

# Attachment D5. Frequently Asked Questions and Responses



## National Food Study

### **Section 1. General Questions**

#### **1. What is the purpose of this study?**

The goal of the National Food Study is to learn about the kinds of foods that American households obtain, the costs of food, how people pay for food, and where they shop. USDA plans to use the information to understand how people make food choices and how improvements to food choices and food quality can help Americans get healthy food.

#### **Who is sponsoring this study?**

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Economic Research Services (ERS) and the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) are sponsoring the NFS. Westat, an independent contractor, is helping USDA collect the information for this study.

#### **Why did you choose me?**

Your household is just one of 5,000 households in the nation chosen using a scientific method to represent households similar to yours in your area. Your participation will help the USDA ensure that all Americans get healthy food.

#### **Do I have to take part in the study?**

Participation in this study is voluntary. It will not affect any current or future benefits you may be receiving from any government program. You have the right to refuse any question or stop involvement at any time. We will give you a monetary incentive of at least \$105 for helping us.

#### **How long will with this study take?**

The time spent depends on the size of your family. To begin we need less than 10 minutes to find out if your household can participate.

If we select your household, you will complete an initial interview, receive a training on how to use the FoodLogger, provide information on the food you get for 7 days with the FoodLogger, and complete a debriefing interview.

The initial interview will take about 30 minutes. We will also train you how to use the FoodLogger during the 7 days. The training will take about 45 minutes and we will offer you an incentive of \$40.

Completing the food log and other questions on FoodLogger will take each person in your household about 7 to 9 minutes each day and each person in your household can earn up to \$39.

The debriefing interview takes 6 minutes and we will offer you \$16 for completing it and all days of the food log.

### What do I get for participating in the study?

Each part of the study has a different incentive. Larger households get more. We will mail you the total incentive at the end of your household's data collection period.

1. On completing the Initial interview and the training, your household will receive \$40.
2. Your household will receive \$35 for each person completing their food log every day. If you have three household members, you will receive \$105 if each completes their food log every day.
3. Each eligible person who completes the income worksheet will receive \$2. If you have three persons age 16 and older, your household will receive \$6 if all three complete it.
4. Your household will receive \$2 for each member of the household with a completed profile questionnaire.
5. Your household will receive \$16 for completing the debriefing interview and if all members of the household complete their food logs each day of the study period.

#### Examples of Maximum Household Incentive Amounts by Household Size

Total Household Members	Initial Interview	Food Log	Income Worksheet	Profile Questionnaire	Debriefing Interview + All Persons Complete Food Log	Max Post-Screener Incentive
1	\$40	\$35	\$2	\$2	\$16	<b>\$105</b>
4	\$40	\$140	\$8	\$8	\$16	<b>\$222</b>

### Will the information I provide be kept private?

Yes, your information will be used for statistical purposes only and is confidential by law. In accordance with the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 and other applicable Federal laws, your responses will not be disclosed in identifiable form without your consent. Per the Federal Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015, Federal information systems are protected from malicious activities through cybersecurity screening of transmitted data. **How will the USDA use my information?**

All data reported to the USDA will be de-identified and will be used for research purposes only. The USDA will have access to the food items you reported, but not your name or any other identifying information. Your information will be kept confidential. Only individuals connected to the research will have access to the information you provide to Westat.

OMB Control Number:  
xxx-xxxx  
Expiration Date:  
xx/xx/xxxx

## **Section 2. Questions about the Food Log**

### **Who in my household needs to enter food and drinks online?**

Each person age 11 and older may enter food and drinks using the app FoodLogger himself or herself. The household's primary respondent should enter foods for children under the age of 11.

### **What types of food do I scan?**

Scan all the foods and drinks with a UPC barcode that you get (either purchased or for free) during the 7-day study period. This includes food you purchase at a store, like a grocery store or a restaurant, and food you get for free—for example, from friends, a garden, a food pantry, or some other place. Not all food you get will have a UPC barcode—there are other ways to enter those foods in the Food Log.

### **What is the PLU code?**

The produce look up (PLU) code is found on an oval sticker or rubber band on fresh produce (including fruits and vegetables). You can type this code into the Food Log in the "Enter a PLU" section. This is a quicker way to enter food that does not have a UPC barcode.

### **How should I enter a description about the food or drinks I got if there are no barcodes and no PLUs?**

- We will ask you to provide as much information as possible, including: the **brand**, product name, or menu item;
- the **type** of food (e.g., white or whole wheat bread; chicken nuggets or grilled chicken breast);
- the **form** of the food (e.g., raw carrots or cooked carrots);
- the **flavor** (e.g., chocolate milk, oatmeal cookie, or vanilla yogurt);
- the **fat** and **sugar** (e.g., whole milk or 1% milk; regular or diet soda; 100% juice or drink); and
- the **add-ons** (e.g., butter on bread, ketchup with French fries, or dressing on salads).

### **I do not have time to enter in the details for each food item immediately. Can I just scan the items and enter in the details later?**

Yes, if you do not have time to enter in the details of all the food items you got immediately, you can scan all food items and then come back later when it is more convenient for you to enter in the details for each food item using information from your receipt.

### **I forgot to enter food on a day during the study week. Can I go back the next day and enter the food I got?**

Yes, food items can be entered at any time during the 7-day study period until you complete the Day Overview and the day is completed. You can enter food items for previous days if you forget to do so on any given day. However, completing the Food Log each day makes it easier to remember the food you got.

**Should I estimate the amount or size?**

No. Write the amount (for example, the number of ounces or grams) or the size (for example, small, medium, large) only if it is listed on a package or menu. Select “Don’t Know” if the amount or size is not listed on the package or menu.

**Can I just save my receipts instead of entering the individual food items?**

No, you need to enter the individual food items because some receipts are hard to read or do not include all the information we need. Please enter in the food items into the food log, take a picture of the receipt, and upload the receipt. And, save hard copies of your receipts to hand to the interviewer.

**What if my SNAP money has run out? Should I continue entering in the food I get?**

Yes, we want to know about ALL the food you get during the study week, and not only the food you get with your SNAP money. We also want to know about the food you get for free.

**When should I enter in the food items I bought at a grocery store or other food store?**

The NFS smartphone app can be easily used to scan and enter foods into the food log as you put food items into your shopping cart at the store OR as you unpack your groceries at home. Alternatively, you can use the barcode scanner at home to scan food if you prefer using a computer.

**Should I enter food items in the food log that I am eating outside of my home?**

If you are eating outside of your home (e.g., at a restaurant or your parents’ home), you **DO** need to enter the food into the food log as this is food purchased or obtained for ‘free’. The easiest way may be to enter the food items while you are out eating them, using the NFS App on your smartphone. If you cannot enter the food items on your phone at that time, we suggest that you take a picture of your meal before you eat. The picture will serve as a reminder for you when you are able to enter in the details later when you have more time.

**If I go out to dinner with my family and one person from the family pays for the meal, how do we enter the food we got from this meal into the food log?**

The person who has the receipt can enter in all the food purchased in their food log. Then the other household members will not need to enter these meals in their food log. It is important to remember that all the foods on the receipts are to be entered only once.

**Do you want my receipts?**

Yes, you should be uploading receipts from your food and beverage purchases to the Food Log system and saving the hard copy receipts for your field interviewer to pick up at the end of the week when they return to do the final interview.

**What is the Day Overview asking?**

The Day Overview is asking if and when you ATE meals and snacks each day. You do not need to tell us the types of foods and drinks you ate; just tell us if you had a meal or a snack.

**Who needs to complete the Income Questionnaire?**

The Income Questionnaire must be completed by all household members who are age 16 and older. The Income Questionnaire is accessible via the FoodLogger and only needs to be completed once during the week.

**What is the Profile Questionnaire?**

The Profile Questionnaire asks questions about demographics and is completed once by each household member. We recommend completing this questionnaire the first time you log into the FoodLogger so you do not have to remember to do it later and your incentive for this will be registered.

**Are the food log training videos available to watch during the study week?**

Yes, the training videos are always available under “Help” in the main menu of the Food Log. We encourage you to ask all household members to watch the training videos to better understand the study and what participation involves. You can also re-watch the videos as many times as you need.

### **Section 3. Questions about the Types of Food to Enter**

#### **What types of foods and drink do you want to know about?**

We want to know about all of the food and drinks that you and everyone in your household get (either purchased or for free) during the 7-day study period even if you do not consume them. Include all the food and drinks you get, even if someone else paid or offered to you free by friends/neighbors/coworkers. You do not need to report food and drinks that are already in your home before the 7-day study period began even if you ate it during your 7-day period. You only need to report the food and drinks you got during your 7-day period (sometimes, this is also what you consumed but not all the time).

#### **Are beverages/drinks considered food?**

Yes, we want to know about any beverages/drinks you get during the 7-day study period.

#### **Do I report food I already had in my house in the food log if I'm going to eat it during the study week?**

No. Only report food in the food log that you get (purchased or for free) during the 7-day study period. Do not report the food or drinks you got previously but consume during the study week.

#### **What if all the food I ate on a particular day came from my refrigerator or cupboard? Do I report that in the food log?**

If the food you ate was obtained before the 7-day study period, then you do not need to enter any food in the food log for that particular day. Remember, we do not want to know about what types of food you ate; we are interested in the food you got (either purchased or for free). Sometimes, what you got on a particular day is also what you ate on that day. Sometimes, what you got on a day is not what you ate on that day—you would still report this food as you got it during the study week. Sometimes, you ate food that you got on a previous day—you would not report this food because you should have reported it on the previous day if the previous day was part of your study week. If you did not get any food or drink on a study day, report that no food or drinks were obtained on that day.

#### **Do I enter all my groceries in the food log?**

Only enter food and drinks you get during the 7-day study period. Do not report non-food products such as toilet paper, tissues, cleaning products, toys, and clothing.

#### **Do I need to report food and drinks my young kids had in school or in day care in the food log?**

Yes. We encourage you to talk with each child, check the school breakfast/lunch menu, or contact the day care provider to determine what foods your child received (even if the meal or snack was free). You should try to account for all components of the meal (main course, vegetable, starch, milk or other drink, and dessert). Again, we are interested in the foods served to the child, not necessarily what he or



she ate. You do not need to report foods that your child brought to school from home if you got them before the study week began.

**Do I report food, drinks, and snacks that I packed for my kids to school in the food log?**

No. You do not need to report anything your kids brought to school from home as you would have reported it the day you got it if you obtained it during the 7-day study period. But you do need to report any food, drink, or snack that your kids got from school.

## **Section 4: Questions Related to Who Paid for the Food**

### **What if I don't buy or get for free any food, meals, snacks, or drinks on some days?**

That's okay. Some people don't get food every day.

### **What if I got food that I didn't pay for?**

People get food that they don't pay for all the time. For example, obtaining cups of coffee at work, getting food at a friend's or relative's home, having someone take you out for lunch/dinner, or getting food from a food pantry or soup kitchen are some scenarios that may occur in which you do not pay for food. We **DO** want to know about these foods. Enter the food in the food log as free or as paid by someone else, depending on the situation.

### **What if someone buys food for me?**

If someone buys food for you, go to the food log system to enter the place where they got the food and other information (including that someone else paid for it) about the food and put "\$0.00" for the "Total Paid" since you did not pay anything.

### **What if I only paid for part of the meal?**

If the receipt is for multiple people, but you only paid for some items, circle the items that you paid for on the receipt, upload the receipt, and enter the amount that *you* paid in the food log system. Do not report the amount your total group paid.

## **Section 5. Technical Questions**

### **What do I do if I can't get the app to download on my smartphone?**

Refer to the quick reference document titled, "Downloading and Installing the FoodLogger, Accessing the Food Log, and Survey Concepts" and follow the steps outlined in the instructions. If you still have questions, please call the Westat Help Desk at 1-xxx-xxx-xxxx. Note that you can only download the app on iPhones (6 and up) and Android devices.

### **What if I can't pull up the website on my computer?**

If you are having problems accessing the food log on the computer via the website, you can try the following to troubleshoot:

- Make sure you are connected to the internet.
- See if you typed in the URL correctly: <https://www.nationalfoodstudy.org>
- Refresh the page, or close out of the app or website and log back in.
- Reboot your computer.
- Try a different internet browser such as Chrome, Firefox, or Internet Explorer.
- If nothing works, please call the Westat Help Desk at 1-xxx-xxx-xxxx.

### **What if the handheld barcode scanner does not work?**

Try unplugging the scanner from your computer and follow instructions on how to connect the handheld scanner. See the quick reference document titled, "How to Connect a MiFi Device and Handheld Scanner." If that does not work, please call the Westat Help Desk at 1-xxx-xxx-xxxx.

### **How much of my data plan will be used by downloading the app and using the food log during the study period?**

Most monthly data plans include several Giga Bytes (GB) of data. The FoodLogger app itself is only 28 Mega Bytes (MB). Your phone will use 28 MB to download the App (that is only if you are not connected to WiFi and are using cellular data when you do it).

Using the Food Study App during the study week would not use much data, but may depend on a few things, such as how many food events you log; how you use the Food Log (how many items are present in the collected food events); and finally, the size and number of receipts you upload.

### **Can I access the internet using the Westat MiFi device and my own computer/smartphone?**

Yes, you will need to join the "[INSERT NETWORK NAME]" network and enter in the MiFi password, which is "[INSERT PASSWORD]" The password is case-sensitive.

### **Can I access my personal WiFi network using a Westat computer/smartphone?**

Yes, you can join your home WiFi network as long as you know the password to access this network from a new device (assuming you have a locked, secure network).

**What if I do not know my home WiFi password?**

If you are using your own computer and home WiFi, you won't need to know your WiFi password (assuming that your computer automatically connects to your home WiFi network). If you are using a Westat laptop, you will need to access the internet either through your home WiFi or the Westat MiFi device. If you are unable to access your home WiFi because you do not know the password, you can use the Westat-provided Ethernet cable to connect the laptop to your home router to access the internet. Alternatively, your interviewer can loan you a Westat MiFi device to access the internet – the password for the MiFi device is “[INSERT PASSWORD]”.

**Do I need to be connected to the internet to access the Food Log?**

Yes, you need to be connected to the internet if you are accessing the food log website on a computer. If you are on a smartphone, you can access the FoodLogger app if you have a cellular data plan; please note, this app will use data from your data plan, but not much. If you are connected to a wireless network (WiFi) while using the FoodLogger app on your smartphone, the app will not use data from your data plan.

**What can I use the Westat iPhone for?**

The Westat iPhone should be used to access the FoodLogger app during the 7-day study period. You can also change a few settings on the phone to accommodate your home WiFi network. The Westat iPhone does not have voice and text service. In other words, you will not be able to make calls or send/receive text messages on the Westat iPhone and you should not use it for personal reasons.

## **Section 6. Questions?**

**What should I do if I still have questions about the study equipment, the food log, and what I need to enter during the study week?**

You can look under the “Help” button on the FoodLogger app for various quick reference guides that have been developed to help you. You can also call the Westat Help Desk at 1-xxx-xxx-xxxx anytime during the 7-day study period.

**Who can I contact with other study-related questions?**

You are welcome to reach out to the Westat interviewer who visited your house if you have questions. He/she should have left his/her contact information with you. You may also contact the Westat project director, Janice Machado, at [JaniceMachado@Westat.com](mailto:JaniceMachado@Westat.com) or via 301-294-2801.