

The following text contains the questions from Bob Sivinski concerning the Questionnaire and the Supporting Statement B for the Local Foods Survey.

Questionnaire

- OMB: Would it be helpful to provide a question or two on the producers' access to farm infrastructure that may better help them get their products to market (e.g. access to processing facilities). I understand this is a key element that could be a barrier to marketing locally.
- NASS: Earlier discussions on questions regarding access and barriers resulted in a decision to wait for a follow-up survey for their inclusion instead of this baseline survey. Further cognitive work will be needed to determine how to appropriately word these types of questions.
- OMB: Do you have results from cog labs for this definition? How reliable is it? Will you be able to create top level national estimates that both include and exclude this component of 'local'?
- NASS: Results from cognitive interviews suggested that respondents did not fully understand the intent of the phrase "intermediate market" when it was placed in the question stem without being followed by an immediate definition. Once a definition was added in close proximity to the phrase, respondents acknowledged their understanding of the phrase, its intent, and relation to the marketing practices of local foods. This led to the reformatting of Item 2 on the front page of the questionnaire to make this more visually-apparent by pulling the specific market channels out of the question stem and incorporating them into a bullet point list immediately followed by examples and/or a definition. A definition of an "intermediate market" has also been added to the instruction sheet.
- OMB: It seems like sweet potatoes would belong inside the parentheses since they're vegetables.
- NASS: Most NASS programs include potatoes and sweet potatoes in the 'field crop' categories of our questionnaires. Since this project does not follow that standard, they are emphasized to reduce misreporting.
- OMB: Do you have a cog lab report for this item? Were respondents able to separate marketing expenses for local foods from other marketing expenses?
- NASS: Results from cognitive interviews suggest that certain respondents will have an easier time separating their marketing expenses for local foods than others. This will most likely depend on the overall complexity of the operation, sophistication of record keeping systems/equipment, and general motivation of the respondent. Several respondents did acknowledge the importance and need for this type of information and the benefit it would provide to the data users.

OMB: Again, what about marketing expenses for non-local foods?

NASS: An additional 'Exclude' statement was added for "expenses for food **not** produced and sold directly to consumers, a retail market, an institution, or an intermediate market".

OMB: Please ask AMS if it would be useful for this question to be broken in two (market news and other sources)—AMS is currently undergoing survey efforts to determine who is using Market News, and how.

NASS: NASS contacted AMS and modified the question based on their feedback.

OMB: Wouldn't it make sense for the question immediately before this to be "How many years has this person operated THIS farm?" Lilia McFarland with the New and Beginning Farmers and Ranchers (USDA office of the Secretary) should be engaged on this because we are starting to capture better data on new and beginning farmers and this piece of data could be helpful.

Has there been consideration of how to incorporate results from this survey with BFR results?

NASS: To determine if an operator is a BFR the current question would be more appropriate than asking their years of involvement with only this operation. An operator's total years of farming could be considered when updating a control item on our list frame for future use by BFR.

OMB: What location information will be available from all respondents? Is there any interest in regional or state level estimates?

NASS: Question 4 on Page 15 is used only for identifying duplication of respondents. Due to CIPSEA confidentiality rules, NASS will only be publishing aggregated data. The smallest level we plan to publish data will be on a State level if the data allows. Otherwise it will be on a regional or national level.

Supporting Statement B

The inserted bullet item in Supporting Statement B has been accepted and the revised document will be loaded into ROCIS when the folder is opened for amendment.

Email Comment

OMB: It is important that AMS be involved in this effort as well. I know Elanor just recently moved to AMS, but including perspectives from people who have been at AMS prior to her move will be critical for this survey to be useful to their work as well. Please circulate to AMS for comment, and please update OMB with AMS' comments. Additionally, I would recommend that Lilia McFarland (USDA OSEC) be given a chance to comment.

As she is leading the New and Beginning Farmers and Ranchers work, and helping develop a survey to gather more information, I want to ensure there is no survey duplication and that where necessary or helpful, these efforts are coordinated.

NASS: In early 2015, USDA's Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food Taskforce (KYF2) formulated a sub team to begin discussing a Local Foods survey. This team was made up of Economic Research Service (Steve Vogel), Agricultural Marketing Service (Jim Barham - now with Rural Development), Office of the Secretary (Elanor Starmer - now with AMS), and NASS (Donald Buysse). This team ultimately generated the first version of the questionnaire. NASS worked with this KYF2 subteam throughout 2015 during the content determination phase. The team has been heavily involved in survey methodology and continue to provide feedback regarding cognitive interview results and OMB passbacks. The KYF2 subteam stakeholders have shared the questionnaire with their colleagues and NASS has incorporated feedback from them as well. These other groups include AMS's Farmer's Market Division and Market News Division.