

Appendix G

Informational List of Interview Questions and Topics

Exploratory Interviews on Retail Food Loss

Agency: USDA Economic Research Service

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This document provides a summary of the interview confidentiality and security procedures and a list of the types of questions we will ask in the interview. **We provide this information for informational purposes. You do NOT need to answer the questions before the interview.**

Interview Confidentiality and Security Procedures

The information provided in the interview will be protected under the **Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (CIPSEA)**. CIPSEA provides protection for information collected for statistical purposes under a pledge of confidentiality. CIPSEA-protected information is not subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

Assurance of Confidentiality: The information you provide will be used for statistical purposes only. Your response will be kept confidential and any person who willfully discloses ANY identifiable information about you or your company is subject to a jail term, a fine, or both. This study is conducted in accordance with the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2018, Title III of Pub. L. No. 115-435, codified in 44 U.S.C. Ch. 35 and other applicable Federal laws.

Interview Questions

General Information

- To start, please tell us about your company such as number and formats of stores, number of distribution centers, geographic coverage, and, if applicable, banners under which you operate.

Approaches to Tracking Food Loss and Donations

- Do your stores track and measure unsold food products that are removed from the shelf? How is information on food loss recorded for products with a barcode? How is information on food loss recorded for random-weight products?

Availability of Food Loss Metrics

- If USDA proceeds with a national study, we are considering an approach in which we would request raw data on product shipments and sales and other information that we would use to calculate food loss percentages.

We would need the following raw data for a 1-year period:

- Product shipments into the store for UPC and random-weight products
- Product sales (scanner data) for UPC and random-weight products

- Products packaged in the store (for example, raw meat and poultry), if applicable
- Products transferred to other departments in the store (for example, ingredients for prepared foods) if applicable
- Food donations, if applicable

For each type of data, we would need data fields like those shown below.

Data Field	Description
Store ID	Unique identification for the store
Department	Section of store in which product is located (e.g., dairy, frozen foods)
Category	Food product category used by the store, if applicable
Barcode	UPC, GTIN, or other product code
Description	Text description of the barcode or product code
Date	Year (calendar or fiscal year) for annual data or week for weekly data
Units	Number of units received, transferred, sold, or donated
Weight	Weight per unit or volume per unit
Unit of Measure	Measurement standard for product (e.g., pounds, kilograms, liters)
Value	Total wholesale value of units received (cost of goods sold), or retail value of product sold or donated

- o Do you think an approach like this would be feasible?
- o If yes, what suggestions would you have for designing and implementing this type of approach?
- o If no, do you have any suggestions on other approaches that would be feasible for a company like yours?

General Data Questions

- Could you tell us more about how your company maintains the types of data that we've talked about?
 - o Are the data maintained by one person or unit within the company or is it a different person or department for each type of data (food loss, donations, shipments, sales, random weight, intra-store transfers)?
 - o What software systems or platforms are used to maintain all the types of data we discussed?
- If USDA proceeds with a national study, participating companies will receive a benchmarking report that compares their estimates of product-specific food loss percentages with national averages as a benefit for participation. Would such a report

motivate your company to participate? Why or why not? What else would encourage your company to participate?

- For informational purposes, if USDA proceeds with a national study, would a company like yours be able to provide the types of data we discussed from the most recent calendar or fiscal year?
 - a. What steps or activities would be needed to make this happen?
 - b. For a potential national study, there would be a secure web portal for uploading data. Would it be useful to a company like yours if we were able to provide guidelines and/or a specific format for uploading the data OR would it be easier for you to specify the format?
 - c. About how many hours of staff time and calendar time do you estimate would be required to provide the data that we've described for one store or multiple stores?
 - d. Are there other ways to obtain the data we have described that you think would be more efficient or less burdensome?
- Do you have any other thoughts or potential concerns about the proposed data collection strategy?
- For a potential national study, do you have insights about the best approach for identifying who (e.g., job title) to initially contact to get buy-in for the study and then identifying who collects and maintain the data we need?