

**Appendix F-2**

**Informed Consent for Interviews**

**Exploratory Semi-structured Interviews on Retail Food Loss**

Agency: Economic Research Service

Contractor: RTI International

## Appendix F-2: Informed Consent

### INFORMED CONSENT FOR INTERVIEW

#### *Principal Investigator*

Mary Muth, PhD  
Center for Applied Economics and Strategy  
RTI International

#### *Purpose*

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview. RTI International is conducting this study for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service (USDA ERS). USDA is working to address the problem of food loss and waste through its programs, policies, and guidance. As part of these efforts, we are asking ten food retail companies to participate in confidential interviews to help inform the design of a potential national study on retail-level food loss.

#### *Duration*

We expect that participating in this study will take 2 hours and 7 minutes. This estimate includes 90 minutes for the interview itself and up to 37 minutes for scheduling the interview, reviewing the disclaimer, reviewing and electronically signing the informed consent, reviewing the list of interview topics, and corresponding with RTI via email or phone to answer any questions you may have about the study. Your participation in this information collection is voluntary.

#### *Benefits and Risks*

Although your participation in this research may not yield any direct benefits, participation may offer indirect benefits. With your input, USDA ERS may be able to improve the design and data collection procedures for developing updated national estimates of retail food loss.

#### *Confidentiality*

The study's confidentiality and data security procedures are described below:

- RTI will use Zoom to conduct the interview. RTI's Zoom platform is configured to meet NIST-moderate requirements thus ensuring that the interview will be secure.
- Permission to audio-record the interview will be obtained from each individual at your company participating in the interview before the interview begins. If anyone declines to be recorded, then we will not record the interview.
- Interview notes and audio recordings (if applicable) will be saved in individual files on RTI's Enhanced Security Network. Data access will be limited to a small number of RTI study staff and will require double authentication.
- RTI will prepare an Excel file that summarizes responses to the interviews to prepare a written report for USDA ERS. The summary file will be saved on RTI's Enhanced Security Network. RTI will report aggregated information in the report and will not associate information in the report with individual companies. The individual information

you provide during the interview and the name of your company will not be shared with USDA, ERS.

- Under no circumstances will the recordings, notes, or interview summary (i.e., Word, Excel, or other electronic files) be transferred outside of RTI's Enhanced Security Network (i.e., they will not be stored on computer hard drives or external memory devices and will not be shared with USDA ERS).

#### *Information Requests*

Should you have any questions or concerns about the study, you may contact us at any time. The principal investigator may be reached via email at [muth@rti.org](mailto:muth@rti.org) or via telephone at 919-541-7289.

#### *Withdrawal of Participation*

Your participation is voluntary. You may skip questions as you wish and may discontinue participation at any time.

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**Please click here to sign the informed consent before the scheduled interview.**

**[link – the link states “I have read and understand the informed consent. I agree to participate in an exploratory interview on retail food loss”].**

**Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ ]**

NOTIFICATION TO RESPONDENT OF ESTIMATED BURDEN: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 127 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is #0536-0073. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to: Linda Kantor, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service ([linda.kantor@usda.gov](mailto:linda.kantor@usda.gov)).