

Appendix F-1

Focus Group Moderator Guide Farmers' Market Vendors

Farmers' Market Vendor Focus Groups

Discussion Outline

Project: "Evaluation of Childhood Obesity Prevention and Control Initiative: New York City Health Bucks Program"

Focus groups with _____ (insert description of type of vendor)

Discussion Outline

I. Introduction: Welcome (10 minutes)

A. Purpose: During the next 2 hours, we will be discussing some of your experiences selling at farmers' markets.

B. Disclosure

- Observation
- Audio
- Data Security
- Voluntary Participation

C. Ground Rules

- Would like to hear from everyone; one at a time please
- No right or wrong answers
- Moderator is impartial, please be candid
- Remind participants not to repeat anything heard today or disclose identity of participants.

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- We will take a break after the first hour, but feel free to leave the room if you need a break before that time.

D. Participant Introduction

- Name (Ask them to introduce themselves by first name only. Advise them that last names will not be recorded if inadvertently disclosed.)
- What products – generally speaking (e.g., fruits, vegetables, fish, etc.) – do you sell at farmers’ markets and how long have you been selling them at the markets?

II. Farmers’ Market Participation (30 minutes)

Let’s spend some time talking about your decision to sell at farmers’ markets.

1. Are you the farmer that grows/makes the products that are sold at the farmers’ markets?
 - If no, how are you involved with selling the products?
 - Where is [your farm/the farm whose products you sell] located?
 - How far away (in miles or hours) is this from the market(s) where you sell your products?
2. What made you decide to sell your products at a farmers’ market?
3. Do you sell your products at one farmers’ market or more than one market?
 - If at one market, what influenced your decision to sell at that particular market?
(Probe:
 - *Convenience (define)*
 - *Neighborhood/environment or specific location*
 - *Target Population (define)*
 - *Size*
 - *Methods of payment (EBT, Health Bucks, etc.)*
 - *Sales volume*
 - *Price of products*
 - *Other*
 - If one, describe some of the characteristics of this market:
 - # of booths, product variety, volume of foot traffic, other
 - If more than one, at how many markets do you sell?
 - What influenced your decision to sell at more than one market – and in particular these markets?
 - Are these markets similar or different in characteristics (e.g.,

size/#booths, product variety, volume of foot traffic, type of neighborhood, etc.)?

4. Considering the different things that influenced your decision to sell at these markets, do some of these things/considerations matter more than others?
5. Are you satisfied with your current choice of market(s) for selling your products?
 - Is there anything that you wish could change about the market(s)?
6. How many days out of the week do you sell your products at a farmers' market? List days.
 - Does this vary: by market, by month, other?
 - What influences your decision regarding how often to sell at a market (e.g., do you have to commit to sell throughout an entire farmers' market season)?
7. Has where you sell your products changed over time (e.g., the # of markets and where they are located)?
 - If so, explain what changed.
 - Do you sell your products at any farmers' markets outside of [insert target area]? If so, where?
8. Do you sell your products at places other than farmers' markets?
 - If so, where else do you sell your products (e.g., bodegas, other carts/stands, grocery stores, etc.)?
 - State some of the reasons that you decided to sell your products at these other locations.
 - Did you decide to sell your products at these other locations before or after you were selling at farmers' markets?
 - Do you sell more of your products at the farmers' market(s) or the other places you listed?

III. Farmers' Market Application Process (10 minutes)

9. What did you initially have to do to be able to sell your products at farmers' markets (e.g., is there an application process)?
 - Did you receive a certification or license as a result?
 - From what organization?
 - What does being certified or licensed mean?
 - Did you pay any fees for this certification/license?
 - If yes, is this/are these one-time fee(s) or repeat (e.g., every year, etc.)?
10. What did you have to do to be able to sell your products at a specific

farmers' market?

- Does the process vary by farmers' market (e.g., an independent market vs. Greenmarket, Harvest Home, other)?
 - Do you have to repeat any part of this process each year that you want to sell at the market(s)?
 - Are there fees associated with this process?
 - What are the fees for?
 - Have the fees changed over time (e.g., increase/decrease)?
11. Are you a member of any farmers' market association or federation?
- Do you pay any fees as part of the process?
 - What are the benefits of membership?

IV. Sales and Payment Methods (10 minutes)

12. How do you decide what products to sell at the farmers' market?
- If you sell at more than one farmers' market, do the products you sell vary by market? If so, in what ways?
 - Have the products you sell changed over time? Describe.
13. How do you decide how much of a product to bring on each market day?
- Are some products more popular than others?
(Probe: List most and least popular.)
 - Have you changed what you sell as a result?
14. How do you decide what prices to charge for your products?
- How often do prices change (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly, etc.)?
 - Do prices vary across different farmers' markets?
 - If so, what influences price (e.g., market characteristics)?
15. What are the different ways customers can pay for the products they purchase from you at the market(s)?
(Probe: cash, debit/credit card, food stamps (SNAP), WIC or Senior FMNP coupons, WIC vouchers, Health Bucks, other.)
16. Which methods of payment are most commonly used by your customers?
- Has this changed over time? Since when?
 - In what ways?
 - Does this vary by market or neighborhood? Describe.
17. Which forms of payment do you prefer?
- What makes these payment methods preferable?
 - Are there drawbacks to any of the other payment methods you accept?
18. Are there any forms of payment that you do not accept?

- If so, for what reasons?
19. Do you have any suggestions for changing the payment methods at farmers' markets?

V. Experience with Health Bucks (30 minutes)

20. Have you ever seen a Health Buck (show Health Buck)?
- If so, do you know what a Health Buck is?
 - How did you learn or hear about the Health Bucks Program?
 - If you do not know what a Health Buck is, would you be interested in learning more about the program? (Note: If so, we can give you some information at the end of our discussion.)
21. Do you accept Health Bucks as a form of payment?
- At all farmers' markets where you sell your products?
 - If no, why not?
 - Is there anything that would influence your willingness to try or use Health Bucks?
22. How did you decide whether or not to participate in the Health Bucks program?
23. Do you advertise/display that you accept Health Bucks?
24. Has there been a time when you haven't accepted a Health Buck?
- If so, for what reason(s)?
25. How does the process of paying with a Health Buck work?
- Based on your observations, is the process convenient for the consumer? Why or why not?
 - Is the process convenient for you?
 - Is there a time when consumers use the Health Bucks more or less – during a day, week, month, or season?
 - If so, do you know what might influence when they are used?
26. When you receive a Health Buck from a customer, are you able to distinguish where the customer got the Health Buck?
- If so, how?
 - What are the different ways in which customers get Health Bucks?
 - Have you observed that different sources matter to the customers in any way? Describe.
 - Do different sources of Health Bucks matter to you in any way? Describe.
27. Once you have received the Health Buck as payment from a customer,

what do you do to receive your payment/reimbursement?

- How often do you send in/redeem the Health Bucks for payment?
 - To what organization?
 - Would you change anything about the process?
 - Is this process different from that of other vouchers or coupons?
28. When do you receive your payments for the Health Bucks?
- Would you change anything about the timing?
 - Is the timing for receiving payments different from that of other vouchers or coupons?
29. Has the Health Buck program had an influence on the volume or variety of products you sell?
- If so, in what ways?
30. Have you seen a change in the volume of Health Bucks
- Used by customers? Explain.
(*Probe: Do customers receive their Health Bucks at opportune times in the season?*)
 - Accepted by other farmers/vendors? Explain.
31. Based on your observation, has the Health Buck program had an influence on your customers?
- If so, in what ways?
32. Have you seen a change in the types of people using Health Bucks?
- If so, in what ways?

VI Overall Farmer's Market Experience (20 minutes)

33. Thinking about what you have shared about your experiences selling at farmers' markets,
- What are some of the benefits of selling your products at farmers' markets?
 - What are some of the drawbacks or challenges of selling your products at farmers' markets?
34. Thinking more specifically about your experience with the Health Bucks program,
- What are some of the benefits of accepting Health Bucks for your products at farmers' markets?
 - What are some of the drawbacks or challenges of accepting Health Bucks your products?
35. Would you like to see the Health Bucks program
- Continue

- Grow
- Change in any way?

36. As a final question, recall that we began our discussion today asking about how you decided to sell your products at farmers' markets – are there any reasons you would stop selling at farmers' markets?

VI. Conclusion (5 minutes)

Check with clients for additional questions.

Thank and dismiss participants.