



OMB Control No: 0584-0471
Expiration Date: XX/XX/20XX

Appendix A4. State Email to Sampled SFAs

Subject: USDA School Food Purchase Study IV

Dear SFA Director:

Your school food authority (SFA) has been selected to participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (USDA, FNS) study, School Food Purchase Study IV (SFPS IV). Findings from this study will provide updated national estimates of 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 last study more than a decade ago. Study results on efficient purchasing practices may be especially useful as you strive to continually improve your program. Study results may also be useful to USDA to help determine future USDA Foods offerings.

This study is being conducted for USDA, FNS by Westat and its partner, Agralytica. Data collection will take place during this School Year, 2021-2022. As an invited SFA, you will:

- Attend a Study Overview Webinar;
- Complete a web-based Survey of Food Purchase Practices;
- Attend a webinar about requested food purchase data; and
- Submit detailed food purchase data, and data on total revenues and expenditures, for one selected quarter (three months) of the school year.

The webinars will be scheduled for one hour each. The estimated time to complete the Survey is 1½ hours, and the estimated time to collect and submit food purchase data is about five hours. This includes the time for you to compile purchase data from all of your vendors and food service management company (if applicable), review it for completeness, and submit it to the study.

Your participation in the study is important to ensuring that the results are nationally representative. As a reminder, while you as an individual are not required to participate, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 requires

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is conducting this study to obtain updated national estimates of food acquisitions and a description and analysis of food purchase practices of school districts participating in the Federally supported school meal programs. The estimates will provide information on the type, volume and source of foods acquired, the relative importance of USDA Foods, and changes in food composition and cost over time. Participation in this study by individuals is voluntary and the information collected will be used to understand school meal program trends and practices associated with food buying efficiency. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0471. The time required to provide this information collection is estimated to average 3 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather and maintain the data needed, and complete and review the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314 ATTN: PRA (0584-0471).

that SFAs participate in USDA studies. SFAs that complete all data requests for the study will receive a \$300 stipend as a thank you for participation, which may be used towards attending a conference or other professional development opportunity.

USDA and the State agency understand that research requests place an additional burden on you and your staff, which can be difficult to balance with other responsibilities. The study team has made every effort to minimize burden and is requesting food purchase data for only one quarter, instead of the entire school year. They will also host webinars, as noted above, and provide resources on the study website to ensure you have the information you need to participate. Finally, they will maintain a Technical Assistance Center (TAC) for the study to provide individual support to you as needed, and are able to accept purchase data in a variety of formats to ease your burden.

Please see the attached study brochure for additional information.

If you have any questions about the study, you may email the study team at Westat at PurchaseStudy@westat.com or call the TAC at 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 participation in this important USDA study.

Sincerely,

[State CN Director]

Attachment:

- Study Brochure