

**Appendix I
Foods Focus Groups
Participant Screener**

Notes to facility:

- People who have done a focus group or other interview-based research in the last 6 months are not eligible.
- People who have ever done 5 or more focus groups are not eligible.
- When calling potential participants, recruiters should use general interactions throughout all calls to make judgements about each person's ability and willingness to participate in a focus group discussion. We are looking to recruit participants who are talkative and articulate. Everyone will be expected to participate in the discussion and contribute their opinions. All participants will need to be comfortable conversing in English.

Recruiting Goals:

- All participants must be able to read, understand, and speak English.
- Sufficient recruits will be invited to achieve a target of 8-10 participants per group.
- Each participant will receive a cash token of appreciation for participating in the focus group.
- All participants need to be verbally able and interested in sharing their opinions.

Study Protocol:

- Each group will last approximately 2 hours (including a 90-minute discussion plus time needed for signing in before the group starts and signing out after the group ends).
- Groups will be audio- and video-recorded and live-streamed for off-site observers.
- Signed Informed Consents will be processed at sign-in and a verbal consent will be obtained before the start of the discussion.
- The identity of the participants will remain confidential.
- Groups will be observed by staff from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, USDA and EPA.
- Participants do not have to answer any questions that they do not want to, but are encouraged to participate.

Group Composition and Location:

Focus Group Segmentation

Group No.	Location	Level of Education	Gender
Group 1	Denver, CO	Lower	Female
Group 2		Higher	Male
Group 3	Nashville, TN	Lower	Female
Group 4		Higher	Male
Group 5	Austin, TX	Higher	Female
Group 6		Lower	Male
Group 7	Philadelphia, PA	Higher	Female
Group 8		Lower	Male

SCRIPT:

Hello Mr./Ms. _____, my name is _____ and I'm calling about a research study sponsored by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in your area. We are recruiting for an upcoming focus group in which participants will be asked to share their thoughts and understanding of different foods. Participants in this study will receive a token of appreciation for participating in the focus group. Let me assure you that this is a legitimate research study. I am not trying to sell anything.

1. First, are you at least 18 years of age? IF NO: We are only recruiting people who are 18 years of age or older for these groups. May I please speak with someone in your household who is at least 18 years of age? IF NO ONE, THANK RESPONDENT POLITELY AND END CALL.

IF NEW RESPONDENT, REPEAT STARTING WITH THE INTRODUCTION ABOVE.

2. Are you interested in participating?

- YES → CONTINUE
- NO → ELIMINATE [THANK RESPONDENT POLITELY]

3. Would you mind answering a few questions? This will only take a few minutes of your time.

- YES → CONTINUE
- NO → ELIMINATE [THANK RESPONDENT POLITELY]

4. The focus group will be conducted in English. Are you comfortable reading and speaking English?

- YES → CONTINUE
- NO → ELIMINATE [THANK RESPONDENT POLITELY]

5. Do you or someone from your immediate family work for any of the following:

- A Market Research Firm → ELIMINATE [THANK RESPONDENT POLITELY]
- State or local food agency, U.S. Department of Agriculture, or U.S. Food and Drug Administration → ELIMINATE [THANK RESPONDENT POLITELY]

6. Are you the person who does at least half of the grocery shopping for your household?

- YES → CONTINUE
- NO → ELIMINATE [THANK RESPONDENT POLITELY]

7. Thinking about your eating habits in general, how much attention do you pay to the nutritional content of the foods you eat? Would you say:

- A lot → CONTINUE
- A little → CONTINUE
- None at all

8. How often, if at all, do you check information on the label when you buy a food product for the first time? Would you say

- Often → CONTINUE

- Sometimes → CONTINUE
- Rarely or Never

9. How often, if at all, do you buy organic produce?

- Often → CONTINUE
- Sometimes → CONTINUE
- Rarely or Never

10. How many of your meals you prepare by yourself?

- A lot → CONTINUE
- A little → CONTINUE
- None at all

NOTE TO RECRUITER: If all respondent's answers to Q7-10 are "None at All", "Rarely or Never", and "Nothing at All" ELIMINATE [THANK POLITELY].

11. How much would you say you know about GMO foods?

- A lot → CONTINUE
- A little → CONTINUE
- Nothing → CONTINUE

12. DETERMINE GENDER. IF UNSURE, ASK RESPONDENT IF S/HE IS MALE OR FEMALE.

- MALE → CONTINUE [RECRUIT TO MALE GROUPS]
- FEMALE → CONTINUE [RECRUIT TO FEMALE GROUPS]

13. What is the highest level of education that you have completed? [READ ALL ANSWER OPTIONS. RECRUIT A MIX WITHIN EACH GROUP AND ACROSS STUDY]

- Less than high school → RECRUIT TO LOWER ED GROUP
- High school graduate or GED → RECRUIT TO LOWER ED GROUP
- Technical/vocational school → RECRUIT TO LOWER ED GROUP
- Some community college (towards an Associate's degree or other community college degree) → RECRUIT TO LOWER ED GROUP
- Community college degree (e.g., associate's degree) → RECRUIT TO LOWER ED GROUP
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- Some college (toward Bachelor's degree) → RECRUIT TO HIGHER ED GROUP
- College degree (Bachelor's degree) → RECRUIT TO HIGHER ED GROUP
- Advanced degree (postgraduate degree) → RECRUIT TO HIGHER ED GROUP RECRUIT NO MORE THAN ABOUT 5 PER GROUP TO SEAT NO MORE THAN ABOUT 3 PER GROUP]

14. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin? [ENSURE ABOUT 2 PER GROUP AS REFLECTIVE OF THE AREA]

- Yes → CONTINUE
- No → CONTINUE

15. What is your race? I am going to read several categories of race. You may choose one or more categories. Are you...? [RECRUIT A DIVERSE GROUP REFLECTIVE OF THE AREA.]

- White
- Black or African American
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- American Indian or Alaska Native

16. I am going to read some age categories, could you please tell me in which category your age falls? [RECRUIT A MIX FOR EACH AGE CATEGORY WITHIN EACH GROUP AND ACROSS STUDY][SOFT QUOTA OK BUT ENSURE NO ONE AGE GROUP IS OVER-REPRESENTED]

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18-30 | → CONTINUE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 31-44 | → CONTINUE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 45-64 | → CONTINUE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 65+ | → CONTINUE |
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17. I am going to read some income categories; could you classify your annual household income to one of these categories? [RECRUIT A MIX PER GROUP]

- Less than \$25,000 per year
- \$25,000 to less than \$50,000 per year
- \$50,000 to less than \$75,000 per year
- \$75,000 and over per year

FINALIZING SCREENER QUESTIONS FOR ALL GROUPS

Thank you for answering these questions. We would like to invite you to participate in a focus group with about eight other participants to discuss your thoughts and understanding of different foods. The discussion will last approximately an hour and a half. The discussion will be video- and audio-recorded, and also observed by researchers. Your participation and everything you say during the discussion will remain secure and your personal identifying information will not be included in any reports. At the conclusion of the focus group, you will receive \$75.00 as a token of our appreciation for your participation and to help with any transportation and/or child care costs that may be related to your participation. Are you interested in participating in this focus group?

- Yes [CONTINUE]
- No [THANK THE PERSON FOR HIS/HER TIME]

I'm glad that you will be able to join us! The focus group will take place on (DAY), (DATE), at [6:00 or 8:00 p.m.] at [SITE LOCATION].

Will you be available to participate at this time?

- Yes [CONTINUE]
- No [THANK THE PERSON FOR HIS/HER TIME]

I would like to send you a confirmation letter and directions to the facility. In order to do so, could you please tell me the best way of contacting you:

[INSERT CONTACT INFORMATION]

Date of focus group: _____ Time: _____

We are only inviting a few people, so it is very important that you notify us as soon as possible if for some reason you are unable to attend. Please call [RECRUITER] at [TELEPHONE NUMBER] if this should happen. We look forward to seeing you on [DATE] at [TIME]. If you use reading glasses, please bring them with you to the focus group.