National Food Study Report for June 2012

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| To: | Jennifer Park, OMB |
| From: | Mark Denbaly, ERS |
| Subject: | Monthly Update on National Food Study |
| Date: | July 10, 2012 |

This is the second in a series of monthly reports designed to provide summary information about the progress of USDA’s National Food Study, 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 July 10, 2012, 8,739, sampled addresses had been released to the field: 1,591 from the SNAP frame and 7,148 from the address-based sample (ABS) frame.[[1]](#footnote-1) Of the total, 8.3% were found to be not eligible for screening, 39.2% are “pending,” 37.0% have reached a status of “complete,” 13.9% refused to answer the screener, and initial (Phase 1) efforts to contact households have ended for 1.6%.

74.6% of households that have been screened have been found eligible to participate in the survey; 66.3% of households with completed screeners have agreed to participate in the one-week data collection effort and 8.3% have refused. The remaining households (25.4%) were ineligible for the data collection. The percent ineligible has increased since the last report as we close quota groups to manage the sample against our target distribution of households across income category.

**Interview Status (Table 2)**

Of the2,143 households that initially agreed to participate, 2,016 have entered the interview process. Of the 2,016, 76.6% have completed their initial interview and 9.3% have refused (though only 2.3% have reached a status of “Refused, final.”). The final interview process has started for 1,374 households, of which 94.1% have been completed. There also have been a few refusals at this stage of data collection. There are 171 households (i.e., 1,545 minus 1,374) 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) for the 1,293 households that have completed their final interview. Just over half (51.0%) provided data on food-away-from-home (FAFH) for all seven days of data collection, and another 28.0% provided FAFH information on 4-6 days of data collection. Data entry of 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.

Response burdens for the initial and final interviews are running a bit below our estimates of an average of 30 minutes for each interview. The average length of the initial interview has been 19.6 minutes. It has been 28.5 minutes for the final interview.

**Conclusion**

Overall productivity is lower than expected due to staff attrition after the initial interviewer trainings. A third training was held during the week of June 25, and 27 additional field interviewers began working on July 6. A shortage of scanners was reported last month, but an additional 100 scanners were placed in the field last month and an additional 60 scanners will be added next week.

The screener completion rate is 69.0%, which is below our target rate of 87% and below the field test rate of 72.2%. It is not clear that the $5 prepaid unconditional incentive has been effective. The $5 incentive has been accepted by 89% of respondents that are eligible and agree to the study; 65% of respondents who complete the screener and are eligible but refuse to participate in the study; and 16% of respondents who refuse to complete the screener. At this point little time has been spent on refusal conversion; 47% have been identified by field managers as final refusals, and the remaining 53% are in some stage of refusal conversion.

No Phase 2 activities to reach uncontacted households have begun because only 118 cases have received a status of “effort ended” after 8 unsuccessful contact attempts (2 in each of 4 time slots). The number of retired cases is lower than expected. Many cases have received more than 8 contacts because appointments (soft and hard) are not counted as unsuccessful attempts.

**Table 1—Screener Status as of July 10, 2012**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Total | | Frame | | | | Release | | | | | | | | | |
| SNAP | | ABS | | 0 | | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 4 | |
| # | Pct | # | Pct | # | Pct | # | Pct | # | Pct | # | Pct | # | Pct | # | Pct |
| **TOTAL** | **8,739** | **100.0** | **1,591** | **100.0** | **7,148** | **100.0** | **771** | **100.0** | **2,478** | **100.0** | **2,478** | **100.0** | **1,682** | **100.0** | **1,330** | **100.0** |
| Released in error | 1 | [>0] | 1 | 0.1 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | [>0] | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| **NET TOTAL** | **8,738** | **100.0** | **1,590** | **99.9** | **7,148** | **100.0** | **771** | **100.0** | **2,478** | **100.0** | **2,477** | **100.0** | **1,682** | **100.0** | **1,330** | **100.0** |
| **NOT ELIGIBLE FOR SCREENING** | **726** | **8.3** | **201** | **12.6** | **525** | **7.3** | **80** | **10.4** | **250** | **10.1** | **227** | **9.2** | **84** | **5.0** | **85** | **6.4** |
| No such address | 146 | 20.1 | 59 | 29.4 | 87 | 16.6 | 16 | 20.0 | 59 | 23.6 | 49 | 21.6 | 11 | 13.1 | 11 | 12.9 |
| Vacant or demolished | 474 | 65.3 | 112 | 55.7 | 362 | 69.0 | 57 | 71.2 | 162 | 64.8 | 141 | 62.1 | 58 | 69.0 | 56 | 65.9 |
| Group quarters | 58 | 8.0 | 10 | 5.0 | 48 | 9.1 | 3 | 3.8 | 13 | 5.2 | 18 | 7.9 | 12 | 14.3 | 12 | 14.1 |
| Not a residence | 48 | 6.6 | 20 | 10.0 | 28 | 5.3 | 4 | 5.0 | 16 | 6.4 | 19 | 8.4 | 3 | 3.6 | 6 | 7.1 |
| **PENDING SCREENERS** | **3,427** | **39.2** | **326** | **20.5** | **3,101** | **43.4** | **105** | **13.6** | **402** | **16.2** | **889** | **35.9** | **1,091** | **64.9** | **940** | **70.7** |
| Untouched | 1,535 | 44.8 | 69 | 21.2 | 1,466 | 47.3 | 12 | 11.4 | 38 | 9.4 | 307 | 34.5 | 644 | 59.0 | 534 | 56.8 |
| Not at home | 1,457 | 42.5 | 190 | 58.3 | 1,267 | 40.9 | 68 | 64.8 | 254 | 63.2 | 446 | 50.2 | 365 | 33.5 | 324 | 34.5 |
| Language transfer | 51 | 1.5 | 20 | 6.1 | 31 | 1.0 | 3 | 2.9 | 21 | 5.2 | 19 | 2.1 | 4 | 0.4 | 4 | 0.4 |
| Locked building | 115 | 3.4 | 23 | 7.1 | 92 | 3.0 | 7 | 6.7 | 31 | 7.7 | 41 | 4.6 | 18 | 1.6 | 18 | 1.9 |
| Gated community | 90 | 2.6 | 5 | 1.5 | 85 | 2.7 | 7 | 6.7 | 21 | 5.2 | 27 | 3.0 | 13 | 1.2 | 22 | 2.3 |
| Appointment, firm | 13 | 0.4 | 3 | 0.9 | 10 | 0.3 | 1 | 1.0 | 2 | 0.5 | 7 | 0.8 | 1 | 0.1 | 2 | 0.2 |
| Appointment, soft | 166 | 4.8 | 16 | 4.9 | 150 | 4.8 | 7 | 6.7 | 35 | 8.7 | 42 | 4.7 | 46 | 4.2 | 36 | 3.8 |
| **COMPLETED SCREENERS** | **3,232** | **37.0** | **837** | **52.6** | **2,395** | **33.5** | **389** | **50.4** | **1,262** | **50.9** | **957** | **38.6** | **381** | **22.6** | **243** | **18.3** |
| Eligible and agrees | 2,143 | 66.3 | 748 | 89.4 | 1,395 | 58.2 | 338 | 86.9 | 844 | 66.9 | 647 | 67.6 | 197 | 51.7 | 117 | 48.2 |
| Eligible and refuses | 269 | 8.3 | 32 | 3.8 | 237 | 9.9 | 39 | 10.0 | 89 | 7.0 | 70 | 7.3 | 39 | 10.2 | 32 | 13.2 |
| Inelig, income | 741 | 22.9 | 42 | 5.0 | 699 | 29.2 | 3 | 0.8 | 297 | 23.5 | 220 | 23.0 | 137 | 36.0 | 84 | 34.6 |
| Inelig, seasonal | 52 | 1.6 | 10 | 1.2 | 42 | 1.8 | 6 | 1.5 | 21 | 1.7 | 12 | 1.2 | 4 | 1.0 | 9 | 3.7 |
| Inelig, Chinese | 2 | 0.1 | 0 | 0.0 | 2 | 0.1 | 0 | 0.0 | 2 | 0.2 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Inelig, non-study language | 25 | 0.8 | 5 | 0.6 | 20 | 0.8 | 3 | 0.8 | 9 | 0.7 | 8 | 0.8 | 4 | 1.0 | 1 | 0.4 |
| Inelig, phys/cogn barrier | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| **REFUSALS** | **1,213** | **13.9** | **195** | **12.3** | **1,018** | **14.2** | **181** | **23.5** | **487** | **19.6** | **362** | **14.6** | **122** | **7.2** | **61** | **4.6** |
| Refusal, initial | 225 | 18.6 | 19 | 9.7 | 206 | 20.2 | 14 | 7.7 | 36 | 7.4 | 87 | 24.0 | 47 | 38.5 | 41 | 67.2 |
| Refusal, hold for conversion | 295 | 24.3 | 43 | 22.0 | 252 | 24.8 | 40 | 22.1 | 78 | 16.0 | 127 | 35.1 | 46 | 37.7 | 4 | 6.6 |
| Refusal, release for conversion | 119 | 9.8 | 28 | 14.4 | 91 | 8.9 | 33 | 18.2 | 78 | 16.0 | 8 | 2.2 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Refusal, final | 574 | 47.3 | 105 | 53.8 | 469 | 46.1 | 94 | 51.9 | 295 | 60.6 | 140 | 38.7 | 29 | 23.8 | 16 | 26.2 |
| **EFFORT ENDED** | **140** | **1.6** | **31** | **2.0** | **109** | **1.5** | **16** | **2.1** | **77** | **3.1** | **42** | **1.7** | **4** | **0.2** | **1** | **0.1** |
| Effort ended phase 1 | 140 | 100.0 | 31 | 100.0 | 109 | 100.0 | 16 | 100.0 | 77 | 100.0 | 42 | 100.0 | 4 | 100.0 | 1 | 100.0 |
| Reactivated for phase 2 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 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 | 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. Counts by week are based on the last date of contact. Individual cases that are pending will appear in subsequent weeks as they receive more contacts. >0Value too small to display. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Table 2—Completed Initial and Final Interviews as of July 10, 2012**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Total | | Frame | | | | Release | | | | | | | | | |
| SNAP | | ABS | | 0 | | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 4 | |
| # | Pct | # | Pct | # | Pct | # | Pct | # | Pct | # | Pct | # | Pct | # | Pct |
| **TOTAL** | **2,143** | **100.0** | **748** | **100.0** | **1,395** | **100.0** | **338** | **100.0** | **844** | **100.0** | **647** | **100.0** | **197** | **100.0** | **117** | **100.0** |
| **INITIAL INTERVIEWS** | **2,016** | **100.0** | **726** | **100.0** | **1,290** | **100.0** | **329** | **100.0** | **836** | **100.0** | **617** | **100.0** | **159** | **100.0** | **75** | **100.0** |
| Complete (020) | 1,545 | 76.6 | 590 | 81.3 | 955 | 74.0 | 253 | 76.9 | 656 | 78.5 | 468 | 75.8 | 115 | 72.3 | 53 | 70.7 |
| Pending (358,567,568,650,800,820) | 284 | 14.1 | 89 | 12.3 | 195 | 15.1 | 38 | 11.6 | 94 | 11.2 | 102 | 16.5 | 32 | 20.1 | 18 | 24.0 |
| Complete, Refused training (221) | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 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 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Refused, initial refusal (220) | 102 | 5.1 | 20 | 2.8 | 82 | 6.4 | 17 | 5.2 | 46 | 5.5 | 27 | 4.4 | 9 | 5.7 | 3 | 4.0 |
| Refused, hold for conversion (225) | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Refused, released for conversion (226) | 39 | 1.9 | 10 | 1.4 | 29 | 2.2 | 10 | 3.0 | 13 | 1.6 | 12 | 1.9 | 3 | 1.9 | 1 | 1.3 |
| Refused, final (229) | 46 | 2.3 | 17 | 2.3 | 29 | 2.2 | 11 | 3.3 | 27 | 3.2 | 8 | 1.3 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| **FINAL INTERVIEWS** | **1,374** | **100.0** | **557** | **100.0** | **817** | **100.0** | **248** | **100.0** | **634** | **100.0** | **413** | **100.0** | **71** | **100.0** | **8** | **100.0** |
| Complete (020) | 1,293 | 94.1 | 531 | 95.3 | 762 | 93.3 | 237 | 95.6 | 601 | 94.8 | 388 | 94.0 | 64 | 90.1 | 3 | 37.5 |
| Pending (358,567,568,650,800,820) | 51 | 3.7 | 17 | 3.0 | 34 | 4.2 | 8 | 3.2 | 20 | 3.2 | 14 | 3.4 | 5 | 7.0 | 4 | 50.0 |
| Refused, initial refusal (220) | 30 | 2.2 | 9 | 1.6 | 21 | 2.6 | 3 | 1.2 | 13 | 2.0 | 11 | 2.7 | 2 | 2.8 | 1 | 12.5 |
| Refused, hold for conversion (225) | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 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 | 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 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| **HHs Completing Data Collection Week** | **1,293** | **100.0** | **531** | **100.0** | **762** | **100.0** | **237** | **100.0** | **601** | **100.0** | **388** | **100.0** | **64** | **100.0** | **3** | **100.0** |
| No calls to SOC | 9 | 0.7 | 3 | 0.6 | 6 | 0.8 | 2 | 0.8 | 4 | 0.7 | 2 | 0.5 | 1 | 1.6 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Less than 4 days | 262 | 20.3 | 131 | 24.7 | 131 | 17.2 | 43 | 18.1 | 139 | 23.1 | 68 | 17.5 | 11 | 17.2 | 1 | 33.3 |
| 4-6 days | 362 | 28.0 | 142 | 26.7 | 220 | 28.9 | 72 | 30.4 | 165 | 27.4 | 108 | 27.8 | 16 | 25.0 | 1 | 33.3 |
| 7 days | 660 | 51.0 | 255 | 48.0 | 405 | 53.2 | 120 | 50.6 | 293 | 48.8 | 210 | 54.1 | 36 | 56.2 | 1 | 33.3 |

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

1. 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 1,535 addresses represents 44.8% of all pending screeners, whereas pending screeners as a group represent 39.2% of the net released sample of 8,739 addresses). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)