**Appendix A1. FNS Notification to State Directors**

**Subject: Please Support the USDA School Food Purchase Study IV**

Dear State Directors of Child Nutrition and USDA Foods:

We are writing to request your support of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service’s (USDA, FNS’s) fourth School Food Purchase Study (SFPS-IV). This study will provide updated national estimates of school food authority (SFA) food acquisitions (both purchased foods and USDA Foods) and describe food purchase practices, as well as changes in purchases and purchase practices in the context of the significant changes in the school nutrition environment since the prior study more than a decade ago. Information on purchasing practices that promote efficiencies may be especially useful to SFAs as they strive to continually improve their programs.

The study is being conducted for USDA, FNS by Westat and its partner, Agralytica. Data collection will occur this school year, 2021-2022, and will include approximately 600 public SFAs across the country. Each selected SFA will be asked to complete a web-based Survey of Food Purchase Practices and provide detailed food purchase data, and total revenue and expenditure data, for one selected quarter of the school year. SFAs that complete all data requests for the study will receive a $300 stipend as a thank you for their participation. Westat will also request data on USDA Foods (both direct delivery and processed products containing USDA Foods) from State Distributing Agencies.

In the next few days, the Westat study team will send you an email with a list of the selected SFAs in your State.

* **State Child Nutrition Directors:** Please support the study by promptly notifying the SFAs of their selection and encouraging their participation in the study. Westat will provide you a sample email to send to the selected SFAs. It is very important that selected SFAs participate in the study, to ensure that study results are nationally representative. Although individuals who work at SFAs are not required to participate, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 requires selected organizations (i.e., SFAs) to participate in the study.

**State Distributing Agency Directors:** Please support the study by responding to Westat’s quarterly request for data on USDA Foods for SFAs in the study.

Please see the attached study brochure for additional information. You may also visit the study website at [www.PurchaseStudy.com](http://www.PurchaseStudy.com).

If you have any general questions about the study, you may contact the FNS Project Officer, Jinee Burdg at [Jinee.Burdg@usda.gov](mailto:Jinee.Burdg@usda.gov). For specific questions about study procedures, you may email the study’s Technical Assistance Center (TAC) at [PurchaseStudy@westat.com](mailto:PurchaseStudy@westat.com) or call XXX-XXX-XXXX. The TAC Is available weekdays from 9am to 4pm EST and the message line is available 24/7, with responses provided the following business day.

We appreciate your support of this important study.

Sincerely,

[FNS CN and FNS Food Distribution OR FNS Regional Directors]

Attachment:

* Study Brochure