

# National Food Study Report for May 2012

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From: Mark Denbaly, ERS  
Subject: Monthly Update on National Food Study  
Date: June 8, 2012

This is the first in a series of monthly reports designed to provide summary information about the progress of USDA's National Food Survey, being conducted under contract by Mathematica Policy Research.

The National Food Study is a nationally representative survey designed to collection information from a sample of 5,000 households about the foods they acquire over a seven-day period. Data collection began in April 2012 and is scheduled to end in October 2012.

The two attached tables present information, respectively, on Screening interviews and Initial and Final interviews among screened households determined to be eligible for the survey. Each table shows information for the survey as a whole (TOTAL), for the two sample frames individually (SNAP and ABS), and for each sample release separately. Because survey operations in the east started earlier than those in the west, Release 0 covers east coast operations only.

## **Screener Status (Table 1)**

As of June 5, 2012, 5,052 sampled addresses had been released to the field: 1,440 from the SNAP frame and 3,612 from the address-based sample (ABS) frame.<sup>1</sup> Of the total, 7.1% were found to be not eligible for screening, 48.7% are "pending," 30.4% have reached a status of "complete," 12.8% refused to answer the screener, and initial (Phase 1) efforts to contact households have ended for 0.8%.

80.2% of households that have been screened have been found eligible to participate in the survey: 70.8% have agreed to participate in the one-week data collection effort and 9.4% have refused. The remaining households were ineligible for the data collection.

## **Interview Status (Table 2)**

Of the 1,087 households that initially agreed to participate, 1,027 have entered the interview process. Of the 1,027, 77.6% have completed their initial interview and 7.1% have refused (though only 1.7% have reached a status of "Refused, final."). The final interview process has started for 638 households, of which 93.1% have been completed. There also have been a few refusals at this stage of data

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<sup>1</sup> Percentages in both tables represent column percentages only. Percentages in bold type use Net Total (Table 1) or Total (Table 2) as the denominator. All other percentages use the previous highlighted count as the denominator (e.g., the Untouched sample of 1,591 addresses represents 64.6% of all pending screeners, whereas pending screeners as a group represent 48.7% of the net released sample of 5,052 addresses.

collection. There are 159 households (i.e., 797 minus 638) that have completed the initial interview but have not started the final interview process.

The bottom section of Table 2 shows the distribution of days covered by telephone calls to the Survey Operations Center (SOC) by the 592 households that have completed their final interview.<sup>2</sup> Nearly half (48.8%) provided data on food-away-from-home (FAFH) for all seven days of data collection, and another 30.6% provided FAFH information on 4-6 days of data collection. Data entry on information in households' food booklets is just beginning, so we do not yet know how many households entered FAFH information in the red pages of their booklets but did not call that information in to the SOC.

### **Conclusion**

No major data collection issues have been encountered, although overall productivity is somewhat lower than expected at this point due to staff attrition and a shortage of scanners in areas where recruitment has been high. More interviewers are being trained this week, and the contractor has purchased an additional 100 scanners.

At this point the rates of refusal appear to be within expected ranges even though there has been little time yet spent on refusal conversion. No Phase 2 activities to reach uncontacted households have begun, so it is too early to estimate an expected screener or interview response rate.

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<sup>2</sup> We are investigating cause of the small discrepancy between the 594 households reported as completing the final interview and the 592 households in the bottom section of the table.

**Table 1 Screener Status As of June 5, 2012**

	Total		Frame SNAP		ABS		Release 0		1		2	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,052</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,440</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3,612</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>771</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,478</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,803</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Released in error	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>NET TOTAL</b>	<b>5,052</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,440</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3,612</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>771</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,478</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,803</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>NOT ELIGIBLE FOR SCREENING</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>4.3</b>
No such address	69	19.3	36	28.6	33	14.2	11	16.2	55	25.8	3	3.9
Vacant or demolished	256	71.5	80	63.5	176	75.9	50	73.5	134	62.9	72	93.5
Group quarters	17	4.8	3	2.4	14	6.0	3	4.4	12	5.6	2	2.6
Not a residence	16	4.5	7	5.6	9	3.9	4	5.9	12	5.6	0	0.0
<b>PENDING SCREENERS</b>	<b>2,461</b>	<b>48.7</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>49.0</b>	<b>1,756</b>	<b>48.6</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>30.5</b>	<b>1,514</b>	<b>84.0</b>
Untouched	1,591	64.6	493	69.9	1,098	62.5	36	18.8	163	21.6	1,392	91.9
Not at home	665	27.0	149	21.1	516	29.4	114	59.4	452	59.9	99	6.5
Language transfer	30	1.2	19	2.7	11	0.6	6	3.1	23	3.0	1	0.1
Locked building	43	1.8	9	1.3	34	1.9	6	3.1	32	4.2	5	0.3
Gated community	42	1.7	5	0.7	37	2.1	11	5.7	28	3.7	3	0.2
Appointment, firm	12	0.5	4	0.6	8	0.5	3	1.6	8	1.1	1	0.1
Appointment, soft	78	3.2	26	3.7	52	3.0	16	8.3	49	6.5	13	0.9
<b>COMPLETED SCREENERS</b>	<b>1,535</b>	<b>30.4</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>33.4</b>	<b>1,054</b>	<b>29.2</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>44.8</b>	<b>1,042</b>	<b>42.0</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>8.2</b>
Eligible and agrees	1,087	70.8	425	88.4	662	62.8	299	86.7	693	66.5	95	64.2
Eligible and refuses	144	9.4	28	5.8	116	11.0	40	11.6	89	8.5	15	10.1
Inelig, income	271	17.6	20	4.2	251	23.8	1	0.3	234	22.5	36	24.3
Inelig, seasonal	23	1.5	5	1.0	18	1.7	4	1.2	17	1.6	2	1.4
Inelig, Chinese	2	0.1	0	0.0	2	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.2	0	0.0
Inelig, non-study language	8	0.5	3	0.6	5	0.5	1	0.3	7	0.7	0	0.0
Inelig, phys/cogn barrier	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>REFUSALS</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>3.4</b>
Refusal, initial	278	43.0	46	40.0	232	43.6	63	40.6	186	43.2	29	47.5
Refusal, hold for conversion	186	28.8	34	29.6	152	28.6	51	32.9	120	27.8	15	24.6
Refusal, release for conversion	10	1.6	7	6.1	3	0.6	4	2.6	6	1.4	0	0.0
Refusal, final	173	26.7	28	24.4	145	27.3	37	23.9	119	27.6	17	27.9
<b>EFFORT ENDED</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.2</b>
Effort ended phase 1	41	100.0	9	100.0	32	100.0	8	100.0	30	100.0	3	100.0
Reactivated for phase 2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Effort ended final	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Notes: Percentages on highlighted rows are the percentage of total cases; percentages on non-highlighted rows are the percentage within the category.

**Table 2 Completed Initial and Final Interviews As of June 5, 2012**

	Frame											
	Total		SNAP		ABS		0		Release 1		2	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,087</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>693</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>INITIAL INTERVIEWS</b>	<b>1,027</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>624</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Complete (020)	797	77.6	336	83.4	461	73.9	220	76.7	515	78.2	62	76.5
Pending (358,567,568,650,800,820)	158	15.4	49	12.2	109	17.5	46	16.0	98	14.9	14	17.3
Complete, Refused training (221)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Ineligible, phys/cogn barrier (410)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Refused, initial refusal (220)	48	4.7	10	2.5	38	6.1	13	4.5	30	4.6	5	6.2
Refused, hold for conversion (225)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Refused, released for conversion (226)	7	0.7	3	0.7	4	0.6	2	0.7	5	0.8	0	0.0
Refused, final (229)	17	1.7	5	1.2	12	1.9	6	2.1	11	1.7	0	0.0
<b>FINAL INTERVIEWS</b>	<b>638</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Complete (020)	594	93.1	251	93.0	343	93.2	177	96.2	380	92.2	37	88.1
Pending (358,567,568,650,800,820)	37	5.8	16	5.9	21	5.7	5	2.7	28	6.8	4	9.5
Refused, initial refusal (220)	7	1.1	3	1.1	4	1.1	2	1.1	4	1.0	1	2.4
Refused, hold for conversion (225)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Refused, released for conversion (226)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Refused, final (229)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>TELEPHONE FOOD REPORTING BY PRIMARY RESPONDENT</b>												
<b>HHs Completing Data Collection Week</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100.0</b>
No calls to SOC	4	0.7	3	1.2	1	0.3	1	0.6	3	0.8	0	0.0
Less than 4 days	118	19.9	61	24.4	57	16.7	28	15.8	85	22.5	5	13.5
4-6 days	181	30.6	66	26.4	115	33.6	53	29.9	111	29.4	17	46.0
7 days	289	48.8	120	48.0	169	49.4	95	53.7	179	47.4	15	40.5

Note: Percentages on highlighted rows are the percentage of total cases; percentages on non-highlighted rows are the percentage within the category