

National Food Study Report for June 2012

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 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 the 2,143 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%

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).

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. ^aValue 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