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## Appendix E4, [STATE INTRO LETTER]

[FNS LETTERHEAD]

<Date>

USDA Food and Nutrition Service  
Office of Policy Support  
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 1014  
Alexandria, VA 22302

RE: Information Request - <FNS Region> - Summer Food Service Program Study Participant Characteristics (AG-3198-C-13-0016)

Dear <State Agency Name>,

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has hired Optimal Solutions Group, LLC (Optimal), to conduct a nationwide study about the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). The objectives of this study are to ascertain how the summer foods program operates at the state, sponsor, and site levels as well as describing participant characteristics and examining the differences and factors that affect participation by sponsors and children across states. Enclosed with this letter is a brochure describing the study and its value to your state and our nation's youth in need of nutrition assistance during the summer.

Optimal is conducting a survey of all state agencies that administer their states' summer foods programs as well as a survey with sponsors and sites and interviews with parents/caregivers of SFSP-eligible participants and non-participants. The goal of the state-level survey is to better understand how summer foods programs operate at this level (e.g., finding sponsors, administering training, making outreach efforts, etc.). The findings from this study will help the FNS determine which summer foods program policies are successful and which need improvement. This information will ultimately help the FNS better serve state agencies such as yours in administering this valuable program to our nation's youth.

**In a few weeks, you will receive an invitation via e-mail with details about an upcoming webcast hosted by Optimal for all summer foods program state agencies to attend.** This webcast will explain, in more detail, the purpose of the study, key dates to consider, how the data are being collected, and any action items for you to take. This interactive webcast will provide state agencies with an opportunity to ask questions, provide suggestions, and gain clarity about states' role in helping the FNS meet its research objectives. Participation in this study is voluntary. There will be no penalties if you decide not to respond, either to the information collection as a whole or to any particular questions. The information you provide will be private and will not be maintained or disclosed in identifiable form to anyone, except otherwise as required by law.

During the webcast, Optimal will request a list of the 2015 SFSP sponsors in your state along with specific administrative data. Please cooperate with this request in a timely manner.

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In <time of the month>, you will receive an e-mail inviting you to complete the state survey.

No action is needed on your part at this time. If you have any questions or concerns about your participation in this study, please contact Optimal at 877-776-8501 or [SFSP@optimalsolutionsgroup.com](mailto:SFSP@optimalsolutionsgroup.com).

For inquiries about the authorization for this study, please contact Dr. Chan Chanhataasilpa at FNS Headquarters at 703-305-2115 or [chanchalat.chanhataasilpa@fns.usda.gov](mailto:chanchalat.chanhataasilpa@fns.usda.gov).

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

[FNS CONTACT & SIGNATURE]

Enclosure