

Appendix V

SNAP Participant Key Informant Interview

Discussion Guide – English Only



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Food and Shopping

PURPOSE: To understand SNAP participants' experiences with FINI.

A. Welcome and Ground Rules.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. My name is _____. I work for Avar Consulting, a research organization based in Rockville, MD. The Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture has contracted with our company and another research firm, Westat, to evaluate the <FINI> at [name of outlet]. The [name of outlet] provides SNAP customers with matching funds when they use their [State name for EBT card] to buy fruits and vegetables.

We would like to ask you questions about your experiences with this incentive program. We want to learn what's working well, what might not be working well, if and how any of your shopping habits have changed as a result of the program, and any suggestions you have to help the program serve you better.

Before we get started there are a few things I should mention. This is a research project, so your participation is voluntary. You don't have to answer any of the questions, and you can stop the interview at any time.

Everything that you say will be kept private. Your name will not be linked to any of your responses and we will not use your name in any reports. Everything you say will be grouped with others who provided similar perspectives, so your specific responses will not be identified. Nothing you say during the interview will affect your SNAP benefits.

Finally, we have planned for this discussion to last no more than 60 minutes. To thank you for your time, we will send you a check in the amount of \$25. At the end of the interview, I will confirm that I have the correct address for you so we can mail you the check.

Do you have any questions before we start? [ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS]

Are you willing to participate in this interview?

[IF PERMISSION WAS GIVEN FOR INTERVIEW:] With your permission, we would like to record this interview. No one from USDA or [name of outlet] will have access to this recording. The recording will be used to help us recall exactly what was said as we write up our report. The recordings and any notes we have will be stored on our company's private server and Westat's private server. They will be accessible only to Avar and Westat team members. We will destroy the recordings after the study is complete. Are you okay with us recording?

[IF PERMISSION WAS GIVEN TO RECORD:] I'd like to start the audio recording now.

[TURN ON RECORDER:] For the purposes of the recording, I am going to repeat my requests to participate in the interview and to allow the recording so I have your permission on tape.

Today is [DATE] and it is [TIME]. Are you willing to participate in the interview? [PAUSE FOR RESPONSE.]

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May I record our conversation?

[TOPICS: Reason for shopping at outlet; experience at the outlet, impact of the outlet, role of incentive in frequency of visit, types of purchases made, and consumption behaviors.]

1. Let's start by talking about why you shop at <NAME OF OUTLET>. Please tell me how long you have been shopping here and why you shop here.
2. Since when have you been receiving [FINI] at [name of outlet]?
INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: LISTEN TO SEE IF INCNETIVE WAS OFFERED PRIOR TO FINI PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION – I.E. CONTINUATION OF INCENTIVE PROGRAM AT THE OUTLET.
3. How did you find out that [name of outlet] offers [FINI] to [State name of SNAP program] participants?
4. Tell me in your own words how [_____ local incentive program] works, both in general and for you personally.

INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: LISTEN FOR -

- HOW THE INCENTIVE IS PROVIDED (E.G., ONLY FOR THE DAY OR EXTRA FOR LATER USE; TOKENS);
 - WHERE R USES IT;
 - WHETHER IT'S OFFERED SEASONALLY OR YEAR ROUND;
 - WHETHER IT FREES UP MONEY FOR OTHER THINGS;
 - WHETHER R HAS RECEIVED INCENTIVES ON TIME IN THE EXPECTED AMOUNT.
5. How often do you usually get the [FINI] in a typical month?
 6. How did the availability of [FINI] affect your shopping habits?

IF NEEDED, PROMPT R: Think about...

- The stores shopped at before?
- How often you shopped?
- The kinds of foods you bought? [IF YES:] Which ones?
- The amount of fruits you bought? [IF THERE'S A DIFFERENCE:] Which ones?
- The amount of vegetables you bought? [IF THERE'S A DIFFERENCE:] Which ones?

[INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: FOR EACH CHANGE, Tell me what made you make this change.]

7. What changes, if any, have you made in your food budget since you started using [FINI]?

[IF NEEDED, PROMPT R:] Think about...

- The types of products, whether food or not, that you buy
- The types of food you buy
- The amount of money you spend on fruits and vegetables
- The amount of money you spend on groceries in general

8. Overall, what is your impression of the incentive program?

IF NOT MENTIONED, PROBE ON:

- What do you like about [____] local incentive program]?
- What don't you like about [____] local incentive program]?
- What problems, if any, have you had in getting the incentives?
- What problems, if any, have you had in making purchases with the incentives?
- What changes would help the program serve you better?

9. Is there anything else about the program or your shopping habits that I haven't asked you about that you think is important for me to know?

10. Would you continue to shop at [NAME OF OUTLET] if the incentive was not offered? Tell me what makes you say that.

11. How did the availability of [FINI] affect the foods that you eat? Please tell me about any changes you have made to your eating habits since you started receiving [FINI]. Please focus on what you eat. We'll talk about what your family eats in a few minutes.

[IF NEEDED, PROMPT R:] Think about...

- The amount of fruits you eat?
- The amount of vegetables you eat?
- The types of fruits you eat? [IF ANY, How regularly do you eat those now?
- The types of vegetables you eat? IF ANY, How regularly do you eat those now?

12. How did the availability of [FINI] affect what members of your household eat? Again, please think of the changes since you started receiving [FINI].

[IF NEEDED:]

- Would you say your family eats more or fewer fruits?
- Would you say your family eats more or fewer vegetables?
- What new fruits has your family tried since starting the program? [IF ANY:] How regularly do they eat those now?
- What new vegetables has your family tried since starting the program? [IF ANY:] How regularly do they eat those now?

13. Is there anything else about the program or your and your household's eating habits that I haven't asked you about that you think is important for me to know?

[END OF INTERVIEW. TURN OFF AUDIO RECORDER.]

[INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: THANK THE PARTICIPANT FOR THEIR TIME AND THOUGHTFUL RESPONSES, AND CONFIRM ADDRESS ON FILE IS STILL THE CORRECT ADDRESS TO SEND THE CHECK.]