

**Information Sheet in English**

National Food Study Pilot

Agency: Economic Research Service

Contractor: Westat, Inc.

# National Food Study Pilot Information

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## Background

### Who funds this study?

This study is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and managed by its Economic Research Service (ERS), which serves as the primary source of economic research and information for USDA. ERS has hired Westat, a social science research firm, to carry out the National Food Study Pilot to better understand Americans' acquisitions of and accessibility to various foods. USDA plans to use the collected information to conduct research on food choice behavior of American households, including food assistance program participants. USDA conducted a similar study in 2012 and, due to its success, has decided to expand and modernize the study to include even more households with the help of today's technology.



### National Food Study Pilot

## Study Information

### What does participation involve?

Participation in this study involves recording all of the food that is purchased or obtained for free by each person in your household, over a 7 day period. This includes food you get from a grocery store, restaurant, food pantry, soup kitchen, wholesale retailer, work, friend or family member's home, or elsewhere.

Remember, we are only interested in the food that you purchase or get for free, not the details of the food you eat, during the 7 day period.

We have developed the Purchased or Free Food Log (Food Log), a user-friendly tool, to enter your daily food acquisitions. The Food Log can be accessed both on a computer or a smartphone. Your household will be trained by a Westat interviewer on the study's procedures and equipment. After some of the persons in your household have completed the training, you will be asked to keep track of all of the food you get for the next 7 days. You will use receipts, pictures on your phone, and other technology to assist you with this. At the end of the week, a Westat interviewer will visit your home again to conduct the final interviews, collect any equipment loaned to you, and provide you with a receipt showing the incentive check your household will receive. Your incentive will depend on the size of your household and the extent of your participation. For example, two-person households can receive up to \$197 at the end of the study if each person fully participates.

### Why do you want me to participate?

USDA wants a representative sample of American households. Your household is scientifically selected to represent views of American households like you. To participate in this study, you do not need to be on any government provided food assistance programs.

\*\*Turn the page over to read some common frequently asked questions and answers about the study.

## Common Frequently Asked Questions and Answers (FAQs)

### **Why are you doing this study?**

The USDA ERS is interested in learning about the kinds of foods that American households have access to and acquire.

### **Why did you choose me?**

USDA wants a representative sample of American households. Your household was selected through a scientific method to represent thousands of households like you.

### **Do I have to take part in the study?**

Participation in this study is completely voluntary, but we hope you will agree to participate. You have the right to refuse or stop involvement at any time without affecting any current or future benefits you may receive.

### **How long will it take?**

The initial visit will take less than 2 hours. Entering food in the Food Log during the 7-day study period could take a total of about 3 hours. The final visit could take up to an hour.

### **What types of foods and drink do you want to know about?**

We want to know about all of the food that you and everyone in your household buy or get for free during the study week. Include all the food you obtain, even if it is paid for by someone else or offered to you for free by friends/neighbors/coworkers or you obtained it during the week but did not actually eat it.

### **Who in my household needs to enter food and drinks online?**

Each person age 11 and older may enter food and drinks online. An adult should enter foods for children under age 11.

### **What should I do if someone buys food for me?**

We still want to know. Just enter, in the Food Log, the place where they got the food and other information about the food and write down \$0.00 for the total paid since you did not pay anything.

### **Are beverages/drinks considered food?**

Yes, we want to know about any beverages/drinks you get during the week even if you do not drink them.

### **If I only ate food from my refrigerator or cupboard on a particular day, do I report the details of what I ate on the Food Log?**

No. In the Food Log, we want to know only what you purchased or obtained for free during the study week. If some or all of the food you eat today came from a purchase or acquisition made earlier in the study week, it should have been included in the Food Log when it was obtained. Listing it again when it is eaten would cause double counting. Just check the day at the top of the Daily List and click "Day Complete".

### **Do I report food I already had in my house if I'm going to eat it during the study week?**

No. Remember it is not about what you eat—it is about what you get during the study week only.

### **Do I enter all my groceries?**

Yes, if your groceries were obtained during the study week. Do not report non-food items (e.g., paper products, cleaners).

### **Do I need to report food and drinks my young kids had in school or in day care?**

Yes. We encourage you to talk with the child, check the school breakfast/lunch menu, or contact the day care provider to determine what foods the child received (even if the meal or snack was free). Please enter all components of the meal (main course, vegetable, starch, milk or other drink, and dessert). Again, we are interested in the foods served to the child, not necessarily what he or she ate.

### **Do I report food, drinks, and snacks that I packed for my kids to school?**

No. You do not need to report anything your kids brought from home to school, but you need to report any food, drink, or snacks purchased by or served to your kids while at school.