


**Memorandum**

**Date:** March 30, 2016

**To:** Stephanie Tatham, OMB Desk Officer

**Through:** Ruth Brown, United States Department of Agriculture, Office of the Chief Information Officer

**From:** Lynnette Thomas   
Food and Nutrition Service, Branch Chief, Planning & Regulatory Affairs

**Re:** Under Approved Generic OMB Clearance No. 0584-0524  
Request Approval to Perform Research on Distribution Costs to District for USDA Foods

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The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the USDA Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services is requesting approval for formative research under Approved Generic OMB Clearance No. 0584-0524.

This request is to acquire clearance for a survey to gather information on distribution fees, storage fees and administrative fees charged to recipient agencies by the State. This research will help FNS analyze the true cost of USDA Foods and assist States with investigating means to lower these fees. Specifically, FNS seeks to conduct a survey with State Distributing Agents in order to improve our program and better meet the needs of schools. This package includes the final version of the survey that will be used during the research.

The following information is provided for your review:

1. **Title of Project:** USDA Foods Distribution Survey
2. **Control Number:** 0584-0524, Expires 06/30/2016
3. **Affected Public:** State Distribution Agents
4. **Number of Respondents:**

**Surveys**

Audience	Number of states and territories	Number of respondents per state	Total number of respondents
State Distribution Agents	54	1	54

5. **Time Needed Per Response:**

**Time Needed Per Survey**

Title	Time	Time
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	<b>(minutes)</b>	<b>(hours)</b>
Distribution Fee Survey	20	0.30

(a) Affected Public	Respondent Type	(b) Survey Instruments	(c) No. Respondents	(d) Frequency of Responses	(e) Est. Total Annual Responses per Respondent (c x d)	(f) Hours per Response	(g) Total Burden Hours (e x f)
School Districts	School Food Service Directors	Yogurt Pilot Survey	54	1	54	0.30	16.20

**6. Total Burden Hours on Public:**

**7. Project Purpose, Methodology and Design:**

Background

As authorized under Section 6 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 USC 1751 et al, the Department of Agriculture provides states with USDA Foods for use in preparing school lunches. USDA Foods comprise about 15 to 20 percent of the value of food served on the school lunch line. Policy No FD-131 addresses the use of SAE funds regulated in 7CFR Part 235, both as initially allocated and when reallocated, for administrative and other expenses incurred in the Food Distribution program. It is the goal of FNS to provide the USDA Foods in the most economical manner and when possible utilize SAE funds for distribution and warehousing of USDA Foods.

Purpose

The purpose of the proposed research is to gain practical insight into the State’s methods of distribution and utilization of USDA Foods by gathering input from agencies. The data collected will guide our best practices regarding the warehousing and distribution of USDA Foods and utilization of SAE funds.

Methodology/Research Design

The research will be in the form of a survey, with a combination of multiple choice and open-ended questions. The proposed questions are included in Attachment A: Distribution Survey. The survey will be developed and administered through Wufoo, the online survey platform of FNS, and the subsequent sections outline the approach in more detail.

Payments/Gifts to Respondents

There are no provisions for payment or gifts to respondents.

Design/Sampling Procedures

The sample will include all State Distribution Agencies. Each State agent will receive the survey with the request to complete the survey.

Recruitment of Participants

FNS will distribute the link to the online survey to the State agents and request that they complete the survey. Participation in the survey is voluntary.

#### Data Collection Timeline

FNS will distribute the Distribution Survey to all states in May. This timeline will allow FNS to gather data in time to report the findings at the School Nutrition Association National Conference.

#### Data Analysis

FNS will review the surveys and comments gathered and will also evaluate the data using the analytical tools provided through the Wufoo platform.

#### Outcome

The data gathered in this research will help FNS understand each State's distribution practices and utilization of SAE funds toward all fees associated with the USDA Foods program. These insights will provide FNS with direction on how to report the findings.

#### **8. Confidentiality:**

Respondents will be asked to identify the state and region they are located, but they will not be asked for any personal information.

No assurance of confidentiality is necessary for this information collection.

#### **9. Federal Costs:**

The estimated costs to the government for conducting the upcoming surveys will be approximately \$436.65 for labor hours.

#### **10. Research Tools/Instruments:**

- Attachment A: Distribution Survey