

Local Food Marketing Practices Study
Cognitive Interviewing Guide

State:	Click here to enter text.
POID:	Click here to enter text.
PID:	Click here to enter text.
Type of Operation (size, acreage, commodities, etc.):	Click here to enter text.
Type of places they sold to (consumer, retail market, institution, intermediate market)	Click here to enter text.
Date:	Click here to enter text.
Starting Time:	Click here to enter text.
Ending Time:	Click here to enter text.
Interviewer Name:	Click here to enter text.

Before we begin, I want to tell you a little more about the project and what we will be doing today. The National Agricultural Statistics Service, known as NASS, will conduct the Local Foods Marketing Practices Study in 2025 and 2026. Response will be mandatory on the survey, but your participation today is voluntary.

Before NASS administers a survey, we want to ensure that everyone understands the questions and comprehends them in the same way. We are asking operators like you to review the

questionnaire with us to see if the questions make sense to you and you are able to accurately answer the questions. During the interview today I am not as interested in collecting your exact answer to each question, but am more interested in understanding if it is possible for you to report the type of information at the level of detail we are asking about in each question.

First, I'll have you fill out the first section of the questionnaire on your own. Please fill it out as if you received it in the mail for your operation and as if you were filling it out without me here. After you complete the first section, we will go back over some of the questions you answered. I am also going to ask you some follow-up questions on why you answered the way you did and what certain things meant to you when you answered. This will help us make sure that everyone who receives this questionnaire understands the questions and that it is easy to complete. We will continue to do this for each section of the questionnaire one-by-one.

Also, it is important for you to tell me if something in a question doesn't make sense to you, a question seems hard to answer, the words in a question are hard to understand, or you have a hard time coming up with an answer. All of your answers and everything we discuss today will be kept completely confidential.

Show or read the OMB information to the respondent:

OMB No. 0535-0248
Approval Expires: 02/29/2028

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 operation is subject to a jail term, a fine, or both. This survey 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. For more information on how we protect your information please visit:
<https://www.nass.usda.gov/confidentiality>. Response is voluntary.

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 number is 0535-0248. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

Do you have any questions on what we're going to be doing today before we start?

[Hand the respondent the questionnaire and ask them to read the first section as if they had received this questionnaire in the mail. Have them circle anything that they find confusing or have a hard time answering. Have them stop after they have finished with the screening questions.]

INTERVIEWER NOTE:

Ask emergent probes as necessary, for example:

How did you arrive at an answer for this question? Can you tell me more?

Would you need records to answer this question? If so, tell me about these records.

What does this [insert term] mean to you?

I see you didn't answer this question. Can you tell me why? <if the respondent asks for clarification, ask "what would you do if I weren't here?"

SCREENER SECTION (Page 1)

The Concept of Local Food

Did you notice the title at the top of the report form? Based on this title, do you feel like this survey applies to you and your operation? Why or why not?
[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

What would be an example of a local food marketing practice?
[Click here to enter text.](#)

What does the term “local” mean to you in the title of this survey?
[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 1

{Try to wait till they complete the entire screener section} How did you respond to question 1 on the first page? Was anything missing from the options besides what's listed in a thru d?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Tell me about the products you produce and sell. How do you typically market them? Would you consider any of that local food marketing? Why/Why not?
[Click here to enter text.](#)

Did you read the option “receive any government payment”? Why did you answer that way? Are you familiar with the CRP program?
[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 2

You answered [insert “yes” or “no”] for Item 1. Why did you answer [insert “yes” or “no”]?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 3

In your own words, what is this question asking?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

What does the term “consumer” mean to you?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

What does the term “retail market” mean to you? What types of “retail markets” come to mind?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

What does the term “institution” mean to you? What types of “institutions” come to mind?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

What does the term “intermediate market” mean to you? What types of “intermediate markets” come to mind?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 3

What do you think the purpose of this question is? Do you see any association between it and local food marketing? Why/Why Not?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 4

You answered [insert “yes” or “no”] for Item 4. Why did you answer [insert “yes” or “no”]?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 5

In your own words, what is this question asking? (If needed, ask) Did you notice the phrase “food for humans to eat or drink?”

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Do the list of items in the bullet points under the ‘Include’ and ‘Exclude’ headings seem to belong in this item? Why or why not? Did you use these to answer the question?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Do you have any other comments on this section?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Next, please turn the page and let's look at Pages 2, 6, and 8. Please complete these pages and let me know when you are done. Once you are done I will have some questions for you.

SECTION 1 (Page 2)

Item 9

In your own words, what is this question asking? You answered [insert 1, 2, 3, or 4] for item 9.
Why?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 29

Can you tell me why you answered the way you did in Item 29?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Did you include any agricultural products in this question with ingredients sourced from other producers? If so, why did you include them? What were they?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Does this operation keep records of the information in this table for the specific direct-to-retail markets it sells to? If so, would you need to consult these records to answer this item?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

How did you arrive at the totals? How do you know these numbers are accurate? Do you generally think of the totals in terms of the parts listed here or some other way?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Did you produce any agricultural products that you did not include in this question? If so, why didn't you include them?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Do you have any other comments on this section?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

General

<Interviewer> did you observe any potential issues with this section? If so, what? Please explain.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

SECTION 2 (Page 6)

<Interviewer – you may need to paraphrase questions that were asked in previous sections>

Item 1

You answered [insert “yes” or “no”] for Item 1. Why did you answer [insert “yes” or “no”]?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

For Item 1, we use the phrase “**directly to a retail market.**” What does this phrase mean to you?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 7

Can you tell me why you answered the way you did in Item 7? How do you know the answer to this question?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 9

Can you tell me why you answered the way you did in Item 9?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

In your opinion, are the direct-to-retail categories in the first column clearly distinguished? How come?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

What about “supermarkets or supercenters?” In your opinion, what are those and how do they differ from those listed in c.?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

What about “independently owned grocery stores?” In your opinion, should they be included here? Why or why not?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Does this operation keep records of the information in this table for the specific direct-to-retail markets it sells to? If so, would you need to consult these records to answer this item?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

How did you arrive at the totals? How do you know these numbers are accurate? Do you generally think of the totals in terms of the parts listed here or some other way?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Did you produce any agricultural products that you did not include in this question? If so, why didn't you include them?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Do you have any other comments on this section?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

General

<Interviewer> did you observe any potential issues with this section? If so, what? Please explain.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

SECTION 3 (Page 8)

Item 1

You answered [insert “yes” or “no”] for Item 1. Why did you answer [insert “yes” or “no”]?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

For Item 1, we use the term “**directly-to-an-institution.**” What does this term mean to you?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Looking at the bullet point list under the ‘Include’ heading, do you believe that these are all markets where a producer can sell directly to an institution? If not, which ones and why?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Looking at the bullet point list under the ‘Exclude’ heading, did you notice these when you answered the question? Did you use these when answering the questions?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 2

You answered [insert “yes” or “no”] for Item 2. Why did you answer [insert “yes” or “no”]?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

When we use the phrase “**food for humans to eat or drink,**” what does that mean to you? What types of products were you thinking of?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 5

How did you decide which K-12 school this operation received the largest gross value of food sales from in <year>?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

How did you determine the number of miles to report here?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 7 and 9

Can you tell me why you answered the way you did in Item 7? How do you know the answer to this question?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

How did you decide which college or university/hospital this operation received the largest gross value of food sales from in <year>?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

How did you determine the number of miles to report here?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 11

Can you tell me why you answered the way you did in Item 11?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Does this operation keep records of the information in this table for the specific institutional markets it sells to? If so, would you need to consult these records to answer this item?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

How did you arrive at the totals? How do you know these numbers are accurate? Do you generally think of the totals in terms of the parts listed here or some other way?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Did you produce any agricultural products that you did not include in this question? If so, why didn't you include them?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Do you have any other comments on this section?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

General

<Interviewer> did you observe any potential issues with this section? If so, what? Please explain.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

SECTION 4 (Page 10)

Item 1

You answered [insert “yes” or “no”] for Item 1. Why did you answer [insert “yes” or “no”]?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Before Item 1 we include a definition for “**intermediate market**.” In your own words, what does the phrase “intermediate market” mean to you? What does “sell **directly –to an-intermediate market**” mean to you?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

For Item 1 we use the phrase “**...locally- and/or regionally-branded products.**”

What does this phrase mean to you?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Can you think of an example of an intermediate market which markets mostly locally- and/or regionally-branded products?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Looking at the bullet point list under the ‘Include’ heading, do you think all of these examples make sense in this question? If not, which ones and why?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Looking at the bullet point list under the ‘Exclude’ heading, did you notice these when you answered the question? Did you use these when answering the questions?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 3

Are you unfamiliar with any of these intermediate markets? If so, which ones?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

What does [insert term] mean to you? (Probe on each type of intermediate market)

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Why did you answer yes/no/don't know [for each intermediate market respondent says they sell too in the first column]?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 5

How did you decide which intermediate this operation received the largest gross value of food sales from in <year>?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

How did you determine the number of miles to report here?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 7

Can you tell me why you answered the way you did in Item 7?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Does this operation keep records of the information in this table for the specific intermediated markets it sells to? If so, would you need to consult these records to answer this item?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

How did you arrive at the totals? How do you know these numbers are accurate? Do you generally think of the totals in terms of the parts listed here or some other way?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Did you produce any agricultural products that you did not include in this question? If so, why didn't you include them?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Do you have any other comments on this section?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

General

<Interviewer> did you observe any potential issues with this section? If so, what? Please explain.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

SECTION 5 (Page 10)

Item 1

Can you tell me how you came up with your answer in Item 1?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Does this number include all of your operation's sales or just those sold directly to consumers, retail markets, institutions, and/or an intermediate market?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

(If respondent says all operation's sales) Would it be easy or difficult to break out only those sold directly to consumers, retail markets, institutions and/or an intermediate market? (If yes) are you willing to do this?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 2

Can you tell me how you came up with your answer in Item 2?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Did you have any difficulty deciding what to include in Items 2a, 2b, and 2c?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Does this operation keep records on the information requested in Item 2? If so, would you need to consult these records to answer this item?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

<Interviewer> did the respondent use percentages? Did the percentages add to 100%?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 8

What does item 8 mean in your own words?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

What did you include in your answer to item 8?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Did you use gross or net value of sales?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Did you produce any agricultural products that you did not sell? If so, what were they? Did you include those in your answer? Why or why not?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Did you receive any government payments in 2024? If so, did you include them?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Did you have production contracts in 2024? If so, did you include the value of those products?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Did you have a landlord? Did they receive any share of the operation's government payments or products sold? If so, did you include that?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 9

Can you tell me how you came up with your answer in Item 9?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Item 10

Can you report each of these categories? Why or why not?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

What about a total?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

What does the term “marketing expenses” mean to you?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Do you consider any of these categories NOT marketing expenses? Why or why not?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

In your opinion, is there a better word or phrase we should use that sums up each of these categories?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Do you have any other comments on this section?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

General

<Interviewer> did you observe any potential issues with this section? If so, what?
Please explain.

[Click here to enter text.](#)