

Appendix A1.

Research Questions

Appendix A1. "Successful Approaches to Reduce Sodium in School Meals" Research Questions

1. What are the strategies, tools, and best practices that could be used to provide technical assistance to SFAs and schools trying to meet the sodium standards for school meals?
2. What technical assistance could USDA/FNS provide SFAs and schools to help them meet the sodium requirements? Is there assistance available now that has been helpful in meeting the sodium requirements?
3. Are SFAs meeting sodium standards through recipe modification or by purchasing lower-sodium foods, or both? Are specific components of meals driving up the average daily sodium amount for school lunches?
4. What products and recipes have gained the greatest student acceptance? What specific strategies, tools, and resources have been used to gain such student acceptance?
5. What products and recipes have not gained student acceptance?
6. How does the use of USDA Foods and/or Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program relate to meeting the sodium standards? (i.e., do the programs help SFAs meet sodium standards)
7. Do schools have difficulty finding and purchasing lower sodium foods? What types of products are the most difficult to procure? What do schools wish they had? What exactly are the challenges?
8. Are schools working with the food industry/distributors/producers to develop/reformulate menus or products? Are there other ways that the food industry has supported SFAs (e.g., going into schools to help with taste-testing, providing menus or recipes, etc.)?
9. Are schools incorporating more scratch-cooking, or planning to do so in the future?
10. Did any SFAs meet the Target 1 sodium standards before implementation was required in SY 2014–2015?
11. Do you think SFAs will be able to continue lowering sodium levels in school lunches in the future, such as to meet Sodium Targets 2 and 3?
12. Does the type of school play a role in meeting the sodium standards for school meals (i.e. elementary, middle, high school)?
13. Does geographic region or urbanicity play a role in meeting sodium standards? What are the specific barriers faced by geographic region, large vs small district, urban/rural?
14. Does the method of procurement system affect ability to purchase lower sodium foods?