



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food and Nutrition Service

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; 60-Day Public Comment Request for the Study Food Price Data Collection in the Non-Contiguous States and U.S. Territories

AGENCY: Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

ACTION: Notice

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice invites the general public and other public agencies to comment on this proposed information collection for the Food Price Data Collection in the Non-Contiguous States and U.S. Territories Study. This is a new information collection request. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) uses information on current food prices for several applications related to research, policy, and consumer education. Accurate food price data are crucial for informing federal nutrition and agricultural policies such as the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP), which estimates the cost of a healthy diet. The purpose of this study is to fill a gap in existing food price data by collecting and estimating the prices of foods and beverages in the TFP market basket in seven States and Territories: Alaska, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Hawaii, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: Comments may be sent to: Kevin Kuczynski, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1320 Braddock Place, Floor 4, Suite 4080, Alexandria, VA 22314. Comments may also be submitted via email to kevin.kuczynski@usda.gov. Comments will also be accepted through the Federal eRulemaking Portal. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and

follow the online instructions for submitting comments electronically.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval. All comments will be a matter of public record.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of this information collected should be directed to Kevin Kuczynski by phone at 703-305-2153 or email at kevin.kuczynski@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions that were used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Title: Food Price Data Collection in the Non-Contiguous States and U.S. Territories

Form Number: Not applicable

OMB Number: 0584-NEW

Expiration Date: Not yet determined

Type of Request: New collection

Abstract: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) uses information on current food prices for several applications related to research, policy, and consumer education. An important application of data on food prices is in calculating cost adjustments to the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) to reflect the food prices in specific areas of the country as required by law. Retail scanner data reflect the best source of information on food prices currently available for adjusting the cost of the TFP to reflect local food prices. However, existing retail scanner data in specific

locations are limited – particularly in the U.S. Territories of Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) – and increasing levels of aggregation present in the scanner data could limit future analyses for Alaska and Hawaii.

The purpose of this study is to answer the question, “What are the prices of foods and beverages in the TFP market basket in each of the non-contiguous States and U.S. Territories?” and to explore development and application of a standardized approach for collecting sufficiently representative food price data. Study objectives include:

1. Develop a detailed plan for collecting representative food price data in each of the non-contiguous States and U.S. Territories.
2. Collect food price data in each of the non-contiguous States and U.S. Territories using the data collection approach developed.

The study will use multiple methods to gather food price data, including: (1) Electronic retailer data (retailer-provided sales data from point-of-sale system, retailer-provided price data from inventory management system, commercial scanner data); (2) WIC EBT data; (3) Web scraped data (from retailer website); and (4) In-store survey data (field data collection).

Affected Public: Members of the public affected by the data collection include: (1) State and local governments, (2) business for-profit agencies, and (3) business not-for-profit organizations.

1. State and local governments: Staff from the 7 non-contiguous States and Territories (2 States and 5 U.S. territories) will participate in data collection activities.
2. Business for-profit agencies: Staff from 244 retailers in the 7 non-contiguous States and Territories (39 in Alaska, 31 in American Samoa, 30 in CNMI, 36 in Guam, 40 in Hawaii, 42 in Puerto Rico, and 26 in U.S. Virgin Islands) will participate in the study.
3. Business not-for-profit organizations: Staff from 21 organizations in the 7 non-contiguous States and Territories will participate in the study.

Estimated Number of Respondents The total estimated number of respondents for the study is 1,299: 546 staff representing State and local government agencies, 732 staff from business for-profit organizations, and up to 21 business not-for-profit organizations. We anticipate all State government staff to be responsive to outreach. Of the 753 businesses contacted (732 for-profit and 21 not-for-profit), we anticipate 258 to be responsive and 495 to be nonresponsive. The breakdown of respondents follows:

1. State and local staff: Of the 21 State staff contacted to participate in the study (7 SNAP/NAP staff, 7 WIC staff, 7 Department of Health Staff), 21 staff are estimated to participate in the study and 0 to be nonresponsive. Of the 525 local SNAP/NAP staff contacted to participate in the study, 525 are estimated to participate in the study and 0 to be nonresponsive.
2. Business for-profit organizations: Of the 732 business for-profit organizations contacted to participate in the study, 244 are estimated to participate in the study and 488 to be nonresponsive.
3. Business not-for-profit organizations: Of the 21 business not-for-profit organizations contacted to participate in the study, 14 are estimated to participate in the study and 7 to be nonresponsive.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 3.2 (3.9 for responsive participants and 2.0 for nonresponsive participants). The estimated breakout is as follows:

1. State SNAP/NAP staff (7): The estimated number of responses per State SNAP/NAP staff is 7.0. The 7 staff from the 7 non-contiguous States and Territories will receive an introductory recruitment email from the study team, will receive an email from the study team asking for retailer contact information, will share retailer contact information, will send an introductory email to retailers and local partners on behalf of the project team, will send an introductory email to SNAP/NAP local staff on behalf of the project team, and will take part in pre data collection follow up emails/phone calls.

2. WIC State agency staff (7): The estimated number of responses per State WIC staff is 6.0. The 7 staff from the 7 non-contiguous States and Territories will receive an introductory recruitment email from the study team, will be asked to share retailer contact information, and will share WIC EBT data.
3. Department of Health staff (7): The estimated number of responses per State Department of Health staff is 2.0. The 7 staff from the 7 non-contiguous States and Territories will receive an introductory recruitment email from the study team and will share retailer contact information.
4. Local SNAP/NAP staff (525): The estimated number of responses per local SNAP/NAP staff is 1.0. Up to 525 staff will receive study introduction letters from their State SNAP/NAP director.
5. Business for-profit organizations (732): The estimated number of responses per retailers/corporate chains is 10.0 for responsive organizations (244 organizations) and 2.0 for non-responsive organizations (488 organizations).
 - a. All 732 organizations will receive two recruitment emails, one from the State SNAP/NAP director and one from the study team accompanied by a one-page summary.
 - b. Of those 732 organizations, 244 will be identified as priority retailers/corporate chains and will receive an informational webinar email and webinar reminder email. We estimate that 61 of the 244 participating organizations will attend the webinar. In addition, these 244 organizations will receive a follow up email confirming participation and participate in a data collection planning call.
 - c. We anticipate having to conduct follow-up phone calls with up to 150 of the priority stores that are not responsive; we anticipate having to call each of these stores up to 3 times.
 - d. 134 organizations will participate in in-person recruitment.
 - e. 122 organizations will complete the paperwork required to receive an honoraria for participation.
 - f. Of the 244 responsive organizations, 128 will participate in the in-store survey pre-visit

phone call and in-store survey.

g. Of the 244 responsive organizations, 75 will provide scanner data. We anticipate that some of these organizations will be corporate chains that can provide scanner data for multiple retailers within the sample of 244.

h. Of the 244 responsive organizations, 9 will participate in web scraping.

6. Business not-for-profit organizations (21): The estimated number of responses for not-for-profit organizations is 2.0 for responsive organizations and 2.0 for non-responsive organizations. All 21 organizations will receive a notification email, one-page study information sheet, and request for retailer contact information. The 14 organizations that are responsive will share existing retailer contact information.

Estimated Total Annual Responses: 4,096 (3,106 annual responses for responsive participants and 990 annual responses for nonresponsive participants).

Estimated Time per Response: 0.44 hours (0.61 hours for responsive participants and 0.16 hours for nonresponsive participants).

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: Estimated total annual burden on respondents and nonrespondents: 2,056.2 hours (1,894.1 hours for responsive participants and 162.2 hours for nonresponsive participants). See table 1 for the estimated total annual burden for each respondent type.

Table 1: Estimated Total Burden Hours per Respondent Type			
Respondent Category	Type of Respondents	Instruments	Grand Total Annual Burden Estimate (Hours)
<i>For profit businesses</i>	Retailers/corporate chains	Recruitment: Study introduction letter (SNAP/NAP director to sample retailers)	59.4
		Recruitment: WRMA initial contact to sample and reserve retailers/corporate chains and review study one-pager	183.0
		Recruitment: Informational webinar email	20.4
		Recruitment: Webinar reminder email	20.4
		Recruitment: Attend Food Price Data Study introductory webinar	30.5
		Recruitment: Follow up phone call for nonresponsive retailers/corporate chains	9.2
		Recruitment: In-person recruitment	67.0
		Recruitment: Follow up email confirming participation	20.4
		Recruitment: Data collection planning call	183.0
		Recruitment: Completing MOU for honoraria	610.0
		Data Collection: Web Scraping Protocol	0.0
		Data Collection: Pre-visit phone call	32.0
		Data Collection: In-store survey (collected by project team)	64.0
	Data Collection: Providing scanner data	600.0	
	Subtotal for for-profit businesses		1,899.2
<i>Non-for-profit Businesses</i>	Non-for-profit Businesses	Recruitment: Study introduction letter (SNAP/NAP director to sample retailers)	1.7
		Recruitment: Study notification email (WRMA to non-governmental organizations), reading one pager, and sharing retailer contact information	7.6
	Subtotal for Not-for-profit businesses		9.2
Business subtotal			1,908.5
	TOTAL		2,056.2

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