



# The USDA National Food Study

## Consent Form

You are being asked to participate in the National Food Study. Your address was selected at random using a scientific process to assure that all households have a chance to be selected. Please read the following information carefully before you decide whether or not you consent to participate.

**Sponsor of Study:** The study is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) under the authority of United States Code Title 7 Section 2026 (a) (1). The study is conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, an independent research firm.

**Purpose of the study:** This study will collect information to help USDA improve its programs and help to assure that all residents of the US have access to a healthy diet at affordable prices.

**Procedures to follow:** If you agree to participate, we will ask you and members of your household to keep track of the foods you get for 7 days. We will also ask you to complete interviews. The study procedures include:

1. **Complete** one 30-minute interview and one 35 minute interview:
  - a. **Interview #1** will be done today, in person. It includes questions about your household, where you shop for food, and whether you receive benefits from food assistance programs.
  - b. **Interview #2** will be done at the end of the week, in person. It includes questions about household income, major non-food expenditures and financial practices like bill paying. It also includes questions about your family's health, special dietary needs, nutrition knowledge, and food security. We will provide you with an **Income Worksheet** to help you prepare for this interview.
2. **Receive a one-hour training** to learn how to keep track of foods for the survey.
3. **Save receipts** from all of your household food purchases for the next 7 days.
4. **Scan food items** that you bring into your home during the next 7 days. We will give you a scanner to use for the week. This may take about 20 minutes during the week.
5. **Keep track of meals and snacks that you get away from home.** This may take about 1 hour during the week for each person age 11 and over who obtains food away from home.
6. **Call us for three (3) 15-minute telephone calls** to discuss the foods you get during the week.
7. **Complete a Respondent Feedback Form** (4 questions) at the end of the week.

It may take four to six hours of your time during the week, depending on your household size.

**Incentives for participation:** This study provides three types of incentives:

- The primary respondent in the household, who completes the two (2) interviews and keeps track of food, will receive a **\$100 check** at the end of the week after returning the scanner and food books.
- The primary respondent will also receive up to **three (3) \$10 gift cards**, one for each time that you call us to report the foods you get during the week.
- Other members of your household will receive a gift card if they keep track of the foods they get: children age 11 to 14 will receive a **\$10 gift card** and persons age 15 and older will get a **\$20 gift card**.

**Voluntary participation:** Taking part in the study is **voluntary**. If you choose to participate, you can skip any question you do not want to answer or that makes you feel uncomfortable. Deciding to take part in the study or not, or withdrawing from the study, will not affect your eligibility for benefits or services received by anyone in your household—now or in the future. Each household member may decide to participate. Your household may participate even if all members do not agree to participate.

**Discomforts or risks:** The risks are no greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life. If you receive SNAP benefits (or food stamps), the study incentives will not affect your eligibility or benefit amount.

**Termination of participation:** You may choose to withdraw from the study at any time. If you withdraw before you track foods for 7 days, you will not receive the study incentives. The study may use some of the data you provide to us up to the time of your withdrawal.

**Statement of confidentiality:** We are required by law (read box below) to use your information for statistical research only and to keep it confidential. The law prohibits us from giving anyone any information that may identify you or your family without your consent.

**Assurance of Confidentiality** – All information which would permit identification of an individual, a practice, or an establishment will be held confidential, will be used for statistical purposes only, will be used only by USDA staff, contractors, and agents authorized by USDA to perform statistical activities only when required and with necessary controls, and will not be disclosed or released to other persons without the consent of the individual or establishment in accordance with section 308(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 USC 242m) and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (PL-107-347). By law, every employee as well as every agent has taken an oath and is subject to a jail term of up to five years, a fine of up to \$250,000, or both if he or she willfully discloses ANY identifiable information about you.

**Use of administrative data:** We may obtain data from state agencies about your household's participation in government food programs, such as the SNAP program. Any data obtained this way will also be kept strictly confidential and will be used **ONLY** for research purposes. Please initial below if you allow us to obtain information from state agencies about your receipt of food program benefits. Your initials here are not required for participation in the study.

Initial here: \_\_\_\_\_

**Where to go with questions about the study:** If you have any questions about the study please call us at: 1-866-275-8659 or write to us at: National Food Study, c/o Mathematica Policy Research, P.O. Box 2393, Princeton, NJ 08543-2393. The email address is: [info@usdafoodstudy.org](mailto:info@usdafoodstudy.org).

If you feel that you have been harmed in any way as a result of being in this study, or have questions about your rights as a study participant, please contact: Melissa Billarrial at Public Private Ventures Institutional Review Board, toll-free at 800-755-4778 extension 4482.

**I read the information provided on this form. By printing my name and signing below, I show that I am at least 18 years of age and I agree to take part in this study.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Your Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Signature

\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / 2012  
Today's Date