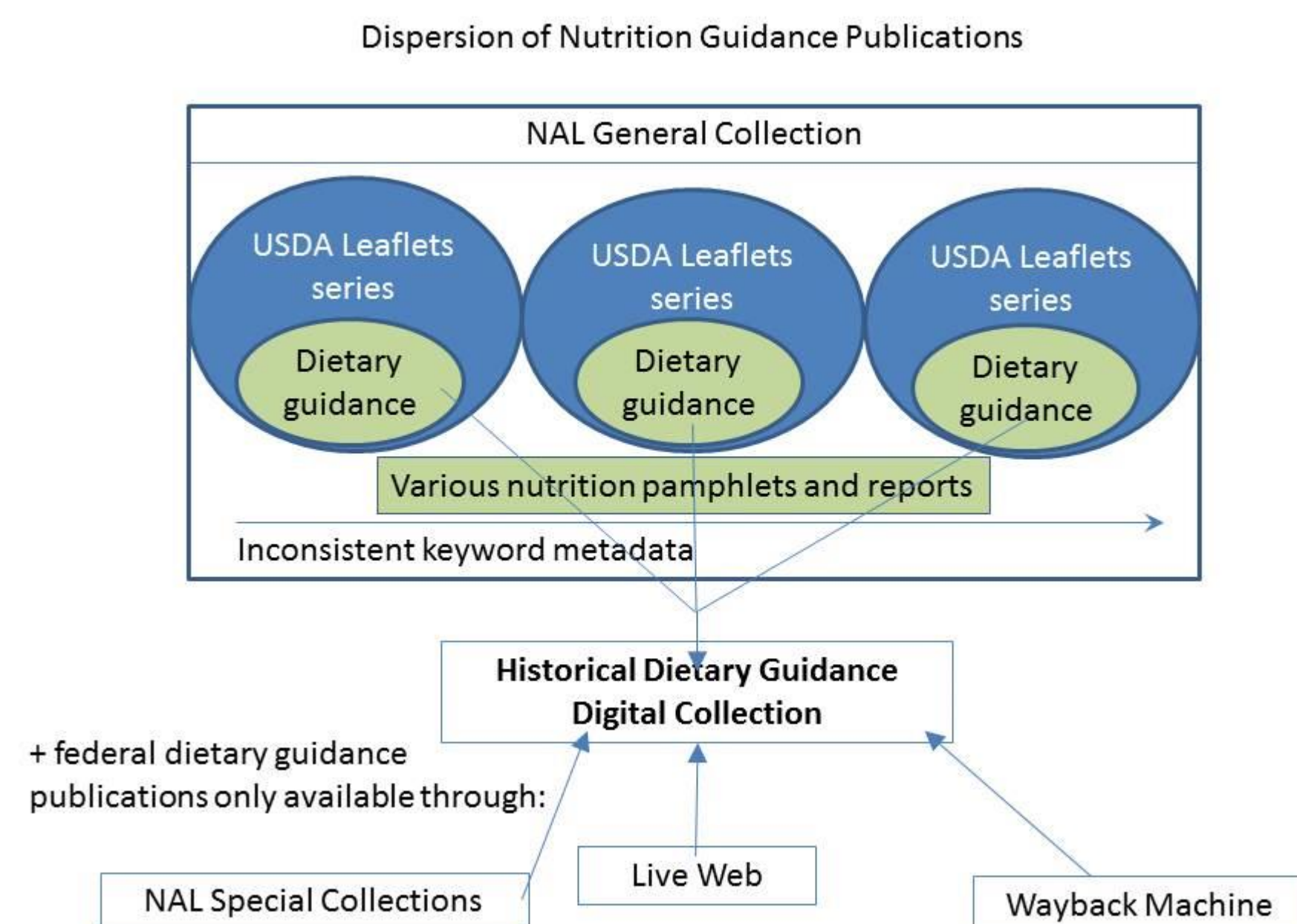


Digitally Uniting Historical Nutrition Guidance

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Problem Statement

Thousands of dietary guidance publications published by the U.S. government over the last century have been dispersed because they were published by several different agencies, catalogued with inconsistent subject keywords, assigned to several different series, or created as web-only documents. What strategies are currently being implemented by the National Agricultural Library (NAL) so that these dispersed publications become available in a single digital repository?



How is This Approach Different?

- Individual Effort**
Unlike documentation strategy or virtual reunification, NAL's work is currently performed without cooperation from separate institutions. The benefit is that NAL can work more quickly. The disadvantage is the risk that the digital collection could be less complete.
- Limit the Advisory Panel**
Our panel's involvement is less extensive than those close, years-long collaborations common to documentation strategy efforts. This approach could satisfy concerns about the length or cost of the project.

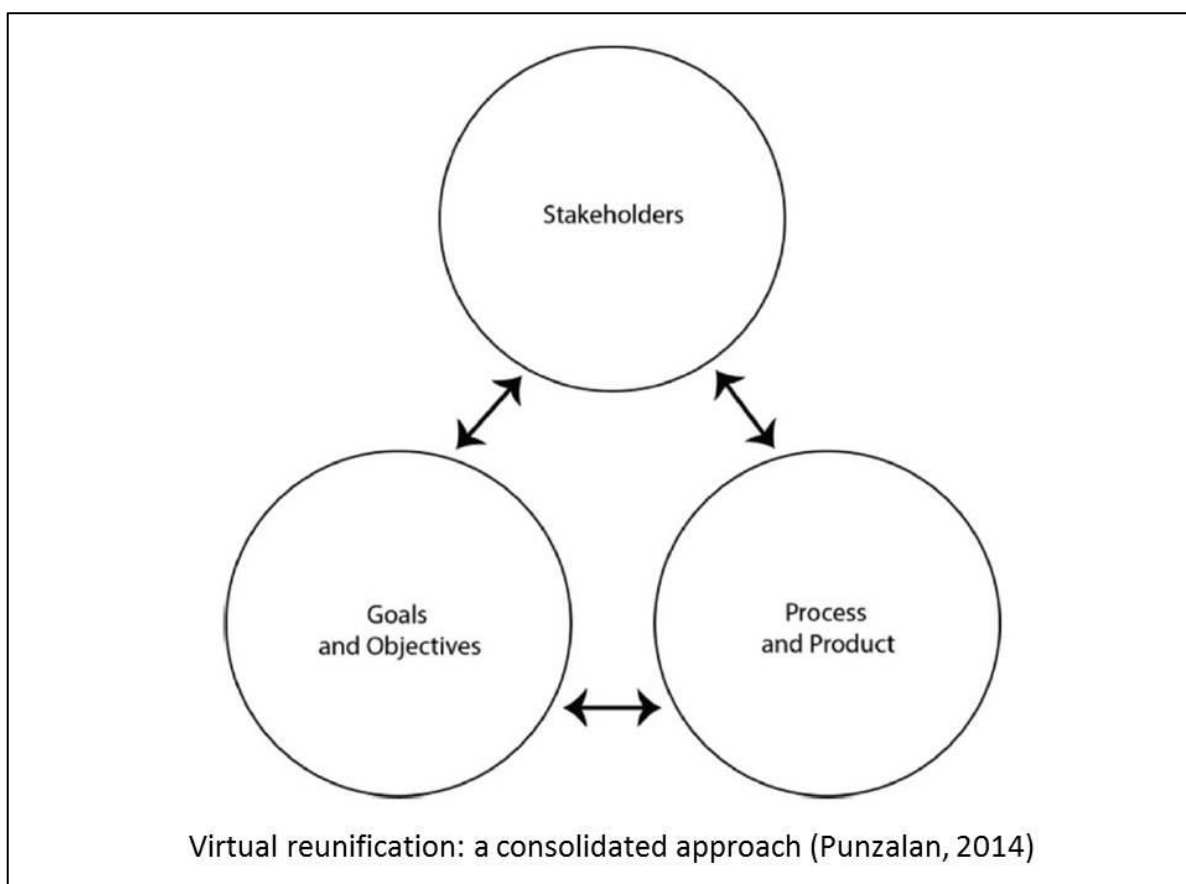


Image Credits: Hunt, C. (1916) *Food guide for young children*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2013) *Nutrition*, retrieved from <http://www.girlshealth.gov/nutrition/index.html>.; Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion. (1992) *Food guide pyramid: A guide to daily food choices*.

Existing Approaches:

The question of how to unify collections remains a problem in the archival profession. **Documentation strategy**, while widely known as a collection development strategy in archives, is not commonly adopted among institutions. **Virtual reunification** is still in exploratory stages at a handful of institutions.

Documentation Strategy:
1. choosing and defining the topic to be implemented
2. selecting the advisors and establishing the site for the strategy
3. structuring the inquiry and examining the form and substance of the available documentation
4. selecting and placing the documentation (Samuels, 1986)



National Agricultural Library Approach

- Environmental Scan, Define Scope**
- Assemble Expert Panel**
NAL has collaborated with current and retired federal nutrition experts representing four decades of work in federal health and agriculture policy. Consultants helped refine the scope of the project and provide context and organizational history.
- Research Institutional History**
Project staff researched history of the agency to determine which agencies published nutrition guidance materials.
- Mine Data**
Project staff mined NAL's catalog for all works created by the dozens of offices that authored nutrition publications, then weeded out titles that were not nutrition-related.
- Upcoming Work:** Define description requirements (Resource Description & Access (RDA)); define technical requirements (imaging standards, preservation formats); determine how to add websites to NALDC (PURL link, web archiving or emulation)

Lessons for Archives and Special Collections

- Documentation Strategy in the Digital Age**
Institutions considering documentation strategy should determine which electronic formats currently document their topic/area, and how they can be archived and preserved alongside other, older formats.
- Merging within Your Institution**
Archives and special collections may imagine scenarios in which they would merge items from separate collections and institutional divisions into the same digital collection. Archival collections, rare books, donated collections, library collections and institutional repository items may be merged based on their topic or demand for use. This could require efforts similar to NAL's.
- Data Control**
Controlling large amounts of digital metadata is increasingly necessary as both print and digital objects may be collected from an institution or donor.

Suggestions for Further Research

- Web Archives:** Memory institutions must explore ways to provide access to web archives within their own institution in the same way they provide access to digitized print objects.
- Access Points:** To integrate archived web pages into collections, collecting institutions should consider how to integrate these digital objects into existing catalog, finding aid or other discovery systems.

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