

APPENDIX E5. FOCUS GROUP MODERATOR GUIDE FOR FM FREQUENT SHOPPERS -- ENGLISH

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Farmers Market Focus Group Moderator Guide FM Frequent Shoppers

Introduction

Thank you for joining us today for a discussion about food shopping at farmers' markets. My name is _____ . I will be leading the session today. This is _____ and s/he will be taking notes. We work for Westat, a research firm hired by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service to talk with you about food shopping at farmers' markets.

Ground Rules:

Before we get started, I would like to mention a few things.

- Today's discussion should take about one hour.
- This is a research project, and your participation is voluntary.
- There are no wrong answers to any of the questions that we will be discussing today. Your opinions and experiences are important and we want to hear them.
- Participating in this study will not affect any of your SNAP benefits now or in the future.
- We would like to audio record this discussion, so that I can pay attention to all of you today, but also make sure that if I missed or forgot something, I'll be able to hear it again when I get home. We will destroy the recording and any other form you completed when our project is finished.
- We will not use your name or personal information in any reports. Your comments will be combined with comments from other focus group participants not only in this city, but potentially with comments from participants in the two other cities where we will be holding similar discussions. The information/results from this study may be presented in meetings or in internal reports to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service. Results from this study and portions of audio recordings (with no identification of individuals by name) may be presented in meetings or oral presentations to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service. Your name, and any information that can

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be traced back to you, will not be included in any reports or meetings. We will have our technology people take out any names that might get mentioned in an recorded section before we present it.

- When reviewing the transcripts from today's session, it is helpful for me to know when we change speakers. So, please identify yourself by your first name or your initials when you speak, or make up a name for today's session, as long as you use the same name throughout the session. There are name tags; please write the name you plan to use for this session, so we can refer to you by this name.
- Before you leave today, I will give you all your stipend of \$60.00, to thank you for coming and sharing your opinions and insights with us.
- I'd like you to read the informed consent form that we handed you and make sure that I addressed everything that is in there before you sign it. Does anyone have any questions? [MOD ANSWER QUESTIONS] Okay, please sign and date your form and hand it to [NAME] who is assisting me today.

If any of my questions are unclear, please let me know. Lots of times, participants get very enthusiastic about the topic and everyone has something to say – which is great! Except when I get back to listen to the audio recording, I won't be able to clearly hear anyone's comment. So please wait until someone is finished speaking before you speak. If you need to use the restroom during this time, please feel free – the men's room is located [DIRECTIONS] and the women's room is located [DIRECTIONS]. If you haven't helped yourself to refreshments, please feel free to do so now OR anytime during our discussion.

I am going to turn the tape recorder on now.

Participant introductions

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I would like to start by having everyone introduce themselves. Please just use your first name. Tell us a little bit about yourself, how long you've lived in <NAME OF CITY/TOWN/ NEIGHBORHOOD> and **where you usually get your groceries.**

I. General Awareness and Use of Farmers' Markets

A. As we just heard people get their groceries from several different types of places, including farmers' markets. I'd like to talk today about shopping at [NAME] farmers' market. How did you first find out about [NAME] FM?

PROBES:

- Got a letter in the mail
- Heard about it from a friend
- Heard about it at WIC/SNAP office
- Other sources – sign at grocery store, church, community center, etc.

B. How easy or difficult is it for you to get to the farmers' market from where you live?

PROBES:

- How far is the FM from where you all live? (e.g., 2 blocks, 1 mile, etc.)
- How do you get there? (e.g., public transit, drive, walk)
- [NAME] Farmers' market is open from [BEGIN MONTH] to [END MONTH]. During these months, how often would you estimate that you go shopping there?
- For how long [years] have you been shopping at FM?

II. PURCHASING PATTERNS

A. What types of foods do you purchase at the Farmers Market?

- Do you purchase the same kinds of items each time you go to the FM, or do your purchases vary?
 - o IF VARY: What are some of the reasons you purchase different items each time you go?

PROBES:

- Availability of specific items?
- Time in the redemption month?
- Size of benefit?

B. When these items are available at the FM, why do you purchase them there instead of a grocery store or corner market?

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PROBES:

- Better quality?
- Lower cost?
- Organic / healthier?
- Give money to local farmers instead of large corporations?

C. Thinking about the different places where you shop for food, where do you redeem most of your SNAP benefits? Explain.

D. In the month(s) when you shop at the FM, what proportion of your benefits do you estimate are redeemed at the FM?

III. Perceived Benefits and Barriers to Shopping at FM

A. What are some of the reasons you all have shopped at [NAME] FM?

PROBES [IF NOT ADDRESSED IN QUESTION II.B, ABOVE]:

- Quality and selection of fruits and vegetables (or other foods)
- Organic produce/local produce/ healthier foods available
- Bonus or incentive program
- Accepts WIC, SNAP
- Location (proximity to home or work, ease of access, safe)
- Social experience (cultural events, fun atmosphere, meet other people in the community)
- Health information (food preparation/cooking demonstrations, social service rep available, offers health info/screenings/immunizations)

B. In this area, certainly not everyone shops at FMs. Some of the people in this area responded to a survey and said there are several things that keep them from shopping at [NAME] farmers' market or from shopping at [NAME] as much as they would like, such as [FILL WITH MOST FREQUENTLY MARKED REASONS – SELECT TOP 3 OR 4 AND DISCUSS THEM ONE AT A TIME]. What are your thoughts about this barrier? Does this issue ever keep you from shopping at [NAME] when you would like? That is, you were planning to shop there, but you changed your mind because of [ISSUE]? Explain.

- Location is not convenient
- Location is not safe
- Not convenient to public transportation

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- o Days the market is open are not convenient
- o Hours the market is open are not convenient
- o Parking is difficult
- o High prices of fresh fruits and vegetables
- o Limited selection of fresh fruits and vegetables
- o Poor quality of fresh fruits and vegetables
- o Staff/vendors are not respectful
- o Other shoppers are not respectful
- o Staff vendors do not speak participants' language
- o Prefer to buy all of their groceries at one store
- o Hard to find deals or value for the money
- o Other as noted

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. What suggestions do you have for changes to the FM that would make it easier/more convenient for you to shop there? Explain.**

- B. What suggestions do you have for changes to the FM that would encourage others who are receiving SNAP benefits to shop there? Explain.**

V. CLOSE

Those are all the questions I had for you. Is there anything else about your experiences shopping at FM that I didn't ask about, but you think is important for me to consider when I write my report?

We truly appreciate your joining us, thank you.