

B. SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR JUSTIFICATION FOR CONSUMER FOCUS GROUPS (O583-NEW)

B.1 Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods

We will conduct 11 focus groups and segment the groups by type of at-risk population and/or demographic characteristics to increase the homogeneity of the groups. We will conduct one focus group with adults aged 26 to 59 years old (general population) and two focus groups with each of the following subpopulations:

- parents or guardians of children less than 5 years old;
- older adults, aged 60 or older;
- individuals who have been diagnosed with cancer, diabetes, or a condition that weakens the immune system;
- underserved population (high school education or less and annual income less than \$25,000); and
- young adults aged 18 to 24.

To provide geographic diversity, we will conduct three focus groups in Raleigh, North Carolina and two focus groups in each of the following locations: Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota; Norwalk, Connecticut; Miami, Florida; and Phoenix, Arizona. Table B.1.1 shows the subpopulation and location for each focus group.

In addition to meeting the requirements for inclusion in the specific subpopulation, focus group participants must meet the following inclusion criteria in each phase:

- have primary responsibility or shared responsibility for grocery shopping in the household;
- have primary responsibility or shared responsibility for cooking in the household;
- prepare food and cook in the home at least three times a week;
- are not a vegetarian;
- have prepared specific foods in the past 2 months, including uncooked, breaded, boneless poultry products, frozen pot pies, and frozen meals and entrees;
- have the ability to read and understand written materials in English;
- have not participated in a focus group in the past 6 months; and
- have not been employed by the federal government; the food service industry; the food industry; health care industry; or a marketing research, advertising, or public relations company (including immediate family members) in the past 5 years.

Table B.1.1 Focus Group Subpopulations and Locations

Group	Subpopulation	Location
1	Parents of young children	Raleigh, NC
2	Immunocompromised	Raleigh, NC
3	General population	Raleigh, NC
4	Older adults	Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN
5	Immunocompromised	Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN
6	Young adults	Norwalk, CT
7	Underserved	Norwalk, CT
8	Older adults	Miami, FL
9	Parents of young children	Miami, FL
10	Young adults	Phoenix, AZ
11	Underserved	Phoenix, AZ

Our contractor will work with local market research companies in each of the focus group locations to recruit potential participants and provide the facilities for hosting the focus group discussions. Using convenience sampling, the market research companies will recruit from their databases potential participants who meet the eligibility criteria.

B.2 Procedures for the Collection of Information

Upon arrival to the focus group facility, participants will read and sign an informed consent form (approved by RTI’s IRB) and answer a few short questions to confirm eligibility. Two experienced moderators will conduct the focus group discussions. They will use a moderator guide, which will serve as an outline and provide structure for the focus group discussions. The moderator guide addresses the following topics:

- Assess preparation instructions for specific products
 - What are consumers’ understanding of the preparation instructions on product labeling for the following food product types:
 - o uncooked, breaded, boneless poultry products;
 - o frozen ground beef patties;

- o frozen pot pies;
- o frozen meals and entrees; and
- o raw meat and poultry?
- What improvements, if any, can be made to the preparation instructions for these products?
- Assess understanding and use of carbon monoxide labeling on raw meat products
 - How do consumers use use-by or freeze-by dates on raw meat products?
 - Are consumers aware manufacturers package meat products using carbon monoxide?
 - Do consumers understand how carbon monoxide works in meat packaging?
 - Do consumers understand carbon monoxide labeling found on meat products?
 - What improvements, if any, can be made to carbon monoxide labeling?
 - What are the most effective ways of conveying carbon monoxide labeling messages to consumers, in terms of methods of communication, transmission, and dissemination?

During the focus group discussions, participants will be evaluating existing and newly designed labeling features regarding the safe handling of meat and poultry products. To stimulate discussion among participants, participants will be asked to complete a worksheet.

Each focus group discussion will last no more than two hours and will be professionally video- and audio-taped by the local market research companies. The audiotapes will then be professionally transcribed by an independent contractor. The moderators will review the videotapes and transcriptions of the focus group discussions and prepare a detailed summary of each discussion. The moderators will then systematically analyze the detailed summaries to identify common themes and any exceptions to these themes in a final report to FSIS. No statistical analyses will be conducted.

B.3 Methods to Maximize Response Rate and Deal with Non-Response

Each market research company will recruit 11 to 12 individuals to ensure eight individuals show to participate in each of the 11 discussion groups. We anticipate a total of 88 adults participating in the focus group discussions.

B.4 Tests of Procedures or Methods to be Undertaken

On March 11, 2008, RTI conducted a pilot focus group with 8 adults aged 26-59 years old in Bethesda, Maryland. The purpose of the pilot focus group was to test the focus group materials (i.e., moderator guide and worksheets) and the time allotted for each topic. Based on the pilot focus group, the moderator guide was revised to allow more time for participants to examine and discuss the public health messages and less time examining and discussing specific food products.

B.5 Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects and Individuals Collecting and/or Analyzing Data

FSIS employees will review the results of the consumer focus groups: Daniel Engeljohn, Sally Jones, Murray Penner, Jeff Canavan, Robert Tuverson, Eileen Dykes, Diane Van, Barbara Obrien, and Rosalyn Murphy-Jenkins.

