

APPENDIX A
RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

**School Nutrition Dietary
Assessment Study IV**

(OMB No.: 0584-0527)

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Food and Nutrition Service
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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR FNS REGIONAL OFFICES.....	2
INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR STATE CHILD NUTRITION DIRECTORS	4
INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR STATE CHILD NUTRITION DIRECTORS TO SFA DIRECTORS.....	6
RECRUITMENT/INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR SFA DIRECTORS IN SCHOOL SAMPLE.....	7
RECRUITMENT/INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR SFA DIRECTORS IN SFA-ONLY SAMPLE.....	9
CONFIRMATION LETTER FOR SFA DIRECTORS IN SCHOOL SAMPLE.....	10
INTRODUCTION/CONFIRMATION LETTER FOR SCHOOL FOODSERVICE MANAGERS.....	12
INTRODUCTION/CONFIRMATION LETTER FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPALS.....	14
STUDY FACT SHEET.....	16

INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR FNS REGIONAL OFFICES

TO BE PRINTED ON FNS LETTERHEAD

DATE, 2009

Name
Title
Regional Office
[Address here]

Dear [Name of FNS Regional Office Liaison]:

As you know, FNS is conducting the fourth School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study (SNDA-IV). FNS has contracted with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR) for this project. SNDA-IV will provide up-to-date information about the food and nutrient content of meals offered and served through the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. This will provide needed information about how school meals have changed since the SNDA-III study was conducted (school year 2004-2005) and since the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 was enacted. SNDA-IV will also gather information about a range of other issues important to the school meals programs, including the food and nutrient content of afterschool snacks, characteristics of local school wellness policies, and the availability of competitive foods.

SNDA-IV will collect data during the 2009-2010 school year. Data will be collected from SFAs and schools; however, unlike the SNDA-III study, data will not be collected from students or parents. SNDA-IV will include a national sample of over 600 SFAs. Half of these SFAs will be asked to participate in school-level data collection, including school menu surveys, in an average of three schools. The other half of the SFAs will be asked only to complete an online SFA Director Survey.

Your office's support for previous SNDA studies has been important to their success. We hope that you can provide the same assistance and support for this study. Attachment 1 identifies, by state, the SFAs in your region that are included in the national sample. We would very much appreciate it if you could contact the Child Nutrition (CN) directors in these states to describe SNDA-IV, inform them about the SFAs in their state that have been selected to participate in the study, and encourage their support of the study. Please tell them that they will be contacted by a representative of MPR in the coming weeks. This person will directly elicit their support for the study and will provide any additional information they may need. A sample of the letter we will be sending to State CN Directors is enclosed, along with a study fact sheet. If it is useful to do so, please feel free to use excerpts of the letter or copies of the study fact sheet when communicating with CN Directors.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with this important study. If you have questions about the study, feel free to contact me by phone [(703) 605-0811] or email (fred.lesnett@fns.usda.gov). You may also contact Ted Macaluso, Branch Chief, at (703) 305-2121 or ted.macaluso@fns.usda.gov.

Sincerely,

Fred Lesnett
Senior Program Analyst
Office of Research and Analysis
Food and Nutrition Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Attachments

INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR STATE CHILD NUTRITION DIRECTORS

TO BE PRINTED ON FNS LETTERHEAD

DATE, 2009

Name

[STATE] Child Nutrition Program Director
[STATE] Department of Education/Agriculture
[Address here]

Dear [Name of State CN Director]:

As you may know, FNS is conducting the fourth School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study (SNDA-IV). FNS has contracted with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR) for this project. SNDA-IV will provide up-to-date information about the food and nutrient content of meals offered and served through the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. This will provide needed information about how school meals have changed since the SNDA-III study was conducted (school year 2004-2005) and since the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 was enacted. SNDA-IV will also gather information about a range of other issues important to the school meals programs, including the food and nutrient content of afterschool snacks, characteristics of local school wellness policies, and the availability of competitive foods.

SNDA-IV will collect data during the 2009-2010 school year. Data will be collected from SFAs and schools; however, unlike the SNDA-III study, data will not be collected from students or parents. SNDA-IV will include a national sample of over 600 SFAs. Half of these SFAs will be asked to participate in school-level data collection, including school menu surveys, in an average of three schools. The other half of the SFAs will be asked only to complete an online SFA Director Survey.

Your office's support for previous SNDA studies has been important to their success. We hope that you can provide the same assistance and support for this study. Attachment 1 identifies the SFAs in your state that are included in the national sample. We would very much appreciate it if you could contact each of these SFAs to describe the study, tell them that their SFA has been selected, and encourage and support their participation. Please tell them that they will be contacted by a representative of MPR in the coming weeks who will provide them with additional information about the study and confirm their participation. A sample of the letter we will be sending, as well as a study fact sheet, are enclosed for your information. The fact sheet is designed to provide essential information about the study and should be helpful to you in responding to questions SFA directors may ask. If it is useful to do so, please feel free to use excerpts of the letter or copies of the study fact sheet when communicating with SFA directors.

The project team from MPR will begin contacting SFA directors around the middle of September. For this reason, it would be very helpful if you could contact SFA directors before mid-September. In addition, to prepare for the SFA contacts, we would appreciate it if you could confirm the names and addresses of the SFAs and provide names and contact information for the SFA directors. Soon, MPR will send you an electronic document that you can edit and send back to them. If you prefer, you can fax a marked-up hard copy to MPR or call them and review the information over the phone. Instructions for responding will be included in MPR's e-mail.

Finally, we want you to be aware that FNS is simultaneously conducting a study of school food purchasing. In that study, data will be collected from SFAs, but not from schools. It is possible that some SFAs selected for the SNDA-IV study have also been selected for the food purchasing study. These two studies are substantively different and both will provide important information about the school meals programs. For this reason, it is important that any SFA selected for both studies make every effort to participate fully. MPR is also involved in the school food purchasing study (under a subcontract with

Promar International). In the event that an SFA is selected to participate in both studies, MPR will make every effort to coordinate the timing of data collection requests for the two studies to avoid overlap.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with this important study. If you have questions about the study, feel free to contact me by phone [(703) 605-0811] or email (fred.lesnett@fns.usda.gov). You may also contact Ted Macaluso, Branch Chief, at (703) 305-2121 or ted.macaluso@fns.usda.gov.

Sincerely,

Fred Lesnett
Senior Program Analyst
Office of Research and Analysis
Food and Nutrition Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Attachments

**RECRUITMENT/INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR STATE CHILD NUTRITION DIRECTORS
TO SEND TO SFA DIRECTORS IN SAMPLE**

TO BE PRINTED ON FNS LETTERHEAD

DATE, 2009

Name
School Foodservice Director
District Name
[Address here]

Dear «SFA Director Name»:

I have been informed by the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture that your school food authority area (SFA) has been randomly selected to participate in the fourth School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study (SNDA-IV). I am hoping that you will participate in this worthwhile effort. Past SNDA studies, some of which you may have been participants, have made significant contributions to the nutrition and dietary makeup of meals offered and served in schools participating in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. Your cooperation and support for this study is important since the data collected from you and your schools will represent many other school food authority areas across the country when the data is analyzed.

FNS has contracted with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR) for this project. I'd like to again stress the importance of this study and encourage your participation. MPR will be contacting you directly to discuss the study in more detail, but some further information is provided below and in the enclosed study fact sheet.

SNDA-IV will collect data from SFAs and from selected schools in those SFAs. Foodservice managers in selected schools (or your designee) will be asked to complete a detailed Menu Survey for a specified school week. The information requested is very similar to what is normally required for an SMI review, except that managers will not have to provide labels for all foods. Information will be reported to MPR, who will then conduct a nutrient analysis. Results of this analysis will not be shared with your State agency or with USDA; therefore, results will not trigger any type of feedback or corrective action. The information from your schools will be combined with information from about 900 other schools across the country. No individuals, SFAs, or schools will be identified when the study's results are published.

In addition to the Menu Survey, principals in the selected schools will be asked to complete a brief online survey and to appoint a staff member to provide information about the availability of foods and beverages from sources other than reimbursable meals and a la carte sales in the cafeteria. The final component of the study is an online survey to be completed by you.

I want to thank you in advance for your participation. In the next few weeks, someone from MPR will contact you to discuss your district's participation. If you have questions about the study, feel free to contact Fred Lesnett at FNS (703) 605-0811 or email (fred.lesnett@fns.usda.gov). You may also contact Ted Macaluso, Branch Chief, at (703) 305-2121 or ted.macaluso@fns.usda.gov.

Sincerely yours,

[STATE] Child Nutrition Program Director
[STATE] Department of Education/Agriculture
[Address here]

RECRUITMENT/INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR SFA DIRECTORS IN SCHOOL SAMPLE

TO BE PRINTED ON FNS LETTERHEAD

DATE, 2009

Name
School Foodservice Director
District Name
[Address here]

Dear «SFA Director Name»:

Your SFA has been randomly selected to participate in the fourth School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study (SNDA-IV). FNS has contracted with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR) for this project. I'd like to stress the importance of this study and encourage your participation. MPR will be contacting you directly to discuss the study in more detail, but some further information is provided below and in the enclosed study fact sheet.

SNDA-IV will collect data from SFAs and from selected schools in those SFAs. Foodservice managers in selected schools (or your designee) will be asked to complete a detailed Menu Survey for a specified school week. The information requested is very similar to what is normally required for an SMI review, except that managers will not have to provide labels for all foods. Information will be reported to MPR, who will then conduct a nutrient analysis. Results of this analysis will not be shared with your State agency or with USDA; therefore, results will not trigger any type of feedback or corrective action. The information from your schools will be combined with information from about 900 other schools across the country. No individuals, SFAs, or schools will be identified when the study's results are published.

In addition to the Menu Survey, principals in the selected schools will be asked to complete a brief online survey and to appoint a staff member to provide information about the availability of foods and beverages from sources other than reimbursable meals and a la carte sales in the cafeteria. The final component of the study is an online survey to be completed by you.

The following schools have been selected in your SFA:

[LIST NAMES OF SCHOOLS]

Your SFA and the above schools were selected using scientific sampling methods. In the sample, each SFA and school represents not only itself but other SFAs and schools with similar characteristics. For this reason, participation of the selected SFAs and schools is critical to the study's success. SNDA-IV will provide up-to-date information about the food and nutrient content of meals and snacks offered and served through the school meals programs. Comparing results from SNDA-IV to previous SNDA studies will allow USDA to describe how school meals have changed over the past two decades. In addition, USDA will use study results to plan strategies and tools to assist schools in providing nutritious meals to children and in promoting healthy eating habits.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with this important study. In the next few weeks, someone from MPR will contact you to discuss your district's participation. If you have questions about the study, feel free to contact me by phone [(703) 605-0811] or email (fred.lesnett@fns.usda.gov). You may also contact Ted Macaluso, Branch Chief, at (703) 305-2121 or ted.macaluso@fns.usda.gov.

Sincerely,

Fred Lesnett
Senior Program Analyst
Office of Research and Analysis
Food and Nutrition Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Attachments

RECRUITMENT/INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR SFA DIRECTORS IN SFA-ONLY SAMPLE

TO BE PRINTED ON FNS LETTERHEAD

DATE, 2009

Name
School Foodservice Director
District Name
[Address here]

Dear «SFA Director Name»:

Your SFA has been randomly selected to participate in the fourth School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study (SNDA-IV). FNS has contracted with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR) for this project. I'd like to stress the importance of this study and encourage your participation.

Your SFA is being asked to complete an online **SFA Director Survey**, which is one component of the study. SNDA-IV also includes school-level data collection, but your SFA will not be asked to participate in that component of the study. The SFA Director Survey includes questions about a variety of topics related to school food service operations, such as food purchasing, menu planning, wellness policies, and other important issues. The information you provide about these topics will be used by USDA to plan strategies and tools to assist SFAs and schools in providing nutritious meals to children and in promoting healthy eating habits.

Your SFA was selected using scientific sampling methods. In the sample, each SFA represents not only itself, but other SFAs with similar characteristics. For this reason, participation of the selected SFAs is critical to the study's success.

Shortly, you will be receiving an e-mail invitation from MPR to complete the survey online at a time of your convenience. Your participation in this study is extremely valuable. The information needed can only be provided by school foodservice professionals like you. The enclosed fact sheet provides an overview of the entire SNDA-IV study.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with this important study. If you have questions about the study, feel free to contact me by phone [(703) 605-0811] or email (fred.lesnett@fns.usda.gov). You may also contact Ted Macaluso, Branch Chief, at (703) 305-2121 or ted.macaluso@fns.usda.gov.

Sincerely,

Fred Lesnett
Senior Program Analyst
Office of Research and Analysis
Food and Nutrition Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Attachments

CONFIRMATION LETTER FOR SFA DIRECTORS IN SCHOOL SAMPLE

TO BE PRINTED ON MPR LETTERHEAD

Mary Kay Fox
Project Director

DATE 2009

Name
School Foodservice Director
District Name
[Address here]

Dear <SFA DIRECTOR>:

Thank you for recently taking the time to discuss your SFA's participation in the fourth School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study (SNDA-IV). We are pleased that your SFA will be participating in this important national study.

To confirm, the following schools, selected using scientific sampling procedures, will participate in the study:

<SCHOOL #1>
<SCHOOL #2>
<SCHOOL #3>

Foodservice managers in each of these schools will be asked to complete a Menu Survey for the "target week" of:

<START_DATE> through <END_DATE>

MPR staff will provide a detailed over-the-phone training to the managers prior to the target week and will be available throughout the target week to answer questions and offer assistance. It is critical that the Menu Survey be completed as fully and accurately as possible and during the agreed-upon target week. Managers will also be asked to fill out a separate, brief questionnaire that asks about foodservice operations in their school. In recognition of the conscientious efforts and important contributions made by foodservice managers, we will provide each of them with a \$50 check as thanks for their participation.

Principals in each of the above schools will be asked to complete a brief, web-based survey and to appoint a staff member to provide information about the availability of foods and beverages from sources other than reimbursable meals and a la carte sales in the cafeteria. The final component of the study is a web survey to be completed by you. We will be in touch with you about this in the future, via e-mail.

We have included with this letter, introductory letters and study fact sheets for foodservice managers and principals in the selected schools. We would greatly appreciate it if you could distribute these materials to the appropriate individuals and express your support for the study.

Thank you in advance for your participation in SNDA-IV and for your assistance with notifying foodservice managers and principals. This important study of the school meals programs could not be completed without your support. We are looking forward to learning all that we can from you and your staff.

Sincerely,

Mary Kay Fox
Project Director

INTRODUCTION/CONFIRMATION LETTER FOR SCHOOL FOODSERVICE MANAGERS

TO BE PRINTED ON MPR LETTERHEAD

Mary Kay Fox
Project Director

DATE 2009

Name
Title
School Name
[Address here]

Dear «Foodservice Manager Name»:

We are pleased that you will be participating in the fourth School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study (SNDA-IV). Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR) is conducting SNDA-IV under contract to the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Your school was selected to participate in the study using scientific sampling methods, and your participation is critical to the study's success. The information needed can only be provided by school foodservice professionals like you.

SNDA-IV will provide up-to-date information about the food and nutrient content of meals and snacks offered and served through the school meals programs. Results of the study will be used to plan strategies and tools to assist schools in providing nutritious meals to children and in promoting healthy eating habits. The enclosed fact sheet provides an overview of the SNDA-IV study.

You will be involved in two parts of the study, described below. Your school principal will also be asked to complete a survey about the school and to appoint a staff member to provide information about foods and beverages available to students through sources other than reimbursable meals and a la carte purchases, including vending machines, fundraisers and school stores.

The two components of the study that require your participation are:

The Menu Survey. In the Menu Survey, you will provide information about the foods and beverage offered and served in reimbursable meals and, if you offer them, snacks, for a specified school week (the "target week"). The information requested is very similar to what is normally required for an SMI review, except that you will not have to provide labels for all foods. Instead, you'll provide manufacturer names, brand names, and, when possible, product codes. MPR will use the information you provide to complete a nutrient analysis of your meals and snacks. The results will not be shared with your State agency or with USDA; therefore, results will not trigger any type of feedback or corrective action. Your information will be combined with information from about 900 other schools across the country. No individuals, SFAs, or schools will be identified when the study's results are published.

Before the target week, MPR will provide you with an easy-to-use instruction manual that includes samples of completed forms. We will also provide an over-the-phone training where we will review the instructions with you and other participating foodservice managers in your district and answer any questions you may have. In addition, you will be able to reach MPR staff any time during the target week, using a toll free number, if you need assistance.

The target week scheduled for your school is:

<START_DATE> through <END_DATE>

The Foodservice Manager Survey. This is a brief questionnaire about your school's food service operations and practices. It will be included with the Menu Survey and can be completed any time during the target week.

Your participation in this study is extremely valuable and we appreciate the time and effort that you will devote to the study. To thank you, we will be sending a \$50 check as a token of our appreciation. We know that we cannot do this important work without your help.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call a member of our project team at 1-800-xxx-xxxx. We look forward to working with you on this important study.

Sincerely,

Mary Kay Fox
Project Director

INTRODUCTION/CONFIRMATION LETTER FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

TO BE PRINTED ON MPR LETTERHEAD

Mary Kay Fox
Project Director

DATE 2009

Name
Principal
School Name
[Address here]

Dear «PRINCIPAL CONTACT_NAME»:

Recently, your district's Food Service Director agreed to participate in the fourth School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study (SNDA-IV). Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR) is conducting SNDA-IV under contract to the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. SNDA-IV will provide up-to-date information about the food and nutrient content of meals and snacks offered and served through the school meals programs, as well as information about policies and environments in schools that participate in the programs. Results of the study will be used to plan strategies and tools to assist schools in providing nutritious meals to children and in promoting healthy eating habits. The enclosed fact sheet provides an overview of the SNDA-IV study.

The foodservice manager in your school is participating in the study, by completing a detailed Menu Survey. The Menu Survey will provide information about the foods and beverages offered and served in school meals and snacks during a specified school week. The week scheduled for your school is: <START DATE> to <END DATE>. Your school was randomly selected to participate in the study, and there is additional information you could provide that is critical to the study's success.

We are asking that you assist with two components of the study, which are described below:

Principal Survey. This is a brief, web-based questionnaire that covers general school characteristics and school policies related to nutrition education and physical activity/education. MPR will be sending you an e-mail invitation with a link to the web survey.

Competitive Foods Checklist. This checklist will be used to provide information about the foods and beverages available to students outside of school meals and a la carte sales in the cafeteria. Because the foodservice manager will be busy with the Menu Survey, we need your assistance in gathering these data. We will ask you to designate a staff member to serve as a school liaison for this component of the study, such as a health teacher, school nurse, or other qualified staff member.

When you complete the Principal Survey on the web, you will be asked to identify a school liaison and provide contact information for this person. We will then communicate with him/her by e-mail or phone to get the checklist completed. [Middle and High Schools Only] To acknowledge the time devoted to completing the checklist, we will provide the liaison with a thank-you check of \$15-\$30, depending on the number of vending machines available in your school.

Your school's participation in this study is extremely valuable and we appreciate the time and effort that you and the designated school liaison will devote to the study. If you have any questions, please feel free to call a member of our project team at 1-800-xxx-xxxx. We look forward to working with you on this important study.

Sincerely,

Mary Kay Fox
Project Director

THE SCHOOL NUTRITION DIETARY ASSESSMENT STUDY—IV

FACT SHEET



The School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study-IV (SNDA IV) is designed to provide federal, state, and local policymakers with up-to-date information about how the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) operate, how the food and nutrient content of meals and snacks offered and served in these programs conform with program standards, and how the programs have changed since the SNDA-III study was conducted (school year 2004-2005) and since the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004.

SNDA-IV will be similar to previous SNDA studies. However, unlike SNDA-III, information will not be collected from students and parents. In addition, SNDA-IV will collect information on new and important topics, such as school wellness policies, reimbursable afterschool snacks, and food safety. Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR) is working with the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to conduct this study.

WHY ARE WE DOING THE STUDY?

The information from SNDA-IV will be used in part for program performance measurement included in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Strategic Plan, which is required under the Government Performance Results Act (GPRA). Goal 5 in USDA's Strategic Plan for 2005-2010, to "Improve the Nation's Nutrition and Health," includes a target for good performance that "all elementary and secondary schools... offer meal options to students [that are] consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines*."

In addition, findings from the study will be used in planning future technical assistance to schools and in designing nutrition education programs for school-age children.

WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY?

The SNDA-IV study has multiple objectives. They are to:

- Determine the average nutrient content of NSLP and SBP meals *currently* offered and served to students in public schools.
- Determine the average nutrient content of reimbursable after-school snacks.
- Describe the variety of foods offered and served to students in NSLP lunches, SBP break-fasts, and reimbursable after-school snacks.
- Describe the characteristics of School Food Authorities (SFAs) and schools that participate in the NSLP and SBP, especially those related to meal service operations and the school food environment, including the availability of competitive foods.
- Determine changes in school meal programs since SNDA-III was conducted in the school year 2004-2005, and legislation was enacted that required all SFAs to implement comprehensive school wellness policies.

HOW ARE SFAs AND SCHOOLS BEING CHOSEN FOR THE STUDY?

SNDA-IV will collect data from nationally representative samples of SFAs and public elementary, middle, and high schools. A total of 600 SFAs and 900 schools across the country are expected to participate in the study.

Choosing SFAs and schools to participate in the study is a two-stage process. In the first stage, SFAs were selected in the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia. In the second stage, schools were selected in half of the selected SFAs. In most cases, this includes one elementary school, one middle school, and one high school. SFAs and schools were chosen to be nationally representative of all SFAs and public schools that participate in the NSLP.

WHAT DATA ARE BEING COLLECTED?

Data will be collected from school officials and staff.

SFA Directors and school foodservice managers will be asked to provide information about characteristics of the school food service program. Foodservice managers in individual schools will be asked to describe the foods and beverages offered and served in reimbursable meals and snacks for a specific school week—referred to as the target week. In addition, on one day during the target week, managers will identify the types of foods and beverages available for a la carte purchase.

Principals will be asked to provide information about characteristics of the school. In addition, they will be asked to appoint a staff member to provide information about foods and beverages available to children outside of the school meals programs, for example, through vending machines, fund-raisers, or school stores.

SFA Directors and principals will complete web surveys. School foodservice managers and the staff member appointed by the principal will complete forms and checklists that will be provided by mail or e-mail.

WHAT IS THE TIMELINE?

Below is a schedule of project activities.

Fall 2009	Contact SFAs and schools
Fall 2009 through Spring 2010	Collect data
Summer 2010 through 2011	Code and analyze data Prepare study report

FNS expects a final report by late 2011.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

Additional information on the SNDA-IV study can be obtained from MPR. Staff names, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses appear below.

Mary Kay Fox, Project Director
617-301-8993
MFox@mathematica-mpr.com

Eric Zeidman, Survey Director
609-936-2784
EZeidman@mathematica-mpr.com

Annalee Kelly, Deputy Survey Director
609-275-2885
AKelly@mathematica-mpr.com

You may also contact the FNS Project Officer for this study.

Fred Lesnett
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service
3101 Park Center Dr.
Alexandria, VA 22302
703-605-0811
fred.lesnett@fns.usda.gov