

Appendix IV

**Biotech Focus Groups – Wave III
Draft Moderator’s Guide****Introduction and Ground Rules [5 min.]**

Thanks for joining us today. I’m _____, and this is my colleague _____. We’re from Westat, a private research company based in Rockville, MD. On behalf of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (often called FDA), Westat is conducting discussions with individuals like yourselves around the country. The focus of our discussion today is on bioengineered or genetically engineered foods, commonly known as “GMO” foods. Your insights are very important to us, and your time today is appreciated. We will have about 90 minutes for our discussion.

Before we get started there are a few things I need to mention. I know when you all came into the facility they had you read and sign an informed consent form, but I would like to review the key elements in that form.

- First, your participation is voluntary. You don’t have to answer any of our questions that make you uncomfortable, and you can leave at any point in the discussion. There’s no penalty to you for doing so.
- Having said that, we do not think there are any risks to you for participating in today’s discussion. We’re going to ask for your views and opinions about genetically engineered foods. There are no particular benefits to your participation, either, although you will be contributing to FDA’s understanding of what American consumers know and think about genetically engineered products. You will receive a token of appreciation of [\$75] at the end of the discussion as a “thank you” for your participation today.
- Next, your identity will be kept secure to the extent provided by law, which means that we will never use your name in anything we write about the project. When preparing our report for FDA, we might use a quote from someone in the group, but we would only say, “A participant in [CITY] said.”
- We are also audio- and video-recording today’s discussion. This is so when we get back to our office in Rockville we have an accurate record of what was said when we do our analysis. The files are stored on secure servers at Westat and FDA, are only available to members of the project team, and these files will be destroyed once the project is completed.
- We also have some observers today from the project team at the Food and Drug Administration, the Department of Agriculture, and Environmental Protection Agency: [NOTE ANY OBSERVERS BEHIND the GLASS]; we are also livestreaming today’s discussion so that FDA, USDA, and EPA staff who could not be here in [CITY] can log in and view the discussion. All staff who are observing have had to complete our human subjects training and must maintain the security of your data, as outlined above.

Do you have any questions? [ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS]

Great! Let me tell you just a couple of rules to make sure our discussion flows smoothly today. Please speak one at a time. This will ensure that I can hear everybody and that everyone’s perspective can be included in our study. Also, there are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions I ask. Feel free

Appendix IV

to express an opinion that's different from others in the room – we want to hear the full range of views on this topic. Finally, if you need to step out for any reason, please feel free to do so. The restrooms are [DESCRIBE LOCATION]. But I would ask that not everyone decide to go at the same time!
Any questions? [ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS]

Let's get started!

I. Warm-up [5 min.]

Let's go around the room and please tell us just your first name and then some interesting fact about yourself – maybe an interesting hobby, someone famous that you met, some great place to which you've traveled. [MODERATOR GO FIRST; MAKE SURE YOUR NOTE-TAKER/CO-MODERATOR DOES NOT GET LEFT OUT OF THIS EXERCISE.]

II. Perception of Genetically Engineered Products [10 min.]

As I mentioned earlier, we are going to talk about GMO foods, which are also known as genetically engineered or bioengineered foods.

1. Who has heard of GMOs? [SHOW OF HANDS]
2. What have you heard?
3. What else would you like to know about GMO foods?
4. Have you seen any informational materials about GMOs, what were they, what did you think about them? To what extent did they answer questions you may have about GMOs?

III. Reactions to Draft Materials [65 min.]

Today, I will show you some educational materials about GMOs and ask about your opinions after seeing each material. Please consider that these are drafts, still up for some changes. These educational materials will be just a part of an education initiative including social media and a website hosted by FDA.

[Version 1 - to be shown in half of the focus groups]**“GMOs 101” FAQs Web Page Mockup**

[Content: long-form with six Q&As addressing participants basic questions; “101” content level.
Format: FDA web page mockup-mostly text with some images.
Primary Objective: Learn whether participants find information relevant, clear, and credible.]

Please take a few minutes and read this material.

1. What is your first impression?
2. To what extent do you find this information interesting to you? What was most/least interesting?

Appendix IV

3. Which of these subheads/questions are most important to you? Which of them are most important to you? Why?
4. Was there anything unclear/hard to understand? Why?
5. Is there anything here that you find difficult to believe? Why?
6. Would you change, add, remove anything?
7. What questions do you have after reviewing this material?
8. Are there any other questions you have about GMOs in general that were not included here?

“GMOs 201” FAQs Web Page Mockup

[Content: long-form with six Q&As addressing participants advanced questions; “201” content level.

Format: FDA web page mockup—mostly text with some images.

Primary Objective: Learn whether participants find information relevant, clear, and credible.]

1. What is your first impression?
2. To what extent do you find this information interesting to you? What was most/least interesting?
3. Which of these subheads/questions are most important to you? Which of them are most important to you? Why?
4. Was there anything unclear/hard to understand? Why?
5. Is there anything here that you find difficult to believe? Why?
6. Would you change, add, remove anything?
7. What questions do you have after reviewing this material?
8. Are there any other questions you have about GMOs and health that were not included here?

GE Timeline Infographic

[Content: graphic representation of GE timeline (related to key points in GE history or centered around specific crop—to be informed based on stories identified by SMEs); “101” content level.]

Format: infographic—graphic-heavy with some stats and text

Primary Objective: Learn whether participants find information relevant, clear, and credible]

1. What is your first impression?
2. To what extent do you find this information interesting to you? What was most/least interesting?
3. Which of these dates/events are most important to you? Which of them are most important to you? Why?
4. What do you think about graphic representation of different events?
5. Was there anything unclear/hard to understand? Why?
6. Is there anything here that you find difficult to believe? Why?
7. Would you change, add, remove anything?
8. What questions do you have after reviewing this material?
9. Are there any other milestones or important events you would like to see included here?

[Version 2 - to be shown in half of the focus groups]

Social Media Graphic (two versions/iterations)

Appendix IV

[Content: intriguing/provocative image and text on a topic of high interest intended to pique consumer interest and drive visits to the website; “101” content level.

Format: social media graphic—primarily graphic(s) with minor text.

Primary Objective: Learn whether the topics and execution (i.e., copy, graphics) would compel participants to visit the website to learn more and whether they would share the stimuli with others. These visuals are intended to draw people’s attention to the issue of agricultural biotechnology and make them visit a Website; they are not intended to answer all questions people may have about agricultural biotechnology but to encourage them to click on the link to the website.]

Now, I would like to show you two versions of a social media ad about GMO.

1. What is your first impression?
2. In your own words, what is this ad trying to tell you?
3. To what extent is it important or interesting to you?
4. Who is it addressing?
5. What do you like about this ad? [Probe about both, picture and text]
6. What you do not like about this ad?
7. What is not understandable or requires more clarification?
8. What else would you like to see here?
9. Overall, how likely is this ad to encourage you to learn more about genetically engineered foods?
10. What would you do after seeing this ad? [Probe: would you visit the website to learn more; would you share it with others?]

[After showing both version of the graphics, ask respondents which version resonated with them.]

11. Which one was more interesting and important to you?

Video Concept Treatment

[Content: Video concept treatment featuring four experts talking about GMOs within the context of their expertise.

Format: Representative pictures of experts, along with text examples of the topics they could talk about.

Primary Objective: Learn whether participants find the information that could come from these experts relevant, clear, and credible; determine which stories/experts are the most credible/relevant/informative.] Note: based on feedback, we may do one full video on each/some of the experts; we could also use interview transcripts from these experts for a blog or other website content. We want to learn whether participants feel that these storytellers are credible.]

1. What is your first impression of this video outline?
2. Which of the experts/topic segments seems most relevant to you? Which of them is least relevant to you? Why?
3. Which of the experts is most trustworthy to you? Why? Which of them is least trustworthy to you? Why?

Appendix IV

4. What is not understandable or requires more clarification? Why?
5. Would you change, add, or remove anything?
6. Who else would you like to see here?

[After showing all materials, ask]

1. Which one of these materials seemed most useful to you? Why
2. Which one was the least useful? Why?
3. Do you have anything else to add that we have not touched upon today?
4. At the end, we may also want to ask whether they see these materials fitting together as a whole. Do the materials seem to work together to provide comprehensive information on the topic?

IV. False Close [5 min.]

[Ask questions from observers.]

Thank you and good bye.