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Feasibility and Accuracy of Record Linkage To Estimate Multiple Program Participation

Volume II, Survey of Food Assistance Information Systems—Survey Instruments

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Abstract

Administrative data from USDA's food assistance and nutrition programs (FANPs) provide statistics on the number and characteristics of program participants. However, policymakers and researchers often want more information than these administrative data provide about participation in multiple programs or the characteristics of families who choose to participate in some, but not all, programs for which they are eligible. This study investigates the feasibility of linking administrative data across FANPs to provide statistics on multiple-program participation. The first phase of the study included a Survey of Food Assistance Information Systems, taken in 26 States from directors of the Food Stamp Program (FSP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and Child Nutrition Programs. The survey collected information about the characteristics and content of FANP information systems, including system architecture, participant identifiers, integration with other programs, and research uses of administrative data. This report includes the instruments for the survey.

Survey findings are reported in *Feasibility and Accuracy of Record Linkage To Estimate Multiple Program Participation: Volume I, Record Linkage Issues and Results of the Survey of Food Assistance Information Systems*, E-FAN-03-008-1.

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Survey of Food Assistance Information Systems

The *Survey of Food Assistance Information Systems* collected data from food assistance nutrition programs (FANPs) in 26 States. The survey was designed to collect information about the characteristics and content of FANP information systems that are relevant to data linkage across programs.

The *Survey of Food Assistance Information Systems* was conducted as a mail survey, with mailings in December 2001; all surveys were complete by March 2002. Four survey instruments were designed with questions tailored to each of the four respondent agencies. The respondents were:

- State Food Stamp Program (FSP) directors
- State WIC Program directors
- State Child Nutrition Program (CNP) directors
- School Food Authority (SFA) directors

The first three respondents were surveyed in each of 26 States. The SFA survey was targeted to three SFA directors in each of the 26 States. The 26 States included in the survey were: Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington.

This volume contains the survey instruments. Survey results are presented in Volume I: “Record Linkage Issues and Results of the Survey of Food Assistance Information Systems.”