

## Appendix II

### Nutrition Facts Label Focus Groups Moderators Guide

#### 1. Opening remarks: Introduction and Rules, Ice Breaker

Thank you for being here tonight. During this group, we'll be talking about your food choices and food labels.

Before we start, I would like to go over some ground rules for participation in this focus group.

1. We are interested in your thoughts and answers to all questions here.
2. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to and you are free to leave at any time.
3. This is a two way-glass mirror. My colleagues are sitting on the other side of the mirror. They are taking notes about our discussion tonight.
4. This group discussion will be audio- and video-taped. Your responses will be kept completely confidential. No personal identifying information will be used in any report of these interviews. The audio and video tapes will be kept in a locked file cabinet. The tapes will be used only by the research staff.

Let's go around the room and introduce ourselves. Tell us just your first name, and how often you shop for groceries.

#### 2. Introduction: Food Choices

Now I want you to think about what and how much you eat.

- How do you decide what you eat? What influences what you eat? Probe: taste, price, convenience, nutrition, family preferences, friends.
- How do you decide how much you eat? Probe: hunger, what is served, nutrition, food package information.
- Do you use any information on the food package to help you decide what or how much to eat? If yes: What information do you use? Probe: nutrition information such as calories, serving size, fat content, vitamins, or sodium content; ingredient information, health claims on the front of the package such as low fat or low calorie.
- When do you use this information? Probe: when shopping, at home, when making a meal?

### **3. Mock up #1 (Current Nutrition Facts Label with footnote)**

Tonight we are going to be talking in detail about the Nutrition Facts Label found on food packages. This is the box on the label that includes the nutrition information such as number of calories, amount of fat, and other nutrients. The example Nutrition Facts Label is for cinnamon raisin swirl bread (show picture of product). We are not going to be talking about the bread itself, but just the information on the label. Show draft of a current Nutrition Facts Label with footnote to the group. Give them a minute to review the label.

- Do you ever use information on this label? What information on this label do you use? How do you use this information? Probe: to decide what foods to buy or eat, how much of each food to eat, compare the levels of nutrients in different products.
- When do you use this information? Probe: when shopping, at home, when cooking.
- Is there any information on the label that you find difficult to understand or hard to use? Why do you say that?
- If not already mentioned: Take a look at the column for % Daily Value. Does anyone use this information? How do you use it? Is there anything difficult to understand about the term % Daily Value?

MODERATOR: If there is confusion about the what % Daily Value means, explain it to the group.

% Daily Values are there to help you determine whether a serving of a food contributes a lot or a little of a particular nutrient to your daily diet. A high percentage means a serving of the food contains a lot of a nutrient and a low percentage means it contains a little.

% Daily Values are there help us see whether the nutrients most of us need more of (such as fiber, and certain vitamins and minerals) have high percentages and whether the nutrients most of us need to limit (such as saturated fat) have low percentages --5% or less is low, 20% or more is high.

You can use the % Daily Value to make dietary trade-offs with other foods throughout the day. The daily value is based on a 2,000 calorie diet. You may need more or less but the % Daily Value is a helpful gauge.

- Knowing more about % Daily Value, what questions do you have about it? Can you see yourself using this information? When? Probe: when shopping, when preparing a meal, when eating a snack. How would you use it? Why isn't the % Daily Value information useful to you?
- If a friend asked you what the % Daily Value on the label meant, what would you say? How would you describe what % Daily Value means? What would you call it?

**Mock-ups #1 (Current Nutrition Facts Label with footnote) with #2 (Current Nutrition Facts with modified footnote)**

Moderator: use responses to previous discussion to lead in to discussion of footnote. If no one mentioned it earlier, draw attention to footnote on Mock-up #1.

- Have you seen this information on a Nutrition Facts Label before?
- Is this information easy to understand? Why or why not?
- Is this information useful for you? Why or why not?
  
- Draw attention to Mock-up #2 -- #2 puts new information in this bottom part of the label. What is your reaction to this explanation for the number of calories you should eat in day? Why?
- Would it help you understand how many calories you need in a day? Why or why not? Did you know how many calories you should eat in a day before you saw this? Would you use this information?
- Would this be more or less useful than the information that is on #1?
- Would you like to see this information on Nutrition Facts Labels? Why or why not?

Now we're going to turn away from the information at the bottom of the Nutrition Facts Label and focus on the information at the top.

**Mock-ups # 3 (Current NFP without footnote) and #4 (Column Approach to Gram Amounts, including mcg for vitamins and new declaration of serving size)**

- There are a couple of things that are different about this label compared to the current Nutrition Facts Label. What do you notice that is different?
- What do you think about having the gram amounts lined up? Is this easier to read or harder to read?
- What do you think about each slice = 110 calories? Is this additional information helpful to you?
- What do you think about including information about units of vitamins on the Nutrition Facts Label? Why?
- Would you like to see this vitamin information on Nutrition Facts Labels? Why or why not?
- Is there any additional information that you need to help understand the meaning of the vitamin units? Where would you like to find that information? Probe: on the label, on the web.

**Mock-ups # 3 (Current NFP without footnote) and #5 (Percent Daily Values for Calories and Serving Size in Color)**

- Now, let's take a look at the next page in your booklet. What do you notice about this Nutrition Facts Label that is different than the current label?

- What do you think of the blue color? Probe: Does it highlight anything for you? Why do you think this information is in blue? Would having this information in blue be helpful for you? Why do you say that?
- Is the blue distracting from other information? Would you like this information in blue, a different color, or would it better to keep everything in the same color?

MODERATOR: If no one mentions that there is a % Daily Value for calories, point that out too.

- What is your reaction to having a % Daily Value for calories? Is this information helpful for you? Why or why not?
- Would this information help you determine if a food is relatively high or low in calories? How? Why?

**Mock-ups # 3 (Current NFP without footnote) and #6 (Nutrition Facts with Quick Facts/Avoid/Get Enough)**

- What are your thoughts about this version of the label? Why do you think that? What makes it easier or harder to understand than the current Nutrition Facts Label? How does it compare with the current Nutrition Facts Label?
- What do you think about listing the nutrients together that you should get enough of and should avoid? Is this helpful? Why or why not?
- What do you think of the headings, Quick Facts, Avoid Too Much, and Get Enough? Are there other headings that you would like to see? What?

**Mock-ups #6 (Nutrition Facts with Quick Facts/Avoid/Get Enough) and #7 – (Nutrition Facts with Quick Facts plus single Check Column)**

- What is your reaction to this label? Why?
- What about the last column with the checks that says Healthy Alert? What do you think that this column means? Is it useful? How would you use it?
- The check means that the product is low in something that you should avoid too much of and high in something you should get enough of. Was that what it looked like to you?
- Are there other terms besides Healthy Alert that would signal that that this product is low in nutrients in the Avoid Too Much column and high in the nutrients in the Get Enough column?
- Would you like to see this information on the Nutrition Facts Label? Why or why not?

**Mock-ups #6 (Nutrition Facts with Quick Facts/Avoid/Get Enough) and #8 – (Nutrition Facts with Quick Facts plus two star Columns)**

- This next Nutrition Facts Label is similar to the previous one, but contains two columns with stars – one that says, “Good or Excellent Source” and one that says, “Low or Reduced.”

- What is your reaction to having two columns to indicate which nutrients the product is high and low in? Is this more helpful than having one column or more confusing? Why do you say that?
- Are the descriptions of the columns, “Good or Excellent Source” and “Low or Reduced” clear to you? Are there any other descriptions that would be clearer? What?
- Would you like to see this information on the Nutrition Facts Label?

Now we are going to briefly switch from looking at the label for cinnamon raisin swirl bread to looking at the label for a frozen chicken and vegetable dinner that contains 2 servings.

**Mock-ups # 9 (Current Nutrition Facts Label for dinner) and #10 (Dinner with modified serving size declaration for whole package)**

- Now, I would like for you to look at a Nutrition Facts Label for a frozen chicken and vegetable dinner and next to it, a modified version of the same label for the same dinner.
- What do you notice that is different between the two versions of the Nutrition Facts Label? (MODERATOR: If no one mentions that there is a change in the serving size declaration, point that out.)
- What is your reaction to having the number of calories per package? Do you think you’d ever eat the whole package at one time?
- Is this information helpful for you? Why or why not?

**Mock-ups # 9 (Current Nutrition Facts Label for dinner) and #11—(Gram and %DV information for both one serving and entire package)**

- Finally, I have one last label for you to look at. This is also of the chicken and vegetable dinner, but with some additional information. What additional information do you see on this package? (MODERATOR: Point out two columns if needed.)
- What do you think of this format for packages of food that list more than one serving on the label, but you might eat the whole package at one time?
- Would this information be useful for you to determine how much of a food to eat? Would it help you determine how many servings are in a package?
- Is this too much information? Is it hard to read?
- Is there anything else that you would like to see on this label? What?

**Wrap-up**

- As our last exercise tonight, I want for you to think about all of the possible modifications to the Nutrition Facts Label that you have seen tonight.
  - What are some of the best ideas for changes to the Nutrition Facts Label that you saw tonight? Why?
  - What are some changes that you saw that you don’t think will be helpful for you? Why?
  - Are there any other thoughts that you have about changes to the Nutrition Facts Label that you would like to share? Are there any other ideas that

we did not talk about tonight that you think would be helpful for making the Nutrition Facts Label more useful?

**Thank you very much for your participation! Your answers have been very helpful. Have a great evening.**