

Response to Comments from FNS

(Comments in *italics*, Responses in **bold**.)

October 22, 2012

Reviewer 1. John Endahl, FNS/ORR

Statement A, p. 7, at, “However, some questions related to Farm to School activities are included in the School Health Policy and Practice Survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control”, clarify that these are school-level questions not district-level questions.

This change has been made.

p. 7, at “Including non-SFA respondents is beyond the scope of this information collection due to resource constraints. However, some questions related to sales by local producers to school districts are included in the Agricultural Census conducted by USDAs National Agricultural Statistics Service.” Unsure if the comment related to non-SFA respondents or SFA non-responders. If the latter, include response indicating that you plan to contact 100 non-responding SFAs by phone to conduct follow-up interview.

This comment refers to the desirability of obtaining information from respondents other than food service directors, such as school principals and agricultural producers in order to get a more complete picture of farm to school activity in the area.

Page 9. Why is the burden for non-responder follow-up phone calls greater than the burden estimated for those completing the survey?

See related explanation at page 11.

Page 10. At “forty of them (78 percent) are expected to provide an electronic list of SFAs in the State with contact information” Are you expecting the remainder of the State CN Directors (11) to provide you with a hard copy list of SFAs in the State with contact information?

We are expecting that 11 CN Directors will be unable to provide any list of SFAs within two weeks.

Page 11. At “Non-responding Food Service Directors contacted by phone are expected to spend an average of 15 minutes answering an abridged set of questions about the presence and volume of local food procurement for the SFA.” May need to expand this explanation to indicate that a portion of those that are called will take minimal time if they do not engage in Farm to School Activities, while other may exceed the 15 minute average to answer the abridged set of questions.

This explanation has been added.

Statement B Page 1. At “The Farm to School Census questionnaire (see attachment “Farm to School Census.pdf”) will collect information from food service directors in all public school district School Food Authorities (SFAs) on purchases of locally produced food for school meal programs, as well as other educational activities related to local foods”, insert “participating in the National School Lunch Program” after “(SFAs)”.

This change has been made.

Page 2. At “Lists of SFAs requested from State Child Nutrition Directors.”, insert “public” before “SFAs”.

This change has been made.

Page 2. At “A list of SFAs that submitted income verification reports to USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS).”, insert “public” before “SFAs”.

This change has been made.

Page 2. At “A list of school districts from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data (CCD) for school year 2009-10.”, insert “public” before “school districts”.

This change has been made.

Page 6. What is the fall-back position if non-response bias isn’t small?

If non-response bias is not small, this will be noted as a caution in reporting results.

Memo to State Child Nutrition Directors, page 2, paragraph 1, change “Responses from all SFAs” to “Responses from all public SFAs”

This change has been made.

Invitation to Food Service Directors: page 2, “Just email your fax number to farm2schoolcensus@ers.usda.gov to receive a paper copy to be faxed back.” Why would you fax a copy of the survey to those having problems with SurveyMonkey when you could just provide an electronic version as an attachment to the incoming email?

We have changed this procedure to recommend that respondents print out an attached version of questionnaire to submit by fax as suggested. The change has been made in the invitation and email reminders, the introduction to the questionnaire, and in Statements A and B.

Reviewer 2 Traci Mouw, FNS/CND

Is it appropriate to use school districts and SFA interchangeably in letters etc?

In the memo to the State Child Nutrition Directors, we use the phrase “public school district SFA” to distinguish these SFAs from private school SFAs. In Statements A and B, we use “school district” when referring to the Local Education Authorities covered by the Common Core of Data collected by U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics.

Should salad bars be included?

We are unable to include a question about salad bars due to space constraints and the very focused nature of the information collection.

Do we want to know about competitive food availability?

We are unable to include a question about competitive food availability due to space constraints and the very focused nature of the information collection.

Do we want to ask if F2S makes it easier to meet the new meal pattern?

We are unable to include a question about F2S and the new meal pattern due to space constraints and the very focused nature of the information collection.

Should this question, page 12, include the official names of the Federal Programs: " Please indicate whether your district or any schools in your district used local products IN ANY FORM (fresh, minimally processed, or processed) for any of the following Federal nutrition programs during the 2011/2012 school year (check all that apply):"

We were advised on an earlier draft to avoid the official names of the Federal Programs because smaller school districts would not necessarily know the official names.