

# **The Food Stamp Program's Elderly Nutrition Pilot Demonstration**

## **Initial Evaluation Design**

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### **Abstract**

Low participation rates in the Food Stamp Program (FSP) by poor elderly individuals have been a persistent problem. Historically, no more than one-third of eligible elderly have participated in the FSP—a participation rate far lower than that of any other major demographic group. To address the low participation rates among the elderly, USDA is funding the Elderly Nutrition Demonstrations—six separate pilot programs that are testing three alternative ways to increase elderly participation in the FSP. This report presents the design for evaluating the six demonstrations. The design includes an impact analysis to evaluate the effects of the demonstrations on FSP participation, average benefit levels, client satisfaction, and ongoing administrative costs. The design also includes a process analysis to describe the implementation process and to identify the effects of the demonstrations on stakeholders.

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# CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES .....	1
A. THE PROBLEM OF LOW FSP PARTICIPATION RATES BY THE ELDERLY .....	2
B. THREE DEMONSTRATION MODELS TO INCREASE THE ELDERLY’S FSP PARTICIPATION RATES.....	4
1. Simplified Eligibility and Benefit Determination Model.....	5
2. Application Assistance for Eligible Elderly Model .....	7
3. Alternative Food Stamp Commodity Benefit Model .....	9
C. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION .....	12
1. Assess the Effects of the Demonstrations on Elderly FSP Participation .....	15
2. Assess the Effects of the Demonstrations on the Average Value of FSP Benefits that Elderly Households Receive .....	15
3. Assess the Effects of the Demonstrations on Client Satisfaction .....	16
4. Quantify the Federal, State, and Local Costs of the Demonstrations .....	16
5. Assess the Effects of the Demonstrations on Stakeholders.....	17
6. Describe the Implementation of the Demonstrations .....	17
D. STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT .....	18
II. EVALUATING THE EFFECTS ON FSP PARTICIPATION AND BENEFITS.....	19
A. RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	19
B. STUDY DESIGN.....	20
1. Pre-Post Comparison Group Design .....	21
2. Comparison Site Selection .....	24

## CONTENTS *(continued)*

Chapter	Page
II. <i>(continued)</i>	
C. OUTCOME MEASURES.....	25
1. Participation Impacts for All Models.....	26
2. Benefit Impacts for the Simplified Eligibility and Application Assistance Models.....	26
3. Benefit Impacts for the Commodity Alternative Model.....	27
D. DATA SOURCES.....	31
E. ANALYTICAL APPROACH.....	33
1. Analytic Time Periods.....	34
2. Pre-Post Comparisons.....	36
3. The Estimation of Impacts.....	42
4. Determining Whether an Impact Is Meaningful.....	45
5. Final Synthesis Analysis.....	46
III. EFFECTS ON CLIENT SATISFACTION.....	49
A. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS.....	49
B. MEASURING CLIENT SATISFACTION WITH THE DEMONSTRATIONS: OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY.....	50
C. SAMPLE DESIGN.....	53
1. The Target Population and Sampling Frame.....	54
2. Site-Level Sample Design: Census or Sample?.....	58
3. Stratification and Sample Allocation Plan.....	58
4. Sample Weighting and Nonresponse Adjustments.....	62
5. Statistical Precision.....	63
D. SURVEY TOPICS.....	64
E. SURVEY DESIGN.....	82
1. Instrument Length and Mode.....	82
2. Languages.....	83
3. Eligibility.....	83

## CONTENTS (continued)

Chapter	Page
4. Proxies.....	84
5. Pretesting.....	84
6. Locating Sample Members and Gaining Their Cooperation .....	86
7. Confidentiality.....	90
F. ANALYTIC APPROACH .....	90
1. Univariate Analysis .....	91
2. Multivariate Analysis .....	92
G. STRUCTURED DISCUSSIONS WITH HOUSEHOLDS THAT STARTED BUT DID NOT COMPLETE A FSP APPLICATION.....	96
IV. QUANTIFYING THE COSTS OF THE DEMONSTRATIONS.....	99
A. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS .....	99
B. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH.....	100
C. FEDERAL COSTS .....	104
1. Changes in the Costs of FSP Benefits.....	104
2. Changes in the Administrative Costs of Providing Benefits.....	104
D. COSTS TO THE STATE/LOCAL GRANTEES AND THEIR NONPROFIT PARTNERS .....	104
1. Demonstration Start-Up Costs .....	108
2. Costs of Serving Clients During the Demonstration.....	111
3. Costs of Producing Reports and Providing Data.....	113
E. COSTS TO THE COMPARISON SITES .....	113
V. PROCESS ANALYSIS: DESCRIBING THE IMPLE- MENTATION PROCESS AND ASSESSING EFFECTS ON STAKEHOLDERS.....	115
A. RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	115

**CONTENTS** *(continued)*

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Page</b>
V. <i>(continued)</i>	
B. TOPICS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS AND DEMON-STRATION EFFECTS ON STAKEHOLDERS.....	117
1. Community Context and Demonstration Goals .....	117
2. Demonstration Structure .....	120
3. Description of Demonstration Services.....	120
4. Implementation Process .....	125
5. Accomplishments, Challenges, and Lessons Learned .....	128
C. DATA COLLECTION METHODS .....	131
1. Continuous Monitoring .....	131
2. Site Visits .....	131
3. Quarterly Reports .....	133
4. Structured Discussion Groups.....	133
D. DATA ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS.....	134
REFERENCES.....	137
APPENDIX A: COMPARISON SITE SELECTION	
APPENDIX B: SPECIFICATIONS FOR STATE CASERECORD EXTRACT AND SURVEY CONTACT DATABASE	
APPENDIX C: DEMONSTRATION STAKEHOLDERS	

## TABLES

Chapter		Page
I.1	OVERVIEW OF EVALUATION OBJECTIVES, DATA SOURCES, AND EVALUATION DESIGN ISSUES .....	13
II.1	HYPOTHETICAL PRE-POST IMPLEMENTATION COMPARISON.....	22
II.2	EVALUATION COMPARISONS FOR EACH SITE PARTICIPATING IN THE DEMONSTRATION .....	37
III.1	ESTIMATED APPLICANTS BY SITE AND CENSUS VS. SAMPLING RECOMMENDATIONS.....	59
III.2	EXPECTED PRECISION LEVELS BY SITE FOR VARIOUS DESIGN EFFECTS: OVERALL AND FOR SUBGROUP ESTIMATES.....	65
III.3	SURVEY TOPICS .....	66
III.4A	DESCRIPTIVE COMPARISON OF SAMPLE MEMBERS.....	93
III.4B	DESCRIPTIVE COMPARISON OF SAMPLE MEMBERS' OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH FSP.....	94
III.5	OUTCOME VARIABLE(S) AND CLIENT GROUP ESTIMATED ODDS RATIOS.....	97
IV.1	CHANGE IN AVERAGE FSP BENEFITS FOR THE ELDERLY DUE TO DEMONSTRATION.....	105
IV.2	CHANGE IN FSP BENEFITS FOR THE ELDERLY WHO SELECT THE COMMODITY OPTION.....	106
IV.3	DISTRIBUTION OF FSP BENEFITS AMONG THE ELDERLY WHO SELECT THE COMMODITY OPTION.....	107
IV.4	COSTS OF IMPLEMENTING THE ELDERLY NUTRITION DEMONSTRATIONS .....	109
IV.5	LABOR COST OF [ACTIVITY NAME].....	110

**TABLES** (*continued*)

<b>Table</b>		<b>Page</b>
IV.6	COSTS OF SERVING CLIENTS UNDER THE DEMONSTRATION .....	112
IV.7	REPORTING COSTS .....	114
V.1	COMMUNITY CONTEXT AND DEMONSTRATION GOALS.....	118
V.2	DEMONSTRATION STRUCTURE.....	121
V.3	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES.....	122
V.4	IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS.....	126
V.5	ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES.....	129
V.6	LESSONS LEARNED.....	130
V.7	TOPICS AND DATA SOURCES FOR THE ELDERLY NUTRITION PROCESS ANALYSIS .....	132

## I. OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

The Food Stamp Program (FSP) is the cornerstone of the federal government's strategy for ensuring that all Americans have enough to eat. The program provides low-income individuals and families with benefits that can be redeemed for food at authorized stores. However, not all those eligible for benefits participate in the program, especially elderly persons. About one-third of elderly individuals estimated to be eligible participate, compared with more than two-thirds of nonelderly eligible individuals (Rosso 2001). The low rates of participation among the elderly might indicate that the FSP is not fulfilling its mission to provide food assistance to all those who need it.

To address the low participation rates among the elderly, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is funding the Elderly Nutrition Demonstrations—five or six separate pilot programs that are testing alternative ways to serve the elderly.<sup>1</sup> These demonstrations reflect three distinct strategies and are intended to increase elderly participation in the FSP and improve the satisfaction of elderly persons who participate. Insights and information obtained from the evaluation of these demonstrations should help federal policymakers formulate effective strategies for increasing FSP participation among the elderly.

Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., (MPR) was selected through a competitive bidding process to design the evaluation of the Elderly Nutrition Demonstration pilots. This report details the steps necessary to evaluate the impact of each demonstration on elderly FSP participation, benefits, administrative costs, and client satisfaction. It also describes the process

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<sup>1</sup>Currently there are five pilots; a sixth state may receive demonstration funding before the evaluation begins.

analysis that will be used to study the implementation of these demonstrations and the effects on stakeholders.

#### **A. THE PROBLEM OF LOW FSP PARTICIPATION RATES BY THE ELDERLY**

Reaching the poor elderly has been a persistent problem in the FSP. Each month, millions of eligible, poor elderly individuals go without food stamp benefits. In September 1999, 5.3 million elderly individuals were estimated to be eligible for food stamps (Castner 2000). Only 32 percent of them participated in the FSP, leaving 3.6 million eligible elderly individuals without benefits.

Historically, no more than one-third of eligible elderly individuals have participated in the FSP—a participation rate that is far lower than that of any other major demographic group. In 1999, the participation rate for all nonelderly, FSP-eligible individuals was almost twice that of the elderly. Five years earlier, when economic conditions were not as strong, the participation rate for the nonelderly was much higher, at 78 percent, yet the participation rate for the elderly was still just 32 percent.

Low participation rates for the elderly are especially troublesome because these individuals have unique nutritional needs. Many elderly persons suffer from medical or dental conditions that require special diets. For instance, diabetes and heart disease are common among the elderly, and many elderly individuals are overweight. It is estimated that more than two-thirds of the elderly have multiple medical conditions (Hoffman and Rice 1995). Low-income elderly persons are especially disadvantaged for two reasons. First, rates of chronic health conditions are significantly higher in the low-income population (U.S. DHHS 2000). Second, low-income elderly individuals with health conditions often face choosing between spending resources on food and spending them on medication—a choice that can harm their health whatever they

decide. Thus, without food assistance, the nutritional needs of the low-income elderly might go unmet.

This problem is likely to get worse. The number of low-income elderly is expected to rise sharply in the next 10 years as baby boomers begin to turn 60. If participation rates for the elderly remain constant (as they have since the early 1980s), then the number of non-participating eligible elderly will only grow.

Recent research has identified five main reasons why elderly individuals do not participate in the FSP (Ponza and McConnell 1996; McConnell and Ponza 1999):

1. ***Perceived Lack of Need.*** Despite their low income, many nonparticipating elderly feel that they do not need food stamps, while others perceive their need as being only temporary. Yet evidence suggests that many of those who say they do not need food stamps are still not food secure. When probed about this inconsistency, some of these elderly nonparticipants indicate they feel that they *should* be able to manage without food stamps and were ashamed that they could not. Thus, some elderly who claim they do not need food stamps might not be participating for other reasons, such as to avoid the stigma associated with the program.
2. ***Lack of Information.*** Lack of information is a common reason that the elderly do not participate in the FSP. Some eligible elderly are unaware of the existence of the program, while many more know about the program, but have limited knowledge of program specifics, such as where or how to apply for benefits or whether they are eligible. Surveys have found that about one-third to one-half of nonparticipants identified as FSP-eligible think that they are ineligible. Many believe that their assets are too high or that they are categorically ineligible because they have no children or because they are elderly. Often, these misconceptions about the FSP are based on inaccurate information from family and friends.
3. ***Low Expected Benefits.*** Some poor elderly individuals think that it is not worthwhile to apply for food stamps given the small amount of benefits they would receive. Many elderly households are eligible for only the minimum food stamp allotment for one- and two-person households of \$10. In 1999, while the average monthly benefit to households with elderly was \$61, 28 percent of participating households with elderly persons received monthly benefits of \$10 or less, and 41 percent received \$25 or less. These benefit amounts are far lower than that of the average food stamp household; the average monthly benefit program-wide was \$162, with only 10 percent of all households receiving \$10 or less, and 15 percent receiving \$25 or less.

4. **High Costs of Applying.** The cost in terms of both time and money of applying for food stamps is often too high for elderly nonparticipants, especially those eligible for small benefit amounts. Bartlett et al. (1992) estimated that the average applicant (elderly or otherwise) takes nearly five hours to complete the food stamp application and spends more than \$10 on transportation and other expenses. In addition to time and money costs, the hassle of applying for food stamps can be significant. Due to transportation difficulties and physical limitations, elderly individuals often find it difficult to get to the local food stamp office. Additionally, elderly people might have trouble completing application forms because they have difficulty recalling information and/or cannot read the small print on the application.
5. **Stigma.** The stigma of applying for and using food stamps might be a barrier to participation. Feelings of embarrassment, a sense of failure, hurt pride, dislike of receiving government assistance, and the perceived loss of independence in using food stamps are reasons elderly people cite for not participating in the FSP. Moreover, some researchers have suggested that recent welfare reform changes that promote work over welfare might have increased the stigma of receiving welfare. Conflicting evidence exists on how important stigma is as a deterrent to FSP participation among the elderly. While more than half (67 percent) of 51 state FSP directors surveyed in a recent study by the GAO indicated that stigma is a major reason for nonparticipation (GAO 2000), surveys of elderly nonparticipants suggest that few elderly feel it is the main reason for not participating.

These five reasons are not mutually exclusive; many elderly cite multiple reasons for nonparticipation, and the reasons are often related. For example, some elderly people do not participate because they do not understand how the program works, but in their desire to avoid the embarrassment and stigma associated with being “on welfare,” they do not seek information on the program. Similarly, many households that don’t participate because they believe their benefits are low might participate if they thought it would take minimal effort to apply for benefits.

## **B. THREE DEMONSTRATION MODELS TO INCREASE THE ELDERLY’S FSP PARTICIPATION RATES**

USDA developed three demonstration models that are intended to increase elderly participation in the FSP: (1) the Simplified Eligibility and Benefit Determination model, (2) the Application Assistance for Eligible Elderly model, and (3) the Alternative Food Stamp

Commodity Benefit model. These models seek to reduce the barriers to FSP participation that the elderly face. Strategies include simplifying the application process, increasing eligible elderly individuals' understanding of the program, assisting elderly individuals with the application process, or providing food stamp benefits as commodities rather than either coupons or as payments on an EBT card. All three models rely heavily on publicity campaigns to expand outreach efforts to eligible elderly. These campaigns will increase awareness of FSP eligibility, nutritional issues, and demonstration benefits.

USDA has entered into cooperative agreements with five states to implement these demonstration models.<sup>2</sup> Florida is implementing the simplified eligibility and benefit determination model; Maine and Michigan are implementing the application assistance model; and Connecticut and North Carolina are implementing the alternative food stamp commodities model. To facilitate an evaluation of the separate effects of each demonstration, USDA requires that states not combine components of the various models.

### **1. Simplified Eligibility and Benefit Determination Model**

The simplified eligibility and benefit determination model (referred to as the “simplified eligibility” model) is designed to reduce the burden associated with applying for food stamps by simplifying the process of determining eligibility. Currently, households that contain at least one person age 60 years or older are eligible for food stamps if everyone in the household receives Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or if their combined income and assets meet the following two rules:

1. *The household's gross monthly income less certain deductions (its net income) is below 100 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.* Deductions include a standard

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<sup>2</sup>A sixth state may receive demonstration funding before the evaluation begins.

deduction of \$134 (in most states) for each household, a deduction for monthly medical expenses above \$35, a deduction for shelter costs in excess of 50 percent of net income after applying the other deductions, as well as deductions for earnings, dependent care expenses, and child support payments.

2. ***The sum of the household's countable assets is below \$3,000.*** Countable assets include cash on hand, checking and savings account balances, stocks and bonds, and most retirement accounts. Furthermore, the value of some tangible assets is counted. In particular, a portion of the value of most vehicles is counted toward assets (generally the fair market value of the vehicle in excess of \$4,650 is counted; vehicles used to transport disabled individuals are not counted). Also, the equity value of certain recreational property is counted.

For all households that meet the eligibility criteria, benefits are computed as a function of the number of persons in the household, the household's net income, and the maximum benefit levels.<sup>3</sup> Households applying for food stamps must provide adequate documentation to verify the information used to deem eligibility and calculate benefits. For example, they must provide documentation to verify earnings, medical expenses, and asset holdings.

**a. Florida's Simplified Eligibility Pilot**

Florida's simplified eligibility demonstration is available to households consisting of elderly individuals only and will be implemented in two pilot counties, Gadsden and Leon. The demonstration will take several steps to reduce the burden of applying for food stamps. Elderly individuals applying for food stamps will be given a short, one-page application that asks only relevant information (the longer, universal form requests information about the age of children and other characteristics not relevant to this population). Elderly individuals will not have to

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<sup>3</sup>The maximum benefit level is tied to the cost of purchasing a nutritionally adequate low-cost diet, as measured by USDA's Thrifty Food Plan. The benefit is calculated by subtracting 30 percent of the household's counted net income—the amount that the household is thought to be able to spend on food from its income—from the maximum benefit level for the household size. Currently, the maximum benefit level for a one-person household is \$130. Eligible one- and two-person households are guaranteed a minimum monthly food stamp benefit of \$10, while households of three or more have no minimum benefit.

provide documentation verifying their income and deduction amounts. In particular, they will not have to document earnings, SSI or Social Security income, medical expenses, or asset holdings. Completed applications can be mailed or faxed to the local office, or the individual, a friend, or an advocate can drop them off. The face-to-face application and recertification interviews will be waived.

The Florida demonstration will require applicants to verify citizenship status. Additionally, the state will verify Social Security numbers, Social Security income and SSI income using existing databases. Because the shorter application form is part of the application assistance model and not the simplified eligibility model, the state will also use the shorter form in two comparison counties: Alachua and Jackson counties but will not change the rules.

## **2. Application Assistance for Eligible Elderly Model**

The application assistance for eligible elderly model (referred to as the “application assistance” model) uses strategies designed to improve outreach to eligible nonparticipants and to reduce the burden of applying for food stamps. Under this demonstration, eligibility rules will remain unchanged, but elderly people will be provided with help in understanding program requirements and in completing their applications. Sites implementing application assistance models will link elderly applicants with application assistance workers from nonprofit community service organizations. Assistance workers will provide one-on-one application assistance, helping elderly applicants assemble documents needed to apply for food stamps, understand the application, and complete forms. Application assistance workers may also participate in the applicant’s caseworker interviews to interpret difficult questions and prevent errors. This assistance is intended not only to help the elderly meet program requirements but also to provide emotional support. Maine and Michigan are the two states that have developed variations of the application assistance model.

**a. Maine’s Application Assistance Pilot**

Maine’s application assistance program will be implemented in Waldo County. The county plans to hire three application assistants to help applicants understand the FSP application and eligibility rules, assemble the documentation necessary to apply, complete and submit the application, and secure transportation, if necessary. This one-on-one assistance will occur in homes, senior centers, or wherever the applicant feels comfortable. The three application assistants will be hired from participants in the Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP). As a result, assistants will be similar to the FSP applicants in terms of age and income. Assistants will be trained to understand the FSP eligibility rules and requirements. As part of their duties, assistants will prescreen applicants, but will not be able to determine eligibility. The face-to-face application interview will be waived.

**b. Michigan’s Application Assistance Pilot**

Michigan’s application assistance pilot features an on-line application that can be accessed at all senior centers in the pilot site, Genesee County. Senior center staff will assist elderly applicants understand FSP eligibility rules and help them complete an FSP application. Senior center staff will work one-on-one with applicants to complete the application. To make the process easier for the applicant, staff will enter the applicant’s data into the on-line application. For demonstration participants, the face-to-face interviews conducted by application assistance persons will be accepted in place of those conducted by Michigan Family Independence Agency workers. Center staff will be authorized to complete verification of application information. The on-line form will collect additional information to enable staff to conduct a nutritional risk assessment and to screen for eligibility for a variety of nutritional programs.

Michigan’s pilot builds on an existing on-line application system called Michigan’s Coordinated Access to Food for the Elderly (MiCAFE). The MiCAFE system targets individuals

applying for assistance through the Michigan Emergency Pharmacy Program for Seniors (MEPPS). The system is used in senior centers to conduct a nutritional assessment, screen for home-delivered meal eligibility and determine eligibility for congregate meals. The system also determines eligibility for MEPPS. For this demonstration, additional screens will be added to MiCAFE to help elderly enroll in the FSP.

### **3. Alternative Food Stamp Commodity Benefit Model**

Under the alternative food stamp commodity benefit model (referred to as the “commodity alternative”), elderly FSP households will have the option of receiving one or two packages of commodities each month instead of food stamp coupons or an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card. Food packages will be designed to meet the unique nutritional needs of the elderly. In areas with large multicultural populations, packages might include ethnic or traditional foods in an attempt to attract new elderly participants from these groups.

Households participating in this model will be limited to those in which all members are elderly, and households can receive one package for every eligible elderly member. Households applying for food stamps can choose between the food packages and traditional food stamp benefits. With some restrictions, households that select commodities can switch to food stamps, and vice versa.

The contents of the commodities packages will be targeted to the needs of the elderly. The demonstration sites will consult with a nutritionist in developing the packages and will also take into consideration the specific needs and preferences of low-income elderly in the demonstration community. Demonstration sites may develop a variety of packages, each for a different target population (for example, diabetics, specific ethnic groups).

Nonprofit food distribution programs that partner with the state FSP office will distribute commodities packages. These organizations will take primary responsibility for ordering,

storing and distributing the commodities packages. Other organizations, such as health service organizations, churches, and Meals on Wheels, will assist with publicity, nutrition education, and home deliveries. Commodities will be delivered to certain participants' homes. Most participants (or their authorized representatives) will pick up packages at local distribution centers.

The commodities model is designed to reduce the stigma associated with using food stamps or EBT cards in grocery stores because recipients will be less likely to be seen receiving welfare benefits. The model also is intended to make using FSP benefits easier and to increase client satisfaction. It is believed that clients receiving commodities packages will make fewer trips to the grocery store.

Each commodity package should cost the same as the average benefit that elderly FSP recipients receive in the commodity alternative pilot sites. This cost includes the cost of the commodities and the cost to the federal government of shipping the commodities to the commodity sites. Thus, if elderly households in a pilot site receive an average FSP benefit of \$40, then the demonstration can distribute packages whose contents cost \$40 to procure and ship. The cost of the packages will be the same for all participants, regardless of the benefit amount for which they are eligible.

**a. Connecticut's Commodity Alternative Pilot**

Connecticut's commodity pilot will work with the Community Renewal Team (CRT) to offer commodities packages to elderly households in the north central region, which includes Hartford. Residents of Hartford and nine surrounding towns will have the option of receiving two commodities packages a month instead of food stamps. Clients can pick up their packages at the local congregate meals site (called Senior Community Cafés), or, if they participate in the Meals on Wheels program, have the packages delivered to their homes.

The commodities packages will be tailored to meet clients' needs and preferences. CRT will identify client preferences through surveys of seniors at the Cafés. They will reassess preferences twice a year. Distributing packages twice a month will mean that each package is lighter in weight and more manageable for the elderly to carry. The packages might also include nutrition education information.

CRT will order and store food for the individual Cafés and Meals on Wheels programs. CRT's food bank, located in a Hartford warehouse facility, will receive the food and CRT staff will assemble packages at the warehouse. Packages will be included in normal distributions to Cafés and individual homes.

**b. North Carolina's Commodity Alternative Pilot**

The Loaves and Fishes Christian Food Ministry will operate North Carolina's commodity alternative pilot. FSP-eligible households in which all individuals are elderly will be offered commodity packages in lieu of traditional FSP benefits. Participants can pick up the packages at the central food bank facility or at one of several distribution sites. Participants with medical limitations, transportation difficulties, or other access problems can have food packages delivered to their homes.

The demonstration will take place in Alamance County, a county of 130,000 people in the central part of the state. A local nutritionist will design the food packages. Packages will be designed based in part on the findings of a survey of current FSP participants in the county. The packages will include pamphlets providing nutritional tips, food safety information and small portions recipes geared to the elderly.

### **C. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION**

The goal of this project is to design an evaluation that measures the effects of the elderly nutrition pilot programs and meets six research objectives:

1. Assess the effects of the demonstrations on elderly FSP participation
2. Assess the effects of the demonstrations on the average value of the FSP benefit that elderly households receive
3. Assess the effects of the demonstrations on client satisfaction with various aspects of the FSP
4. Quantify the federal, state, and local costs of the demonstrations
5. Assess the effects of the demonstrations on state and local FSP agencies, nonprofit organizations participating in the demonstrations, alternative food assistance providers, and other stakeholders
6. Describe the implementation of the demonstrations, problems encountered, solutions to these problems, and lessons learned.

The evaluation design includes both an impact analysis and a process analysis of each site's demonstration. The impact analysis will evaluate the effects of the demonstrations on FSP participation, average benefit levels, client satisfaction, and ongoing administrative costs of the demonstrations. The impact analysis will use a pre-post comparison group design. Administrative data and a survey of demonstration participants will provide key information to support the analyses. The process analysis will quantify the costs of the demonstration, identify the effects of the demonstrations on stakeholders, and describe the implementation process. The evaluation objectives, related subsidiary issues, and methodological implications, are described below and are summarized in Table I.1.

TABLE I.1

OVERVIEW OF EVALUATION OBJECTIVES, DATA SOURCES,  
AND EVALUATION DESIGN ISSUES

Evaluation Objective	Data Sources	Methodology	Evaluation Design Issues
(1) Assess effect on FSP participation	FSP participation data obtained for sites from states	Descriptive analysis of data from pre/post comparison group analysis	Identifying appropriate comparison sites  Acquiring data  Determining whether change in participation occurred at demonstration site  Determining extent to which change in participation (if any) was due to demonstration or other factors
(2) Assess effect on level of food stamp benefits	Participation data obtained for sites from states	Descriptive analysis of data from pre/post comparison group analysis	Determining whether change in average benefits occurred at demonstration site  Measuring value of commodities
(3) Assess effect on client satisfaction	Survey of elderly clients who apply/recertify for food stamps  Discussions with stakeholders	Descriptive and multivariate regression analysis	Assessing the reliability and validity of satisfaction measures
(4) Quantify costs of the demonstrations	Quarterly reports  Structured discussions with stakeholders  Participation data	Descriptive comparisons  Process analysis	Compiling uniform and accurate cost measures across sites  Measuring cost of volunteers

TABLE I.1 (continued)

Evaluation Objective	Data Sources	Methodology	Evaluation Design Issues
(5) Assess effect on stakeholders	Discussions with stakeholders  Quarterly reports	Process analysis	Triangulating the findings by speaking with all relevant stakeholders  Developing ways to encourage and secure participation of key informants  Identifying the correct people to speak with in each organization
(6) Describe implementation process	Discussions with stakeholders  Quarterly reports	Process analysis	Identifying the correct people to speak with in each organization

## **1. Assess the Effects of the Demonstrations on Elderly FSP Participation**

Because a primary demonstration goal is to increase elderly FSP participation, a key objective of the evaluation is to measure the impact of each demonstration on the number of elderly households participating in the FSP. By comparing the rate of change in elderly participation in the pilot sites with the corresponding rate of change in elderly participation in similar comparison sites, the evaluation will attempt to identify how much of an observed change in elderly participation at the pilot sites is due to the demonstration versus other factors. The evaluation also will attempt to determine if those trends vary by subgroup (such as racial and ethnic groups, urban and rural residence, etc.). Administrative data will be used to measure the impacts on elderly participation.

## **2. Assess the Effects of the Demonstrations on the Average Value of FSP Benefits that Elderly Households Receive**

In affecting participation, the demonstration also might affect the average benefit paid to elderly residents in the pilot sites. All of the models might attract individuals eligible for higher-than-average or lower-than-average benefits. Additionally, the commodities alternative model might provide individuals with a package valued higher or lower than their traditional FSP benefits. Measuring the impact of the demonstrations will help USDA anticipate the costs associated with replicating the demonstrations on a larger scale. To measure this impact, the evaluation will compare the average benefit received by elderly households in the pilot site with the average benefit received by elderly in other sites. Additionally, for the commodity alternative demonstrations, the evaluation will determine how many households choose traditional benefits and how many choose commodity benefits. The evaluation will use administrative data to measure the impact on average benefits.

### **3. Assess the Effects of the Demonstrations on Client Satisfaction**

To assess whether the FSP better meets the needs of the low-income elderly population under the demonstrations, the evaluation will assess the level of client satisfaction with the FSP overall and with key components of the program, based on a survey of clients. Of particular interest for the simplified eligibility and application assistance models are the reasons why clients decided to select or not select this option, and among those who select it, whether the demonstration changes the clients' satisfaction with the application process—the time required, the out-of-pocket expenses incurred, and the general “hassle” involved with the process. Of particular interest for the commodity alternative model is the clients' satisfaction with receiving benefits in the form of commodities, in terms of the quality, quantity, and types of commodities received, and, also the process for receiving the commodities. The evaluation will measure whether the level of satisfaction varies with the characteristics of the elderly applicants. Findings from the client satisfaction survey can be used to interpret findings from the participation impact analysis.

### **4. Quantify the Federal, State, and Local Costs of the Demonstrations**

Understanding the costs of the demonstrations will help USDA anticipate the costs of replicating successful demonstrations on a larger scale. The evaluation will measure the costs associated with the start-up of the demonstration, including the cost of training staff, conducting publicity campaigns, and developing partnerships with outside organizations. It will also measure the cost of ongoing administration of the demonstrations, including not only the costs incurred the federal FSP, but also the costs incurred by the state and local FSP agencies, as well as by nonprofit organizations. Data to support the analyses will come from administrative reports, as well as discussions with program directors and stakeholders.

## **5. Assess the Effects of the Demonstrations on Stakeholders**

Although the demonstrations are designed to affect the FSP-eligible elderly population, the demonstrations also will affect other stakeholders, including the state and local FSP agencies, any partner organizations that help administer the demonstrations, and alternative food assistance providers in the community. The evaluation will assess the effect on each of these stakeholders. In particular, the evaluation will examine how the operations of the FSP local offices change because of the demonstration, including any changes in the application procedures, the roles of the caseworkers or the caseworker caseloads, concerns about fraud, and the services caseworkers provide. It will address whether services improved for elderly participants at the cost of poorer service to other participants. It also will assess whether the demonstrations had any effect on the demand for food from alternative food assistance providers. Data to support these analyses will come from semi-structured interviews and structured discussion sessions with key stakeholder staff, supplemented with data from the quarterly reports submitted by the sites.

## **6. Describe the Implementation of the Demonstrations**

Another important goal of the Elderly Nutrition Demonstrations is to identify how effective strategies can be replicated. To this end, the evaluation will describe in detail how each site implemented the demonstration. This will include a detailed description of the changes each agency—the state (and county, if applicable) FSP agency, local FSP agencies, and nonprofit organizations—made to implement the demonstration. All steps will be described, including the process for identifying and recruiting nonprofit organizations as partners, outreach efforts, changes to application forms, staff training, and any other administrative changes. The evaluation will also ask each stakeholder to describe the problems encountered in implementing the demonstration, how these problems were overcome, and what lessons were learned while implementing the demonstration. Understanding the problems involved in implementing the

demonstrations will not only assist future efforts to implement similar programs, but also it will assist the evaluators in interpreting the findings from the evaluation.

#### **D. STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT**

The remainder of this report describes the evaluation design for the Elderly Nutrition demonstrations. Chapter II explains the pre- and post- comparison group design and describes the steps needed to measure the impact on participation and benefits. Chapter III presents the survey and sampling plan design for measuring the impact on client satisfaction. Chapter IV describes how the costs of the demonstrations will be measured. Chapter V details the process analysis used to describe the implementation process and assess the effects of the demonstration on stakeholders.

## **II. EVALUATING THE EFFECTS ON FSP PARTICIPATION AND BENEFITS**

A primary goal of the Elderly Nutrition Demonstrations is to increase the participation rate among the elderly. The evaluator must estimate how many elderly would have participated in each pilot site if its demonstration were never implemented and compare that with the number who participate with the demonstration in place. Because no precise measures are available of the number of elderly that would participate in the absence of the demonstration, the evaluators will use a pre-post comparison group design to estimate the impact of the demonstrations on participation and on average benefits.

This chapter explains how the evaluation will use the pre-post comparison group design to estimate the impact of the demonstration on elderly participation and benefits. Section A describes the research questions. Section B explains the design of the study. Section C describes the outcomes that will be measured. Section D describes the data that will be used for the analysis. Finally, Section E explains the analytic approach.

### **A. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The evaluation of the participation and benefit impacts of the Elderly Nutrition Demonstrations is designed to address the following research questions:

- What elderly participation patterns likely would have occurred in the pilot site if the demonstrations were not implemented? What is the apparent impact of the demonstrations on elderly participation in the pilot site?
- Do participation patterns vary by subgroup? Are some types of elderly more or less likely to be affected by the demonstrations?
- How do the demonstrations affect the average benefit paid to elderly households? Does the demonstration attract low-benefit households, lowering the average benefit? Does it attract high-benefit households, raising the average benefit?
- Do the impacts of the demonstrations vary by model?

The answers to these questions will reveal how successful the Elderly Nutrition Demonstrations are in reaching elderly FSP nonparticipants.

## **B. STUDY DESIGN**

The best design for estimating the impacts of a demonstration, if feasible, is usually a random assignment experiment. If such a design were feasible for the elderly nutrition pilots, elderly individuals eligible for food stamps would be randomly assigned to either a treatment or a control group. Members of the treatment group would receive the simplified eligibility, application assistance or commodity packages. Members of the control group would not.

Unfortunately, such an experiment is not feasible. In the experiment, every FSP eligible elderly individual in the pilot site would need to be assigned to treatment and control groups, regardless of whether they would ever apply. Because the treatment is intended to encourage individuals to apply for food stamps, this assignment cannot be made after the individual decides to apply. Thus, the experiment would require accurately identifying and assigning every elderly individual eligible for food stamps to treatment and control groups – a task that is virtually impossible because the data needed to identify all eligible elderly individuals are not available. Moreover, some of the components of the demonstration treatments, such as outreach, are provided for all individuals in a geographic area and cannot be assigned to only certain individuals.<sup>1</sup>

An alternative to a random assignment experiment is a pre-post comparison group design. In this type of design, participation outcomes for the pilot sites are compared with outcomes for a group of comparison sites, and the differences observed are attributed, in part, to the

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<sup>1</sup>An alternative experimental design would be to randomly assign FSP offices in a state or groups of states to implement the demonstration. However, given the costs involved in implementing random assignment in a large number of sites, random assignment is beyond the scope of the Elderly Nutrition Demonstrations.

demonstration. (Some differences might be attributed to factors, such as new outreach programs, that are unrelated to the demonstration.) The comparison sites serve as a proxy for measuring what would have happened in the pilot site in the absence of the demonstration. This design can be used to determine, with a reasonably high degree of confidence, whether the demonstrations have an impact on participation and on benefits. (Measures of the magnitude of those impacts, however, are less precise than the measures that would be obtained through an experimental design.)

The remainder of this section explains the pre-post comparison group design to be used in this evaluation and describes how the comparison sites were selected.

### **1. Pre-Post Comparison Group Design**

To assess the impact on elderly participation, the evaluators could observe how participation changes after the demonstration is implemented and compare that with what would have happened if the demonstration had not been implemented. This comparison cannot be made directly, because it is not possible to observe the change in participation or benefits that would have occurred at a particular demonstration site in the absence of the demonstration.

The pre-post comparison group design uses a group of sites outside demonstration site to serve as a proxy for what would have happened in the pilot site if the demonstration had not been implemented. The comparison sites are selected because they are similar to the pilot site. For the pilot and the comparison sites, the rate of change in elderly participation (or average benefits) from before the demonstration's implementation to after its implementation is calculated. Statistical adjustments are made to account for nondemonstration-related differences between the pilot and comparison groups. Then, the difference between the participation change observed in the pilot site and that observed in the comparison sites is attributed to the demonstration.

Table II.1 illustrates this comparison with a hypothetical example. In this example, the number of elderly participants in the pilot site increases from 350 before the demonstration to 390 during the demonstration, an 11.4 percent increase. In the comparison sites (after statistical adjustment, a process described later in this chapter), the number of elderly participants increases from 400 to 430, or a 7.5 percent increase. This methodology assumes that in the absence of the demonstration, the pilot site would have experienced an increase in participation similar to that observed in the comparison sites. Therefore, the demonstration increased participation by approximately 4 percentage points more than would have happened in the absence of the demonstration.

TABLE II.1  
HYPOTHETICAL PRE-POST IMPLEMENTATION COMPARISON

Site	Number of Elderly Participants		Rate of Change (Percent)
	Before Startup	After Startup	
Pilot	350	390	11.4
Comparison (Adjusted)	400	430	7.5
Impact			3.9

For the comparison sites to be accurate proxies for what would have happened in the absence of the demonstration, they must be similar to the pilot sites in terms of those factors that can affect elderly FSP participation. If, for example, elderly FSP participation is affected by how accessible FSP offices are by public transportation, then the comparison sites and pilot sites should have similar public transportation access. If the sites are not similar, the changes in participation observed at the comparison sites might be driven by differences in FSP office

accessibility and thus will not accurately reflect what would have happened without the demonstration.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to find comparison sites that are identical to the pilot sites. Each pilot site is unique in some way. In fact, several of the pilot sites were selected to be pilot sites precisely because they have unique elderly FSP participation circumstances.

Several steps can be taken to ensure that the comparison sites are as reliable as possible.<sup>2</sup> The first step is to use multiple comparison sites. The observed changes in participation at multiple comparison sites can be averaged to determine the overall trend. By averaging the changes, idiosyncratic changes in comparison sites are given less influence in the final comparison. The ultimate number of comparison sites depends on how many similar sites exist for each pilot site.

The second step is to take multiple observations of pilot and comparison site participation levels before and after the demonstration is implemented. These observations can be used to construct an average pre- and post-implementation participation level to minimize the influence of monthly fluctuations and seasonal patterns.

A third step is to use regression analysis to identify the size of the impact of the demonstration. The regression analysis will use data from the pilot and comparison sites to estimate how much of the difference between the pre-implementation rate of change in participation and the post-implementation rate of change in participation can be attributed to the demonstration versus other factors.

Additional analysis will be necessary to determine whether the demonstrations affect certain elderly subgroups (such as age and racial/ethnic subgroups) in different ways. To do this, the

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<sup>2</sup>Section E of this chapter explains how to implement these steps.

pre-post comparison design can be replicated on these subgroups. In many cases, the number of elderly individuals in a particular subgroup at a given site might be too small to make a reliable comparison. In such cases, the evaluators can pool observations across demonstrations to examine whether there are separate effects for those subgroups.

Sensitivity analysis can further improve confidence in the findings. The results obtained when comparing the pilot site with the comparison sites can be measured against the results of other comparisons. For example, the pilot site can be compared with an expanded comparison group that includes additional but less-similar sites, and the pilot site can be compared with the entire state.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, in some states, sites that are not similar in terms of elderly participation but that do have a similar service environment to the pilot site should be compared with the pilot site. If it is observed that impacts are not sensitive to the specific group of comparison sites selected, then more confidence may be placed in the findings. If, however, the impacts vary by the comparison group, then other factors might need to be explored in the analysis.

## **2. Comparison Site Selection**

The best comparison sites will be those that experience the same trends in elderly participation as the pilot site, all else being equal. In designing this evaluation, we have identified for each pilot site those sites in the same state that we expect will experience similar participation patterns. For each pilot site, we identified up to 10 similar comparison sites to use in the evaluation.

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<sup>3</sup>To conduct the evaluation, the evaluators will have access to state electronic caserecord data. These data will be used to conduct the initial pilot-comparison group analysis and the sensitivity analysis. Section D of this chapter explains the data sources for the evaluation.

The process for identifying comparison sites involved two steps. The first step was to analyze site-level data on the elderly FSP participation trends, elderly population size, racial composition, and population density of each comparable site in the state. (In states where the pilot site is a county, we examined all counties; in states where the pilot site was a town, we examined all towns.) These characteristics were selected because they are correlated with elderly FSP participation levels and patterns. Using data on these characteristics, we developed a similarity index to identify the sites most similar to the pilot site in each state.

In the second step, we discussed these sites with state FSP officials to determine whether differences in service environments, transportation and availability of FSP supplements (such as coupons from farmer's markets) and alternatives (such as food pantries) warranted removing some sites from the comparison group and adding others. We also asked state officials to comment on the face validity of each comparison site to make sure that there were no sites that, for some other reason, did not make sense as a comparison site.<sup>4</sup>

While similar sites have been identified for each pilot site, differences still exist. It is important to keep in mind that additional steps will be taken in the evaluation analysis to control for the differences (see Section E of this chapter). The goal of the site selection process is to find the best comparison sites possible to minimize the reliance on these analytical controls.

### **C. OUTCOME MEASURES**

The two outcome variables that will be examined in the pre-post comparison group design are the change in participation and the change in average benefits. This section describes how those outcomes will be measured.

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<sup>4</sup>Appendix A contains a detailed description of the methodology used to select comparison sites.

## **1. Participation Impacts for All Models**

To estimate the impact of the demonstration on participation, the evaluation should compare the rate of change in elderly participation in the pilot site with the rate of change in elderly participation in the comparison sites. The rate of change is a better outcome measure than the level of participation or the absolute change in participation because the rate of change shows the relative impact of the demonstration. Relative impacts are important because sites with large initial populations will likely have large absolute changes in participation, all else being equal.

For example, a pilot site with 300 initial elderly participants might experience an increase of 30 elderly participants, and a comparison site with 400 initial elderly participants might experience an increase of 20 elderly participants. In absolute terms, the pilot and comparison site changes are somewhat similar. However, in relative terms, the pilot site increase (10 percent) is twice that of the comparison site increase (5 percent).

## **2. Benefit Impacts for the Simplified Eligibility and Application Assistance Models**

The simplified eligibility and application assistance models do not affect the amount of FSP benefits any one individual can receive. However, by making the FSP easier to access and by expanding outreach, the demonstrations might attract individuals eligible for higher-than-average or lower-than-average benefits. This will change the average benefit paid to individuals under the demonstration. For example, the average value of the FSP benefit will fall if the demonstration primarily encourages participation by elderly clients who are eligible for benefits of only \$10 per month.

As with measures of participation change, the measures of average benefit change due to the demonstration should be expressed in relative terms. The evaluation should compare the rate of change in the average benefit observed in the pilot sites with the rate of change observed in the comparison sites.

### **3. Benefit Impacts for the Commodity Alternative Model**

To understand the impact of the commodity alternative model on FSP benefits, we first must determine how to measure the value of the commodity package benefit. The benefit can be measured in one of three ways: (1) the cost to the demonstration of each commodity package (similar to the “wholesale” price), (2) the comparable price that participants would pay if they purchased from their grocery store all of the goods in the package, and (3) the value that participants place on the commodity package.

For this evaluation, benefits should be measured as the comparable price of the goods in the commodity package. Measuring the benefit as the cost (including procurement and shipping costs) of the package to the pilot site will understate the benefit to the individual because the comparable price of the package is likely to be significantly higher. Alternatively, measuring the value that the individual would place on the package would be extremely difficult because it would require knowing, for each individual, the relative value they place on each good as well as the overall value of the package in terms of reduced transportation costs, reduced hassle, etc.

The comparable price method should be thought of as a measure of the dollar cost of the commodities that is relevant to the elderly individual, but not as the value the individual places on the commodities. The method reflects that, in dollar terms, the commodity package costs more than what the demonstrations paid to purchase and ship the commodities. However, the method does not reflect that the individual may value some goods less than the dollar cost. For example, while the fact that an individual would pay \$5 at a grocery store for an item in the commodity package, the individual may assign no value to the item if they will never use it.

To estimate the comparable price, the evaluators can use grocery store price scan data. These data are derived from the electronic scanners at grocery store checkout counters and are usually collected from a large sample of grocery stores. The data track prices by good, brand,

packaging type, flavor and size. Many of the commodities included in the packages will be recognizable brands for which an exact (or relatively close) match can be found in the price scan data. Other items will not have a matching brand in the price scan data, but prices for these items can be approximated with similar items.

Grocery store price scan data are available from organizations such as Information Resources Incorporated (IRI) and A.C. Nielsen.<sup>5</sup> The data can be used to track prices over time or to provide a cross-sectional snapshot of prices at one point in time. Because access to the data for even one point in time can be expensive, we recommend using cross-sectional data from one period prior to the demonstration. Evaluators can then use the consumer price index (CPI) for food items to adjust for increases in prices.

To estimate the comparable price of a commodity package, the evaluators need to know the type, quantity, weight/size and, where possible, brand of each item in the package. Using the price scan data, the evaluators can estimate the prices of these goods at a period prior to the demonstration. Prices of goods should be averaged across multiple grocery stores. These average prices then should be adjusted to account for price inflation. Because prices vary by region, and because prices vary by urban, suburban and rural areas (Kaufman et al. 1997), the evaluators should use prices from only those grocery stores located in the same geographic region and in the same urban/suburban/rural setting.

To understand how benefits vary for different demonstration participants, the evaluators will need to know the contents of the commodity packages that each individual receives. Although the cost to the demonstration of all types of packages will be the same, the comparable of the packages might vary as some items might have different cost-to-comparable price ratios.

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<sup>5</sup>USDA's Economic Research Service has grocery store price data purchased for previous research. While the data are somewhat dated, it may be possible to use them for this evaluation.

Tracking the contents of each individual's commodity package might prove difficult. Both demonstration sites intend to develop multiple packages targeted at different groups, and both demonstrations intend to allow the contents of the packages to vary over time. The evaluators should ask demonstration staff to provide a list of the items in each commodity package. Demonstration staff should be asked to develop a system that allows the evaluators to identify which individuals received which commodity packages. This system can be a simple spreadsheet or similar database that identifies the case number of the participant and the commodity package type. The evaluators can then match the case numbers with the electronic case record data used in the evaluation.

Once the comparable price has been determined for the commodity packages, two types of benefit changes can be measured at the commodity pilot sites. First, as with the other models, the percentage change in the average FSP benefit paid to all elderly FSP participants in the commodity pilot site can be measured. To do this, the pre-demonstration average benefit is calculated based on amount of traditional FSP benefits paid, and the demonstration average benefit is calculated based on the amount of traditional FSP benefits paid to those not in the demonstration and the comparable price of the commodities packages given to those in the demonstration. The second comparison is the average change in benefits received by those demonstration participants that opt for the demonstration. For this comparison, the evaluator can compare each household's pre demonstration benefit with their demonstration comparable price to compute the change in benefits.

**a. Measuring the Change in Average Benefits for Commodity Alternative Pilots**

The change in the average benefit paid to elderly participants will be driven by several factors. First, if no new participants entered the FSP and some ongoing participants eligible for the average benefit switched to the commodity package, the average benefit (measured as the

comparable price) would increase. But other factors can affect the average benefit. For example, ongoing participants eligible for the maximum FSP benefit might switch to the commodity package, and if the commodity value is less than the maximum benefit, this would drive the average benefit down. Additionally, elderly people who enroll in the FSP as a result of the demonstration who opt for the commodity package will receive a benefit with a comparable price value higher than the average FSP benefit level, driving the average benefit up.

To understand how the demonstration affects the average benefit paid to all elderly participants in the demonstration, the evaluation can compare the change in average benefits in the pilot site with the change in the comparison sites. The process used to make these comparisons will be similar to the process used to compare average benefits for the simplified eligibility and application assistance demonstrations. The evaluation can compare the rate of change in the average benefit observed in the pilot sites with the rate of change observed in the comparison sites.

#### **b. Measuring the Change in Benefits to Participants for Alternative Commodity Pilots**

In addition to examining how the commodities demonstration affects average benefits, the evaluation can examine how benefits change for households participating in the demonstration. Specifically, the evaluation can determine, for each household in the demonstration, whether the comparable retail value of the commodity package is greater than the FSP benefits the household would have received otherwise. This can answer such questions as:

- Does the commodities demonstration result in large changes in benefits?
- Are individuals more likely to select the commodities demonstration if they are eligible for a relatively small amount of food stamp benefits?
- Do individuals whose food stamp benefits are greater than the comparable retail value of the commodity package select the commodity package anyway?

To measure the change in benefits to participants, the evaluators can compare the value of the commodity package received with the actual FSP benefit for which the individual qualifies.

Outcomes should be measured separately for:

- All demonstration participants
- New entrants to the FSP who opt to receive the commodities packages
- Ongoing FSP participants who switch to receiving the commodities packages
- Individuals eligible for FSP benefits below the comparable price value of the commodities package
- Individuals eligible for FSP benefits above the comparable price value of the commodities package
- Individuals eligible for FSP benefits below the demonstration site average FSP benefit to elderly individuals
- Individuals eligible for FSP benefits above the demonstration site average FSP benefit to elderly individuals

These same comparisons should be made for all subgroups of elderly participants examined in the evaluation.

#### **D. DATA SOURCES**

The impact evaluation will require detailed participation data for each state. The data will need to facilitate comparisons between pilot sites and the various comparison sites, comparisons between the pilot sites and the entire state, and comparisons of participation patterns among subgroups. The best data for making these comparisons are electronic case records from state MIS.

For each month in the pre-implementation and post-implementation analysis period for which data will be collected (described later), the state FSP data managers should be asked to provide the evaluators with an extract of all active FSP cases in the state (including nonelderly

cases) that received FSP benefits that month. Each record should reflect a different case.<sup>6</sup> Each record should contain the following information:

- The month
- The county of residence<sup>7</sup>
- The number of people in the FSP case
- Whether an elderly individual is a member of the case
- Gender
- Prior FSP experience
- The FSP benefit received that month
- Economic characteristics of the case, including the income, asset and expense information used to determine eligibility
- Program participation information for the case, including whether any members participate in the SSI, Social Security or Medicaid programs
- Demographic characteristics of the case, including the age of the households members and the race/ethnicity of household members

Appendix B provides full specifications for the data extracts. The evaluators should work with data managers in each state to establish a timeline for delivering data extracts. (In most states, data extracts can be created within 30 days of the last day of the observation month.) The evaluator and the FSP data managers in each state should sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that states the roles expected of the data manager. This MOU should clearly indicate that the data manager is asked only to provide extracts of the data, not to analyze the data.

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<sup>6</sup>A file in which each record represents a different person will also be acceptable, so long as the other members of each case can be identified.

<sup>7</sup>Zip codes can be used to approximate counties and towns if such information is not available. In Connecticut, the record should identify the town of residence.

Using these electronic case record data, the evaluator can create the necessary tabulations to identify the number of elderly participants in each site, including the number in each analytical subgroup. Moreover, these data can be used to identify the number of elderly participants at multiple points in time during the demonstration. Finally, the evaluator can estimate the average benefit paid to all elderly in the pilot site, in the comparison sites, and in the subgroups.

## **E. ANALYTICAL APPROACH**

Several steps will be needed to estimate the impact of the demonstration at a particular site on elderly FSP participation. First, rates of change in elderly participation at that site will be computed for the pilot and comparison sites. Regression analysis will be used to estimate the impact of the demonstrations on the rate of change in elderly participation. Dozens of comparisons will be made to improve confidence in the findings. Finally, the evaluators will need to assess whether estimated impacts are large enough to represent a meaningful effect of the demonstration.

This section explains the steps needed to measure the impact of the demonstrations on participation. First, we discuss the analytic time periods for measuring an impact. Next, we explain the data requirements and describe how to use these data to measure changes in participation. We then explain the regression analysis to be used to estimate the impact of the demonstrations. Finally, we explain how to determine whether an estimated impact is meaningful.

## 1. Analytic Time Periods

The impact evaluation will compare the change in elderly FSP participation from before demonstration start-up to after the demonstration begins.<sup>8</sup> Because elderly FSP participation can fluctuate from month to month, the results of a comparison based on only one pre-implementation month and one post-implementation month could reflect monthly variations as opposed to the impact of the demonstration. To account for this, the evaluation should take multiple measures of participation from both before and after the demonstration begins.

To provide the evaluators with sufficient observations to make reliable comparisons, the evaluation should collect site-level data on participation at 11 points in time (see Figure II.1).<sup>9</sup> Each observation should reflect the monthly participation (or average benefits) in each site. Three observations should be made to identify the pre-implementation participation levels—one seven months before implementation, one four months before implementation, and one in the month immediately prior to the month that the demonstration begins. Eight observations should be made during the two-year demonstration period (one every three months).<sup>10</sup> Which calendar months are used for observations will vary depending on when each state officially starts its demonstration.

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<sup>8</sup>For each pilot, the demonstration start-up month is considered to be the first month in which an elderly FSP participant applies for food stamps through the demonstration (that is, uses the simplified application process, application assistance, or applies for commodities benefits).

<sup>9</sup>In figure II.1, there is no Month 0; months prior to demonstration start-up are assigned negative numbers while the month in which the demonstration starts up and all subsequent months are assigned positive numbers.

<sup>10</sup>Some sites might receive USDA funding to extend the demonstration to three years. For these sites, four additional observations should be made for the third year.

FIGURE II.1  
OBSERVATION MONTHS FOR DEMONSTRATION EVALUATION



The multiple observation months will allow a variety of comparisons to identify the impact of the demonstrations. For example, the rate of change in elderly FSP participation can be computed as the average participation levels observed in months +3 through +24 minus the average participation levels observed in months -7 through -1. Alternatively, it can be computed as the average the average participation levels in the four post-implementation months of the first or second year compared with the average in the three pre-implementation months. Similarly, it can be computed as the participation level in one particular post-implementation month minus the average participation levels in the three pre-implementation months.<sup>11</sup>

Many of the months for which observations are needed (both pre- and post-implementation) will occur before the evaluation project begins (assuming that the evaluation project begins on October 1, 2002). However, based on discussions with data managers in the five demonstration

<sup>11</sup>Note that in parts of the analysis described in the text, it might be useful to use the same calendar months (or combinations of months) in the pre- and post-implementation periods to exclude the effects of seasonality. The data collection plan proposed in the text allows this by collecting data in the same calendar months. For instance, at a site where Month 1 is—say—October, Month -4 is June and Month +9 is June of the following year, etc. (Use of comparison versus demonstration site differences in the analysis will also help minimize any confounding effects of seasonal factors.)

states, evaluators should be able to access historic participation estimates for each site in each state once the evaluation begins.

## **2. Pre-Post Comparisons**

The primary comparison to measure the impact on participation and benefits will be to compare trends in the pilot site with trends in the comparison sites. Table II.2 lists all of the types of comparisons that should be made as part of the evaluation and indicates the analytic questions those comparisons can answer. We have classified these comparisons into four groups: (1) primary comparisons; (2) subgroup comparisons; (3) sensitivity analysis comparisons; and (4) ad hoc comparisons.

### **a. Primary Comparisons**

The primary comparisons made for each pilot site are the comparisons used to gauge the impact of the demonstrations on FSP participation and average benefits. For participation comparisons, the evaluator should compare the rate of change in participation (between pre- and post-implementation) in the pilot site with the average rate of change in the comparison sites. Likewise, for the average benefit comparisons, the evaluator should compare the rate of change in average benefits in the pilot site with the average rate of change in the comparison sites.

### **b. Subgroup Analysis**

The various demonstrations might have different effects for different subgroups of the elderly population. To examine this, the evaluation should replicate the primary comparisons along the following factors:

- Race/ethnicity
- Living arrangements (for example, living alone, living in “pure” elderly households)

TABLE II.2

EVALUATION COMPARISONS FOR EACH SITE  
PARTICIPATING IN THE DEMONSTRATION

Comparison	Description	Analysis Questions
<b>PRIMARY COMPARISONS</b>		
(1) Pilot vs. Comparison Sites	Compare the rate of change in total elderly participation in the pilot site with the rate of change in the comparison sites.	Is the observed change in elderly participation at the pilot site different than it would have been without the demonstration?  If so, how much different?
<b>SUBGROUP ANALYSIS</b>		
(2) Subgroup Comparisons	Replicate primary comparisons on subgroups of the elderly population.	Do any subgroups of the elderly population experience unique trends?  Do the demonstrations appear to affect some elderly differently than others?
<b>SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS</b>		
(3) Expanded Similar Comparison Sites	Compare the rate of change in total elderly participation (and subgroups) in the pilot site with the rate of change in an expanded set of comparison sites including sites that are less similar to the pilot site. Test to see whether results are sensitive to the particular comparison sites selected.	Do the results of the primary comparisons and subgroup analysis hold if the comparison sites are expanded? If not, does it appear that the expanded comparison sites are inappropriate comparisons? Or does it appear that the primary results are driven by idiosyncrasies of the core comparison sites?

TABLE II.2 (continued)

Comparison	Description	Analysis Questions
(4) Pilot Site vs. Weighted Comparison Sites	Compare the change in total elderly participation in the pilot site with the change in the comparison sites. Each comparison site should be weighted by its similarity index score.	Do the results of the primary comparisons and subgroup analysis hold if the comparison sites are weighted? If not, does it appear that some of the comparison sites are not a good match with the pilot site?
(5) Pilot Site vs. Special Comparisons	Compare the rate of change in elderly participation (and subgroups) in the pilot site with the rate of change in participation in any special comparison sites. Four pilots have special comparisons sites that have some feature in common with the pilot site (see Appendix A).	<p>Is the observed change in elderly participation in the pilot site different from the observed change in the special comparison sites?</p> <p>Is this consistent with the difference observed when compared with the broader comparison sites?</p> <p>Does it appear that the feature common between the pilot and special comparison sites might be associated with the change in elderly participation?</p>
(6) Pilot and Comparison Sites vs. State	Compare the rate of change in total elderly participation (and subgroups) in the pilot site as well as the rate of change in the comparison sites with the change in the entire state.	Are the changes in elderly participation observed at the pilot and/or comparison sites different from that observed in the state as a whole?
(7) Pilot Site Total vs. Demonstration Participant Counts (not applicable for simplified eligibility demonstration)	Compare the change in elderly participation for the entire pilot site with the administrative counts of new FSP applications served by the demonstration	<p>Is the total change in elderly participation for the pilot site larger than the total number of people served by the demonstration?</p> <p>Does it appear that outreach or other factors could drive the change in participation, as opposed to (or in addition to) the application assistance/ commodity benefits?</p>

TABLE II.2 (continued)

Comparison	Description	Analysis Questions
(8) Nonelderly Participation -- Pilot vs. Comparison Sites	Compare the rate of change in total nonelderly participation in the pilot site with the rate of change in the comparison sites.	Is the difference between pilot and comparison site participation concentrated among the elderly?  Does it appear that factors other than the demonstration could be driving pilot-comparison differences among all participants?
(9) Nonelderly participation-- Pilot and Comparison Sites vs. State	Compare the rate of change in total nonelderly participation in the pilot site as well as the rate of change in the comparison sites with the rate of change in the state as a whole.	Are the changes in nonelderly participation observed at the pilot and/or comparison sites different from that observed in the state as a whole?
<b>AD HOC COMPARISONS</b>		
(10) Ad Hoc Comparisons	Compare pilot site changes in participation with other changes throughout the state to answer research questions that arise	Are there other policy or environmental changes that occurred during the demonstration that might be driving the observed pilot site change in elderly participation?

NOTE: Table II.2 discusses comparing changes in FSP participation. Similar comparisons can be made to assess the impact of the demonstration on average benefits. See Section D of this chapter for more details.

- Rural or urban residence<sup>12</sup>
- Receipt of SSI and/or Social Security
- Income levels
- FSP benefit levels
- Household size
- Age
- Disability status

The evaluator should examine whether impacts appear different for the various subgroups. If large differences exist, the evaluator should decompose the total demonstration impact to show how key subgroups drive that difference.

The subgroup analysis might be limited by sample size. In some pilot sites, there might not be enough members of a particular subgroup to draw a reliable conclusion as to whether the trends for those subgroups differ from the elderly FSP population as a whole. In such cases, subgroup comparisons could be conducted by pooling data across multiple sites. Likewise, if patterns of subgroup impacts appear across sites, pooled comparisons should be conducted to further explore those patterns.

### **c. Sensitivity Analysis**

The results of the primary and subgroup comparisons should be subjected to a sensitivity analysis to determine how sensitive the observed impacts are to the comparison groups that were selected. If the results are not particularly sensitive to the comparison group, then more credence can be given to the finding. If, however, the results are sensitive, other factors might be at play, or some of the comparison sites selected might be poorly matched with the pilot site, and further

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<sup>12</sup>Urban/rural residence can be approximated by ZIP code.

investigation is warranted. It should be noted that the sensitivity analysis will not generate answers by itself; the evaluator will need to combine the information obtained from the sensitivity analysis with the initial impact estimates, with data from the process analysis, and with other contextual information to determine whether an observed change is due to the demonstration.

To determine whether the results are sensitive to the comparison groups selected, the evaluator should estimate the results in a variety of ways. For example, the evaluator can estimate the impacts using a comparison group that includes some less-similar sites in addition to the original comparison sites. Additionally, the evaluator can estimate the impacts by using the original comparison group, but weighting the comparison sites by their similarity index. Differences among the various estimates may indicate that the results are sensitive to the comparison sites that were originally selected. If so, the evaluator should explore these differences to identify their source. If, on the other hand, the various estimates generate consistent results, then the results may be considered more reliable.

An additional component of the sensitivity analysis will be to compare the impact estimates identified for elderly in the pilot site with the same estimates for the nonelderly. If the change in elderly participation patterns (more specifically, the change in the rate of change of elderly participation) at the pilot site is different from that of the comparison sites, then it may indicate that the demonstration had an impact on elderly participation at the pilot sites. However, the evaluators should also check to see if the change in *nonelderly* participation patterns at the pilot is different from that of the comparison sites. If so, and if the pilot-comparison site difference in elderly participation patterns is similar to the pilot-comparison site difference in nonelderly participation patterns, then it may be an indication that some factor unique to the pilot site is affecting participation for both groups. If, on the other hand, the pilot-comparison site

differences in participation patterns for the elderly and nonelderly are not similar, more weight can be given to any conclusion that the demonstration is affecting elderly participation at the pilot site.

Finally, the sensitivity analysis can be used to explore site-specific issues. In many states, the pilot site had a key service environment characteristic in common with one or more other sites (such as a common food stamp office).<sup>13</sup> It may be the case that the observed impact in the pilot site is due to the key characteristic rather than the demonstration. To examine this hypothesis, the evaluators can compare the trend in the rate of change in elderly participation at the pilot site with the trend at the special comparison sites. If the trends are the same, then there may be evidence that the similar service environment characteristic may be influencing the results. If not, then there is support to concluding that the demonstration is driving the impact at the pilot site.

#### **d. Ad Hoc Comparisons**

The evaluators likely will need to construct other comparisons over the life of the evaluation. For example, if the pilot site and some other sites in the state implement an unrelated FSP policy change or demonstration that could affect elderly participation, the evaluators will want to compare changes in participation at the pilot site with changes in those other sites to test whether the pilot site trends are different. As the demonstrations are implemented, the evaluators should maintain a list of special ad hoc comparisons that can help explore these issues.

### **3. The Estimation of Impacts**

The impacts of the demonstration projects on an outcome measure can be estimated as the difference in the growth rate in the outcome measure between the pre- and post-demonstration

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<sup>13</sup>We identify these as special comparison sites in Appendix A.

periods for the pilot and matched comparison sites. The use of multivariate regression procedures can be used to obtain these “difference-in-difference” impact estimates. Regression procedures can be used to simultaneously estimate impacts for multiple post-demonstration periods relative to multiple pre-demonstration periods, and can also allow growth rates to differ by pre-demonstration site characteristics, which can increase the precision of the impact estimates. The dependent variables in the regression models are the observed rates of change in the outcomes of interest—either elderly FSP participation or average benefits to elderly households—between two periods for each site. Because there are three pre-implementation observations and eight post-implementation observations, there can be a maximum of 24 observations for each site.

Variants of the following regression model can be used to estimate impacts, where separate models are estimated for each state:

$$(1) \left( \frac{y_{post} - y_{pre}}{y_{pre}} \right) = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 T + \sum_i \sum_j \alpha_{ij} P_{ij} + \sum_i \sum_j \beta_{ij} (P_{ij} * T) + X\gamma + u,$$

where,

- $y_{post}$  = the outcome measure in post-demonstration period  $i$  for a pilot or comparison site
- $y_{pre}$  = the outcome measure in pre-demonstration period  $j$  for a pilot or comparison site
- $T$  = an indicator variable equal to 1 if the site is a pilot site and 0 if it is a comparison site
- $P_{ij}$  = an indicator variable equal to 1 if the outcome measure pertains to post-demonstration period  $i$  and pre-demonstration period  $j$  (where  $i=1$  to 8 and  $j=1$  to 3, and where the term corresponding to  $i=8$  and  $j=3$  is omitted from the model)
- $X$  = a vector of site-level variables pertaining to the pre-demonstration period
- $u$  = a mean zero disturbance term

and where the Greek letters are parameters to be estimated. The parameters of the regression model can be estimated using ordinary least squares procedures.

In this model formulation, the impact of the demonstration on the growth rate in the outcome measure in post-demonstration period  $i$  relative to pre-demonstration period  $j$  can be estimated as follows:

$$(2) \text{ impact}_{ij} = \hat{\alpha}_1 + \hat{\beta}_{ij},$$

and these estimates can be used to assess whether impacts changed over time. The *average* impact of the demonstration during the entire post-demonstration period relative to a particular pre-demonstration period  $j$  can be obtained by averaging the impacts in (2) over all values of  $i$  (that is, over each post-demonstration period) holding  $j$  fixed. Estimates of impacts over particular time periods (for example, by year after implementation) can be obtained similarly.

Site-level variables (that is, the  $X$ s) can also be included as explanatory variables in the regression models. These variables must be baseline measures (that is, pertain to the *pre*-demonstration period), because post-demonstration measures could themselves be influenced by the interventions. The site-level variables included in the model should include those that were used in the matching process (and for which data have already been collected) (see Appendix A). The inclusion of these explanatory variables can increase the precision of the impact estimates if they are significant predictors of growth rates. Importantly, however, we will need to limit the number of site-level variables that can be included because of the small number of observations used in the analysis.<sup>14</sup> We recommend estimating models with and without these explanatory variables to check the robustness of the impact findings to alternative model specifications.

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<sup>14</sup>For example, if the regression model is estimated using one pilot site and two comparison sites, then the number of observations is 72 and the number of parameters to be estimated apart from the  $X$  variables is 48. Thus, we should not include a large number of  $X$  variables to avoid over-fitting the model.

The regression model in (1) can also be used to obtain impact estimates for population subgroups defined by recipient characteristics, by estimating separate models for each subgroup. For example, to estimate impacts by recipient age, we can estimate the regression model separately for those age 60 to 64, those age 65 to 74, and those age 75 and over. Similarly, we can estimate impacts for a subgroup of sites (defined, for example, by the demonstration model employed) by averaging the impacts for sites in that group.

#### **4. Determining Whether an Impact Is Meaningful**

The evaluation must include a plan for judging whether the size of an observed impact is meaningful. Traditionally, in evaluations where sampling is performed, impacts are evaluated relative to their statistical precision. In this study, changes in participation will be measured using *total* caseload information, which is not subject to sample variation, so such statistical tests are not applicable. Nevertheless, we need to bear in mind that the comparisons are limited to only a small group of sites that might not be representative of all sites in similar situations. Hence, we have only limited information on what would constitute a sufficient change in participation. Obviously, the confidence we have in any of the outcomes suggested by the data will be based on the magnitude of the changes we observe. With a large relative change, the confidence in the suggested results is high, but for smaller changes, we need more information on the possible range of changes that could occur in the absence of the intervention to evaluate the impact. For example, suppose that in the two demonstration sites that implement the commodity alternative model, we see an increase (pre- versus post-) in elderly participation of 3 percentage points in one site and 4 percentage points in the other. In contrast, suppose that we see a change in elderly FSP participation of 1 and 2 percentage points, on average, in the two groups of comparison sites. With this information alone, it would be difficult to argue that participation increased at the demonstration sites due to the intervention. On the other hand, if

the demonstration sites show a 10- and 12-percentage-point increase in participation, respectively, and the comparisons site groups experience only 1- and 2-percentage-point increases on average, we could reasonably conclude that participation increased at the demonstration sites.

To help interpret the results, the evaluator can use the data collected for all comparison sites in each pilot. The evaluator can compare changes in elderly participation in the demonstration site with changes observed in the comparison sites. The patterns of change observed in the comparison sites can be used to get a sense of what the typical or average change is after the demonstration is implemented in sites that do not have the demonstration. The evaluator can then determine whether the observed change in the demonstration site is larger than the typical change that likely would have been observed without the demonstration.

To see how this design might work, we return to our example above. Suppose the evaluators found that, in a large pool of similar comparison sites (say at least 10), the changes in participation only ranged from 0 to 2 percentage points. In this case, even only with an observed 3 and 4 percent improvement in the demonstration sites, we could argue with some degree of confidence that participation increased at the demonstration site. Likewise, if the larger comparison pool showed a large range in the changes from 0 to 10 percent, a 3 or 4 percent improvement in the demonstration sites would suggest that participation did not increase during the demonstration period.

## **5. Final Synthesis Analysis**

The participation and benefit impact evaluation described here will generate a substantial amount of information on the impacts of the elderly nutrition demonstrations. For each site, dozens of comparisons will be made, and these comparisons might yield conflicting results. In the end, small impacts might make it difficult to distinguish impacts due to the demonstration

from changes due to nondemonstration factors and from general noise. Making these distinctions becomes even more difficult in the presence of conflicting results.

To deal with these difficulties, evaluators must conduct a thorough investigation of the results. Of most importance, they must combine the participation and benefit impact analyses with those of the process analysis and satisfaction survey. The process analysis will help the evaluators identify what changes occurred—through the demonstration or otherwise—that might be affecting participation. The satisfaction survey will gauge client awareness of and satisfaction with the demonstrations and help identify which subgroups might be more affected by the demonstration than others. Evaluators can use the process analysis and satisfaction survey results to generate ad hoc hypotheses about the sites that are more likely to experience an increase in participation or average benefits as a result of the demonstration. They can also use the process analysis and satisfaction survey results to determine which of the conflicting participation and benefit impact results is most likely real.



### **III. EFFECTS ON CLIENT SATISFACTION**

A client satisfaction survey at each demonstration site could assess whether each demonstration program better meets the needs of the low-income elderly than the regular FSP program. Information on client satisfaction is critical, because FSP participation is more likely to increase, holding everything else constant, if clients are satisfied with the demonstrations.

This chapter describes the design for the client satisfaction survey. Section A identifies the research questions the survey will address. Section B provides an overview of the methodology for measuring client satisfaction. Subsequent sections discuss the sample design, survey topics, survey design, analytic approach, and structured discussions with a subset of elderly clients in more detail.

#### **A. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS**

The survey will measure clients' level of satisfaction and awareness of the demonstration, and why or why not clients are satisfied. These measures will help identify the strengths and weaknesses of each demonstration. They can also be used to help explain and interpret findings from the impact analysis. For example, the evaluators can examine whether sites with the greatest rates of change in elderly FSP participation also have the highest levels of client satisfaction. In addition, if there are sites with little or no change in participation during the demonstration period, the client satisfaction measures can be examined to identify sources of client dissatisfaction.

The key research questions include:

- To what extent are elderly FSP applicants aware of the demonstration in their community?

- Do clients in the simplified eligibility and application assistance demonstrations perceive the application process to be more convenient, simpler, and less costly than the regular food stamp application process? If so, why?
- Why do clients in the areas served by the commodity alternative demonstrations choose to select (or not select) the commodity option?
- How do client satisfaction levels differ across the different age groups of the elderly and among key ethnic/cultural groups?

## **B. MEASURING CLIENT SATISFACTION WITH THE DEMONSTRATIONS: OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY**

To measure client satisfaction, we recommend administering a client satisfaction survey every quarter with individuals from pure elderly households who completed an application during the previous quarter. At the simplified eligibility and commodity alternative pilot sites, individuals from elderly households who completed an application or who were recertified for food stamps could be interviewed. At the application assistance sites, only elderly households that completed a food stamp application should be interviewed, because the application assistance pilots do not plan to help many elderly who recertify for food stamps. At all sites, structured discussions can capture the views and experiences of elderly people who start but do not complete an FSP application.

Based on the recommendation of the Economic Research Service (ERS) and the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), the evaluators will not be able to conduct client satisfaction surveys in the comparison sites because the comparison sites are not likely to agree to a survey in their service areas (or provide the data needed to draw the survey samples).

Survey administration should begin as soon as the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approves the survey, the evaluators have a list of sample members from the most recent quarter, and the sample members receive an advance letter that describes the survey.

Once OMB approval is obtained, we recommend administering the survey every quarter with recent applicants. So, for example, if the first round of survey data collection would begin in April 2003 at each site, the next three rounds of interviews would begin in July 2003, October 2003, and January 2004.<sup>1</sup> For each quarterly data collection period, a new sample will be drawn of elderly clients who recently completed an FSP application.<sup>2</sup> Survey respondents will be asked to recall very recent experiences with the pilot, and their responses will be more accurate and detailed as a result. The evaluators will also be more likely to receive accurate telephone numbers and addresses for the survey respondents if data are provided shortly after the respondents' applications or recertifications are received.

The survey will contain questions for six topics. The first two topics—satisfaction with and awareness of the demonstrations—will yield the outcome variables for the analysis. The remaining topics—food stamp program participation, demographics and other program participation, health status, and functional limitations—will provide important background (or control) variables for the analysis and will permit analysis by subgroups of interest, such as age and race or ethnicity.

Several measures can be used—satisfaction with the demonstration in general, satisfaction with the demonstration compared with the regular FSP, and satisfaction with FSP services (such as obtaining answers to clients' questions about the FSP). In addition, elderly households in

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<sup>1</sup>The first round of survey interviews can begin in April 2003 if the evaluation contract is awarded on October 1, 2002, an OMB package is submitted in December 2002, OMB approval is obtained in March 2003, and trained interviewers are ready to contact sample members in April 2003. This is a very optimistic scenario, but MPR was able to meet this accelerated schedule in another project.

<sup>2</sup>Clients who are selected for two different samples—such as for the April 2002 and January 2003 samples in the example above—will be interviewed once.

Connecticut and North Carolina that applied or that were recertified for food stamps will be asked why they decided to select (or not select) the commodity option.

To measure satisfaction with the application assistance and simplified application demonstrations compared with the regular FSP, survey respondents who have applied or been recertified for food stamps within the past three years will be asked to compare their recent application experience with their experience one to two years ago. (In the demonstration sites, the elderly are recertified for food stamps every 3 to 24 months, depending on the state).<sup>3</sup> As long as respondents are asked to compare their general experiences, we do not think that they will have problems recalling their previous application experiences.

The survey is designed to achieve a 75 percent response rate. To meet this goal, the survey will be administered by telephone with a mail follow-up for those who do not initially respond by telephone. It will take 15 to 20 minutes to administer by telephone. We recommend that respondents who complete the telephone survey be paid \$15 and those completing the mail survey be paid \$10. Proxies will be allowed for those sampled clients who appear to have cognitive difficulties. Because a large subgroup of elderly Spanish-speaking FSP participants lives in the Hartford area, the instrument will be translated into Spanish and available for use at all sites.

Before the survey is administered, survey respondents should be sent a letter telling them about the survey and guaranteeing the confidentiality of their responses. The demonstration sites should also be asked to include written notification about the survey in an attachment to the FSP application forms used by the elderly. The letter could include a toll-free telephone number that

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<sup>3</sup>Recertification periods for elderly FSP participants is approximately every 3 to 12 months in Florida, 12 months in Maine, and 24 months in Connecticut, Michigan, and North Carolina.

clients can use if they have questions about the survey or if they would like to respond to the survey and do not have their own telephone (but do have access to a friend's telephone).

To obtain a comprehensive picture of client satisfaction, it will also be important to obtain the views of elderly households that start but do not complete an application. This is especially true in the application assistance and simplified eligibility pilot sites. Because it will be difficult to include a representative sample of these households in the client survey for reasons that are explained in Section C.1.b below, the evaluators should conduct structured discussions with them.

## **C. SAMPLE DESIGN**

The sample design for the client satisfaction survey should be based on both the final size of the target population in each of the demonstration sites and available resources for conducting the survey. If conditions permit, we recommend attempting a census of all people in the target population in each site. Because this might not be possible in some sites, we provide suggested sampling methods. In this section, we indicate the pilot sites where a census currently appears to be feasible, so a sampling plan is not needed. For the remaining sites, we present our recommendations for using stratified random sampling.

The proposed sample design assumes that the study is conducted on a quarterly basis to improve the quality of the data collected and the contact information, which will increase the survey response rate. Furthermore, the design assumes a completed interview goal of 500 respondents per demonstration site over each one-year, four-quarter survey period (subject to the actual number of applicants) to reach a maximum of 3,000 total completed interviews for the study (roughly 125 per site per quarter). Depending on the resources available and the desired precision levels, the actual sample sizes selected could be higher or lower.

## **1. The Target Population and Sampling Frame**

The target population for the survey includes all “pure” elderly food stamp households that recently completed a FSP application. A pure elderly food stamp household is one in which all of the food stamp recipients are age 60 or older. This definition excludes “mixed” food stamp households that have members both over and under age 60. Furthermore, we recommend excluding food stamp households submitting recertification applications in the application assistance demonstration sites (Maine and Michigan) because the application assistance pilots plan to assist elderly people who are applying (but not recertifying) for food stamps.

### **a. Excluding Mixed Food Stamp Households**

We recommend excluding mixed food stamp households from the survey based on the intended focus of the simplified application and commodity alternative models and the lack of direct experience that many elderly people in mixed households may have with the application assistance demonstrations. By the demonstration programs’ definitions, only pure elderly food stamp households are allowed to participate in the commodity alternative and simplified eligibility sites. So it does not make sense to interview mixed households in these sites. For the application assistance demonstrations, we feel that to accurately measure the effects of the application assistance, the researcher needs to obtain information from the person most responsible for completing the application. In a mixed household this might be a person under age 60. In that case, the evaluator is faced with either interviewing the non-elderly applicant for whom the demonstration program was not designed to serve, interviewing the elderly member who may have had no direct involvement in completing the application, or interviewing both people. Each option provides data from experiences that are fundamentally different from those in pure elderly households. Hence their inclusion could contaminate the study results, or at a minimum, would require the separate analysis of mixed versus pure status households. With a

limited budget the additional resources required to provide for a separate analysis may not be available. In summary, based on demonstration design, analytical and cost issues, we recommend a pure-elderly household survey.

**b. Excluding Noncompleters and Other Eligible Nonapplicants**

The target population also excludes households that are eligible for the FSP and do not apply and those who begin the application process but fail to submit a completed form (referred to as “noncompleters”). While the former group of eligible nonapplicants is beyond the scope of this study, it is feasible to study the noncompleters as part of the survey or through structured discussions.

Including some of the noncompleters into the study has advantages and disadvantages. The primary benefit is that such an approach would increase the coverage of the population the demonstrations are designed to serve. With this group in the study, the evaluators would have a broader base for measuring satisfaction and could determine why these individuals failed to complete the form in light of the simplified eligibility and assisted application process in four of the sites. On the other hand, preparing a list of noncompleters likely would place undue burden on the grantees. Also, it would be difficult to define exactly which people should be listed so the actual operational procedures implemented at each site will vary. This will result in differences in the content and quality of lists produced to complicate the data analysis. While we feel this issue warrants further discussion with ERS and the grantees, we tentatively recommend excluding noncompleters from the survey. However, so that these people are not eliminated from the study completely, we recommend conducting structured discussions with noncompleters at each pilot site (and maybe with other eligible people who are affected by the

demonstration but fail to initiate the application process)<sup>4</sup> to supplement the survey results, as discussed in Section F of this chapter.

**c. The Target Respondent and Use of Proxies**

To enhance data quality, we recommend interviewing the person who completed the application form. We will refer to the person who completes the application as the “head of the food stamp household” and will designate that person as the sampling unit for this study. If the head of the food stamp household appears to have some cognitive difficulties, data could be collected from an eligible proxy, providing the proxy was sufficiently involved in the FSP application and commodity option selection decisions. At a minimum, an eligible proxy should be a close friend, relative, or person providing application assistance, who participated in FSP application discussions with the head of the food stamp household, worked closely with the him/her to complete the application, or acted on his/her behalf at these events.

**d. Data Requirements for the Sampling Frame**

During every quarter of the demonstration, each demonstration site should prepare a file that contains data that the evaluators will use to draw the sample and contact sample members for the survey. The file (or “sampling frame”) will list all completed food stamp applications from pure elderly households (or applications and recertifications in Connecticut, Florida and North Carolina) during each quarter.<sup>5</sup> By pure elderly household, we mean a food stamp filing unit for which every member is age 60 or older. For the second and subsequent quarterly lists, any

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<sup>4</sup>The structured discussions should also include people who received assistance from a demonstration application assistant but decided not to submit an application.

<sup>5</sup>The specifications for this file appear in Appendix B.

people or households listed in prior quarters should be eliminated to produce the final quarterly sampling frames.<sup>6</sup>

The files should contain as much data as possible from the application for sampling and contact purposes. At a minimum, each site should submit a list that contains for every pure elderly FSP household:

- Full name (first, middle, last) of FSP head of household
- Full names (first, middle, last) of other FSP household members
- Date of birth of each household member
- Race/ethnicity of FSP head of household
- FSP benefit amount received in month of application/recertification
- FSP case number
- Social Security number of each household member
- The date the food stamp case was opened
- An indicator of whether the household head received food stamps before the current food stamp case opened
- The date that the household head's prior food stamp case was opened (if available)
- Name of authorized representative, if any
- Physical location (street address, city, and ZIP code)
- Mailing address
- Home telephone number(s)
- Work telephone number (if available)
- Employer name and address (if available)
- Number of individuals in the food stamp unit

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<sup>6</sup>In the vast majority of cases, a pure elderly FSP household, with a fixed or semi-fixed income, would not apply for food stamps more than once in a given year. While those who do apply more than once in a year are of potential analytical interest, we expect only a few of them, and we do not want to overburden them by asking them to complete the survey more than once.

- (If available): Whether received assistance through the demonstration (in Maine and Michigan) or whether selected the commodity option (in Connecticut and North Carolina)

If desired, in those sites in which sampling is warranted (see Section 2), the files initially could exclude any personal identifiers, such as name, address and Social Security numbers to reduce the release of confidential information for sampling purposes. Once the sample is selected, the personal identifying information would be supplied separately only for sample members (merged using a masked or encrypted identification number originally provided on the sampling frame).

## **2. Site-Level Sample Design: Census or Sample?**

To address whether a census or sample is warranted under current resource constraints (based on interviewing no more than 3,000 applicants for the study), Table III.1 provides estimates of the quarterly and yearly sampling frame counts. Based on these values and assuming a 75 percent response rate, we recommend conducting a census in Maine, North Carolina and Michigan because the applicant base in these sites is not sufficient with a 75 percent response rate to yield 500 interviews. For Connecticut and Florida, pending more information on funds available for the survey, a sample of the target population should be selected.

## **3. Stratification and Sample Allocation Plan**

The proposed stratified sampling methods are designed to ensure that a sufficient number of interviews are obtained from key subgroups. Based on the estimated population sizes in Table III.1, we assume that a census will be conducted in Maine, Michigan and North Carolina. Therefore, we present a proposed stratification plan only for Connecticut and Florida. However, the guidelines presented in this and subsequent sections can be transferred to other sites if sampling will be used with them.

TABLE III.1

ESTIMATED APPLICANTS BY SITE AND CENSUS  
VS. SAMPLING RECOMMENDATIONS

Demonstration Site	Applicant Base <sup>a</sup>	Estimated Quarterly Applications	Estimated Yearly Applicants	Current Sample Design	Target Completed Interviews
Connecticut	Applicants and Recertifications	300	1,200	Sample	500
Florida	Applicants and Recertifications	400	1,600	Sample	500
Maine	Applicants Only	50	200	<b>Census</b>	<b>150</b>
Michigan	Applicants Only	50	200	<b>Census</b>	<b>150</b>
North Carolina	Applicants and Recertifications	125	500	<b>Census</b>	<b>375</b>
Total		925	3,700		1,675

<sup>a</sup>The application assistance pilots (Maine and Michigan) are primarily planning to assist elderly people who are applying (but not recertifying) for food stamps

The analytical goals of the study and the population profile should heavily guide the stratification and allocation plan. This study seeks to measure differences among age groups, prior FSP status (to measure demonstration effects from those who have had prior experience with the FSP), race/ethnicity, health status and functional limitations. In Connecticut, it will be important to compare people who accept the commodity package and those who do not. While not all of these factors will be available from the application form, for those that are, we suggest that the evaluators use them to stratify the sample. An initial stratification and allocation plan is provided below. (Population profiles are not available at this time to make final recommendations.)

**a. Stratification Recommendations**

We recommend using both explicit and implicit stratification techniques in this study. Traditional explicit stratification divides the sampling frame into strata before the sample selection process so that the evaluators can designate a specific sample size to each of these groups (for example, 100 interviews with applicants ages 60 to 64, 150 with applicants ages 65 to 74), thus over- or undersampling a specific domain as desired. In contrast, implicit stratification techniques are incorporated through the use of systematic or sequential sampling methods. These methods do not allow the evaluators to oversample a given group, but rather ensure (to a greater degree than would result from a simple random sample selection) that the various subgroups used in this process are proportionally represented. We suggest limiting explicit stratification to those characteristics that are available on the sampling frame and for which oversampling is needed; the characteristics would correspond to key analytical subgroups that have low representation in the target population. If proportional representation of a subgroup is sufficient, then explicit stratification is not needed and the evaluators can use implicit stratification to ensure a proportional outcome. In both Connecticut and Florida we

recommend explicitly stratifying the sample on age using three age groups (tentatively, 60 to 64, 65 to 74, and 75+). We expect a small percentage (less than 20 percent) of seniors over the age of 80 to be FSP participants, so we defined the higher age range for applicants at age 75 and older.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, we anticipate that most of the differences in utilization and satisfaction will occur between people in their 60s and 70s. The age group definitions separate people ages 60 to 64 who are not yet receiving Medicare benefits and might be employed.

In Connecticut, we recommend, at a minimum, explicitly stratifying the sample by commodity selection status (two categories)<sup>8</sup> in addition to age (three categories) to divide the sampling frame into six strata. Prior FSP participation could also be used to define the explicit strata as deemed necessary (resulting in 12 sampling strata, with prior FSP participation forming two categories, yes or no). We also recommend using implicit stratification within each of these explicit strata based on the number of elderly persons in the household, race/ethnicity, and level of benefit, if these data are available from the sites (and prior FSP status is not used to form the explicit strata).

For Florida, we suggest explicitly stratifying the sample similarly into six strata by age (as above) and prior FSP status (received benefits before vs. not). Similar to Connecticut, we recommend the use of implicit stratification within each explicit stratum, based on the number of elderly people in the household, race/ethnicity, and level of benefit, if these data are available.

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<sup>7</sup>Nationally, using Food Stamp Program Quality Control System (FSPQC) for fiscal year 2000, among households receiving food stamps with people ages 60 and older, 23.9 percent are between 60 and 64, 21.5 percent between 65 and 69, 20.5 percent between 70 and 74, and 34.0 percent are 75 and older. (Seventeen percent are over age 80.)

<sup>8</sup>At this time, a good estimate of the percentage of sample members in each commodity alternative pilot site who would select the commodity option is not available. If this percentage is fairly high (40 percent or more), then this characteristic would not need to become part of the explicit stratification plan. On the other hand, if this percentage is low, and separate analysis of this group is desired, this factor should be considered in designing the stratification plan.

## **b. Sample Allocation**

As a general strategy, to support the analytical objectives, we suggest that the evaluators aim to achieve relatively equal sample sizes, or at least a minimum sample size (for example, 100) for each of the final age groups, prior FSP participation status, and commodity acceptance status (and any other characteristics for which comparisons are desired and information on the sampling frame is available) as allowed by the population profile. Because such a disproportionate allocation process results in some loss in precision for aggregate estimates, the evaluator must balance these two competing objectives in deciding on a final allocation plan. The evaluators should also consider survey costs, response rates, and other information from prior surveys that might influence the allocation process.

## **4. Sample Weighting and Nonresponse Adjustments**

The evaluators should prepare separate survey weights for each pilot to account for differences in the selection probabilities of various applicant types and for potential differences between the profile of respondents and the target population that could result from survey nonresponse. Evaluators generally develop what is referred to as projection weights that adjust the survey data so that the weighted totals reflect in magnitude the values that would be obtained from the population. The weights should be based on the applicant's inverse of the probability of selection associated with the sample design. These weights would then be adjusted to account differences in the response patterns across the characteristics of the sampled members. With this approach, the weights would provide for unbiased estimation from the sample for means, totals and percentages. Weights could also be developed for combined site analysis, if desired, from the demonstration site weights; however, the details of such procedures would need to be determined based on discussions with the evaluators and ERS.

## 5. Statistical Precision

For the client satisfaction survey, the resulting statistical precision in the estimates will depend first on whether a census was conducted for the site, and, if not, the sample allocation plan implemented (as discussed in Section C.3 of this chapter). If a census of the target population is conducted in the demonstration site, the estimates obtained are not subject to sampling variability. However, the estimates from the sites in which a census was conducted are subject to nonresponse bias (which hopefully would be small given the suggested nonresponse adjustment procedures). Furthermore, even if a census were conducted in all of the sites, the researcher has to be careful in extrapolating the results from the demonstration sites to a broader population because conditions present in the demonstration site might not be similar to conditions elsewhere.

For the proposed sample-based sites, Florida and Connecticut, the estimates will be subject to some level of sampling variability. Table III.2 provides some guidelines on the expected precision levels expressed as 95 percent confidence intervals for a 50 percent characteristic for each demonstration site, overall (for sample sizes of 500, 750 and 1,000) and for subgroups (based on the corresponding sample size levels assuming an overall sample size of 500). The results are based on the indicated population sizes and incorporate a finite population correction factor (FPC) to compensate for the fact that a large portion of the population is likely to be sampled (using the expected population sizes presented in Table III.1; the effects of the FPC will be less if the populations are larger). Results are presented for three levels of a design effect,<sup>9</sup> which assume no oversampling (design effect of 1.0), minor oversampling (design effect of

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<sup>9</sup>The design effect represents the relative sampling efficiency (measured from a base value of 1.0) of the proposed design compared to a simple random sampling method in which all applicants have an equal probability of selection.

1.10), and more extensive oversampling (design effect of 1.3) of one or more subgroups. The results indicate that at an overall sample of 500 applicants, the study would yield respectable precision levels, for an overall 50 percent characteristic ranging from plus or minus 3.3 to 4.1 percentage points depending on the level of oversampling conducted. On the other hand, given the expected small population sizes, raising the sample sizes to 750 or 1,000 substantially improves the overall study precision and would increase the sample sizes available for subgroup analysis.

#### **D. SURVEY TOPICS**

The client satisfaction survey should ask sample members about their awareness of and satisfaction with the demonstration programs, FSP participation, demographics and participation in other food assistance programs, health status, and functional limitations (see Table III.3).

Measuring client awareness of the demonstrations will be easier if each demonstration has a name. For example, the demonstration in Maine is called the FACES program.<sup>10</sup> A unique name for each demonstration will allow the evaluators to more clearly distinguish between activities conducted by the demonstration (such as FACES) versus activities conducted by the demonstration's nonprofit partner, which might not be related to the demonstration. (In Maine, staff from the Senior Community Services Employment Program will provide assistance for the FACES program.)

About one-fourth of the survey will be spent collecting important background information about respondents' FSP application experience, type of prior application assistance received (if any), and their assessments of the application process. Additional background information will

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<sup>10</sup>FACES is an acronym for "Food Assistance—Connecting Eligible Seniors."

TABLE III.2

EXPECTED PRECISION LEVELS BY SITE FOR VARIOUS DESIGN EFFECTS:  
OVERALL AND FOR SUBGROUP ESTIMATES

Site	Population Size	Sample Size	Option 1 No	Option 2 Minor	Option 3 Moderate
			Oversampling (Design Effect =1.0)	Oversampling (Design Effect =1.1)	Oversampling (Design Effect =1.3)
			95% Confidence Half Interval (Plus or Minus Percent) for 50 Percent Characteristic		
Connecticut	1,200	<b>For Overall Study Estimates</b>			
		1,000	1.3%	1.3%	1.4%
		750	2.2%	2.3%	2.5%
		500	3.3%	3.5%	3.8%
		<b>For Subgroups At Sample Size Indicated Assuming Overall Sample Size of 500</b>			
		400	3.7%	3.9%	4.3%
		300	4.3%	4.5%	4.9%
		250	4.7%	5.0%	5.4%
		200	5.3%	5.6%	6.0%
		100	7.5%	7.9%	8.5%
Florida	1,600	<b>For Overall Study Estimates</b>			
		1,000	1.9%	2.0%	2.2%
		750	2.6%	2.7%	3.0%
		500	3.6%	3.8%	4.1%
		<b>For Subgroups At Sample Size Indicated Assuming Overall Sample Size of 500</b>			
		400	4.1%	4.3%	4.6%
		300	4.7%	4.9%	5.3%
		250	5.1%	5.4%	5.9%
		200	5.7%	6.0%	6.6%
		100	8.1%	8.5%	9.3%

TABLE III.3  
SURVEY TOPICS

Module	Proportion of Questionnaire	Question Topic	Example of Question	Applicable to Type of Demonstration					
				Application Assistance			Commodity Alternative		Simplified Eligibility
				MI	AZ <sup>11</sup>	ME	CT	NC	FL
Introduction	2%	Purpose of study	----	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Confidentiality	----	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Voluntary nature of participation	----	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Screener	3%	Residence in demonstration area	What is the ZIP code of the place where you live? ( <i>Compare with ZIP codes for catchment area of demonstration.</i> )	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Age of food stamp applicant	Are you at least 60 years of age? ( <i>Verify that person who completed application is at least 60 years of age</i> )	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Household members all at least 60 years of age	Is everyone in your food stamp household at least 60 years of age? PROBE: Is this a separate FSP household?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Eligible date of application/recertification	Between DATE and DATE, ( <i>Dates of previous quarter</i> ) did you complete a new application for food stamp benefits or did you complete a form for recertification?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Food Stamp Program Participation	25%	Date of last application prior to last quarter	When was the last time you applied for food stamp benefits before DATE (beginning date of last quarter)?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

<sup>11</sup> If a sixth pilot is funded, it will probably be in Arizona.

TABLE III.3 (continued)

Module	Proportion of Questionnaire	Question Topic	Example of Question	Applicable to Type of Demonstration					
				Application Assistance			Commodity Alternative		Simplified Eligibility
				MI	AZ <sup>11</sup>	ME	CT	NC	FL
		Nature of last application (pre-demonstration)	The last time you applied for food stamp benefits before DATE, did you apply in person, during a home visit by a social worker, by telephone, by mail, or did you have an authorized representative complete the application for you?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Assistance received in completing prior application	IF NO AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: Did anyone assist you in completing the food stamp application at that time?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Relationship of person providing assistance (pre-demonstration)	Who provided that assistance: relative, friend, social worker, someone from food stamp office, other (specify)?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Type of assistance required	How did that person help you complete the application? Read or translated the application, provided explanation of what was required, filled in the form, assisted in obtaining documentation, provided transportation, provided other assistance?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Burden of application (pre-demonstration)	How many trips did you make to the food stamp office to apply for food stamp benefits that time?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Time requirement at food stamp office (predemonstration)	Counting all the times you went to the food stamp office, how much time did you spend dealing with the food stamp office? Count the time that you spent traveling there and back, waiting, filling out paperwork, and time spent with program staff.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		IF IN-PERSON APPLICATION: Waiting time at the office	After you arrived at the office, how long did you have to wait to be helped?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

TABLE III.3 (continued)

Module	Proportion of Questionnaire	Question Topic	Example of Question	Applicable to Type of Demonstration					
				Application Assistance			Commodity Alternative		Simplified Eligibility
				MI	AZ <sup>11</sup>	ME	CT	NC	FL
		IF TELEPHONE APPLICATION:	How much time did you spend on hold waiting to be helped?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
			Was the voice mailbox full when you tried to complete the application by phone?						
			Were you disconnected during the call when you were completing your application by phone?						
		Time required to obtain documentation (predemonstration)	Counting all trips, how much time did you spend dealing with places other than the food stamp office obtaining documentation for your application? Once again, count the time that you spent traveling there and back, waiting, filling out paperwork, and talking to people in person by telephone to get the information you needed. PROBE: Your best estimate is fine.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Cost of application (predemonstration)	Now I'd like to ask how much money you spent when you applied for food stamps the last time. What is your best estimate of the cost of all trips to the food stamp office or other places to obtain information you needed for the application? Count gas, bus fare, parking tolls, or any money that you might have paid a driver.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Evaluation of previous application process (predemonstration)	Compared to other public offices with which you have contact, how would you rate the treatment you received from the food stamp office? Would you say you were treated better, the same, or worse than you were treated at other places such as the Division of Motor Vehicles, voter registration, the	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

TABLE III.3 (continued)

Module	Proportion of Questionnaire	Question Topic	Example of Question	Applicable to Type of Demonstration					
				Application Assistance			Commodity Alternative		Simplified Eligibility
				MI	AZ <sup>11</sup>	ME	CT	NC	FL
			post office, or the unemployment office?						
		FIRST TIME APPLICANT: Why no previous application?	Why didn't you apply for food stamp benefits before DATE? Was it because. . . you didn't know about program, didn't know how to get food stamps, too much paperwork/can't fill out forms, didn't believe eligible, no transportation to food stamp office, hours inconvenient, attitude of office staff was discouraging, embarrassed having to apply, thought small benefits not worth the effort, uncomfortable using food stamp benefits, questions too personal, preferred not to receive help from government?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
			Of the reasons you mentioned, which was most important?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Demonstration-Awareness, Burden, and Satisfaction	45%	Awareness of demonstration	Have you heard of the state's MiCAFE program that may be used to help seniors with food stamp applications?	✓					
			IF YES: How did you hear about this program?	✓					
			Did you know there are [description of Arizona's program] that will help seniors with their food stamp applications?		✓				
			IF YES: How did you hear about this program?		✓				
			Have you heard of the FACES program for helping seniors complete food stamp applications?			✓			

TABLE III.3 (continued)

Module	Proportion of Questionnaire	Question Topic	Example of Question	Applicable to Type of Demonstration					
				Application Assistance			Commodity Alternative		Simplified Eligibility
				MI	AZ <sup>11</sup>	ME	CT	NC	FL
			IF YES: How did you hear about this program?			✓			
			Have you seen the brochure that is directed to seniors in Waldo County to “help them stretch their food budget?” (message)?			✓			
			Have you heard that some seniors in the Hartford area can get a package of commodities twice a month instead of food stamps?				✓		
			IF YES: How did you hear about this program?				✓		
			Have you heard that seniors in Alamance County can get a monthly package of commodities instead of getting food stamps?					✓	
			IF YES: How did you hear about this program?					✓	
			Did you know that the food stamp application for seniors in Gadsden and Leon Counties is only one page long and for most people there’s no verification?						✓
			IF YES: How did you hear about this?						✓
		Nature of most recent food stamp application (during demonstration)	When you applied for food stamp benefits between DATE and DATE, did you apply in person, during a home visit by a social worker, by telephone, by mail, or did you have an authorized representative complete the application for you?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Assistance received in completing application (during demonstration)	Did anyone assist you in completing the food stamp application at that time?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

TABLE III.3 (continued)

Module	Proportion of Questionnaire	Question Topic	Example of Question	Applicable to Type of Demonstration					
				Application Assistance			Commodity Alternative		Simplified Eligibility
				MI	AZ <sup>11</sup>	ME	CT	NC	FL
		Relationship of person providing assistance (during demonstration)	Who provided that assistance: relative, friend, social worker, someone from food stamp office, other (specify)?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Type of assistance required (during demonstration)	How did that person help you complete the application? Read or translated the application, provided explanation of what was required, filled in the form, assisted in obtaining documentation, provided transportation, provided other assistance?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Feature of demonstration application process	When you completed your food stamp application between DATE and DATE, did you complete it at a senior center where they were also collecting information for the pharmacy benefit program?	✓					
			When you completed your food stamp application between DATE and DATE, did someone from the [name of Arizona pilot] assist you with the application?		✓				
			When you completed your food stamp application between DATE and DATE, did an application assistant from the FACES program help you with the application?			✓			
			When you completed your food stamp application between DATE and DATE, did you choose to receive the commodities package instead of regular food stamp benefits?				✓	✓	

TABLE III.3 (continued)

Module	Proportion of Questionnaire	Question Topic	Example of Question	Applicable to Type of Demonstration					
				Application Assistance			Commodity Alternative		Simplified Eligibility
				MI	AZ <sup>11</sup>	ME	CT	NC	FL
			IF YES, why did you choose the commodities? Was it because . . . you wanted to try something new, you had trouble using your EBT card, you thought it would get more than you could get with regular food stamp benefits, you thought you would get certain commodities, you thought you would get cheese in your food package, you wouldn't have to carry as many groceries because it was delivered, you would get better quality food, you wouldn't be embarrassed using food stamp benefits in the store, or something else (specify)?				✓	✓	
			IF NO, why didn't you choose the commodities? Was it because . . . you didn't want to try something new, you thought you could get more food with regular food stamp benefits, you wouldn't like the kind of food you got in the commodities package, you would get better quality food in the store, you could get the kind and type of food you want if you pick it out yourself, or something else (specify)?				✓	✓	
			When you completed your food stamp application between DATE and DATE, did you use the one-page application form or was the application form more than one page long?						✓
			When you completed your food stamp application between DATE and DATE, did you have to verify information other than noncitizenship?						✓

TABLE III.3 (continued)

Module	Proportion of Questionnaire	Question Topic	Example of Question	Applicable to Type of Demonstration					
				Application Assistance			Commodity Alternative		Simplified Eligibility
				MI	AZ <sup>11</sup>	ME	CT	NC	FL
		Satisfaction with demonstration in general	Overall, how easy was the food stamp application process you completed between DATE and DATE?	✓	✓	✓			✓
		Time requirement to complete food stamp application between DATE and DATE (during demonstration)	How much time did you spend completing the food stamp application between DATE and DATE? Count the time that you spent traveling to the senior center or the office, there and back, waiting, filling out paperwork, and time spent with program staff or volunteers. PROBE: Your best estimate is fine.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
			How many trips did you make to (other) offices such as utility companies or employers to collect documentation for the food stamp application? ___ TRIPS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
			Counting all trips, how much time did you spend dealing with places other than the food stamp office to obtain documentation for your application? Once again, count the time that you spent traveling there and back, waiting, filling out paperwork, and talking to people in person by telephone to get the information you needed.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Cost of application (during demonstration)	Now I'd like to ask how much money you spent when you applied for food stamp benefits between DATE and DATE. What is your best estimate of the cost of all trips to the food stamp office or other places to obtain information you needed for the application? Count gas, bus fare, parking tolls, or any money that you	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

TABLE III.3 (continued)

Module	Proportion of Questionnaire	Question Topic	Example of Question	Applicable to Type of Demonstration					
				Application Assistance			Commodity Alternative		Simplified Eligibility
				MI	AZ <sup>11</sup>	ME	CT	NC	FL
			might have paid a driver.						
		Comparison of demonstration and predemonstration experience	What was the difference between the application process you completed between DATE and DATE and the last food stamp application process you completed before that time? Would you say... it took less time, I understood what I needed to do, there was less hassle, it was not as embarrassing, I was treated better, I had more choices, the process was simpler, something else (specify ), or there was no difference?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
			Overall, how satisfied are you with the choice of commodities instead of regular food stamp benefits?				✓	✓	
		Satisfaction with demonstration compared with regular food stamp program application process	(Compared to the last time you completed a food stamp application) overall, how easy was the food stamp application process you completed between DATE and DATE?	✓	✓	✓			✓
			Overall, how satisfied were you with the assistance you received from the [name of demonstration] program?	✓	✓	✓			

TABLE III.3 (continued)

Module	Proportion of Questionnaire	Question Topic	Example of Question	Applicable to Type of Demonstration					
				Application Assistance			Commodity Alternative		Simplified Eligibility
				MI	AZ <sup>11</sup>	ME	CT	NC	FL
			IF SATISFIED: What aspect of the assistance did you like? Would you say you liked the convenience of the assistant helping you at home, you liked the way the assistant explained the FSP benefits, you liked receiving assistance from a peer (MAINE ONLY), you liked completing the application at the same time you learned about eligibility for congregate meals or the MEPPS program (MICHIGAN ONLY), or for another reason (specify)?	✓	✓	✓			
			IF NOT SATISFIED: Why were you not satisfied with the assistance? Would you say that the assistant was not very helpful, the assistant was unable to answer your questions, you do not feel comfortable telling others about your personal affairs, or some other reason (specify)?	✓	✓	✓			
			Overall, how satisfied are you with the monthly commodities package you receive instead of regular food stamp benefits? Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?				✓	✓	

TABLE III.3 (continued)

Module	Proportion of Questionnaire	Question Topic	Example of Question	Applicable to Type of Demonstration					
				Application Assistance			Commodity Alternative		Simplified Eligibility
				MI	AZ <sup>11</sup>	ME	CT	NC	FL
		Reasons(s) for dissatisfaction with commodities package	Why are you dissatisfied with the commodities package? Is it because... you would prefer to select the food yourself, You could get more food with regular food stamp benefits, You didn't like the kind of food you got in the commodities package, You could get better quality food in the store, You don't like using so many canned goods, The commodity package was so heavy it was difficult to deal with, or something else (specify)?				✓	✓	
			Thinking about the amount of food contained in the package, would you say it was too much, about right, or not enough?				✓	✓	
			IF TOO MUCH: What did you do with the leftover food? Give it to family or friends, donate it to some charity or food bank, sell it or trade it for something else, throw it away, or something else (specify)?				✓	✓	
			How satisfied are you with the variety of food you receive in the commodities package? Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?				✓	✓	
			Do you think the monthly commodity package is worth more, the same, or less than the regular food stamp benefits you would have received?				✓	✓	
			Is your food package delivered to your home or do you have to go somewhere to pick it up?				✓	✓	

TABLE III.3 (continued)

Module	Proportion of Questionnaire	Question Topic	Example of Question	Applicable to Type of Demonstration					
				Application Assistance			Commodity Alternative		Simplified Eligibility
				MI	AZ <sup>11</sup>	ME	CT	NC	FL
		Satisfaction with food stamp program office services	Now please tell me your opinions about the caseworker assigned to you by the food stamp office. As I read each statement please tell me if you agree or disagree. The kinds of services I received were suitable because of my needs.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
			I felt that my caseworker was doing his or her part to help solve my problems.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
			My caseworker was knowledgeable about food stamp benefits and procedures	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
			My caseworker treats clients respectfully	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
			Overall, how satisfied are you with the food stamp program?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Demographics and other program participation	8%	Age	Use standard question	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Race	Use standard question	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Ethnicity	Use standard question	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Gender	Use standard question	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Marital Status	Use standard question	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Education	Use standard question	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Household Size	Use standard question	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

TABLE III.3 (continued)

Module	Proportion of Questionnaire	Question Topic	Example of Question	Applicable to Type of Demonstration					
				Application Assistance			Commodity Alternative		Simplified Eligibility
				MI	AZ <sup>11</sup>	ME	CT	NC	FL
		Income Sources	Include: Social Security, Social Security Disability, Supplemental Security Income, TANF, General Assistance, income from a job, pension	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Receipt of congregate meals	During the past 30 days, did anyone in your household receive free or reduced-cost meals for the elderly at a senior center or similar place?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Receipt of home delivered meals	During the past 30 days, did anyone in your household receive home delivered meals or meals-on-wheels?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Receipt of food from food pantry or food bank	(Other than the food from DEMONSTRATION NAME,) During the past 30 days, did anyone in the household get food from a food bank or food pantry?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Health Status	5%	Overall health	In general, compared with other people your age, would you say that your health is excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Vision impairment	Do you have a vision problem that interferes with your ability to read labels on packages of food?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Special dietary requirements	Are you currently following any special diet?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

TABLE III.3 (continued)

Module	Proportion of Questionnaire	Question Topic	Example of Question	Applicable to Type of Demonstration					
				Application Assistance			Commodity Alternative		Simplified Eligibility
				MI	AZ <sup>11</sup>	ME	CT	NC	FL
			IF YES, is it Diabetic Low sodium (salt) Low cholesterol Controlled calorie Low sugar Low fat Low fiber High fiber High carbohydrate Bland Ground or pureed Vegetarian No vegetables Non-dairy or lactose free Ethnic/religious Or something else (specify)?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Functional limitations	10%	Ability to perform activities of daily living	Because of a health or physical problem, do you need the help of other people with your personal care needs, such as eating, dressing, or getting around the house?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Ability to travel outside of home	Are you able to travel outside your neighborhood on your own? Do you have more problems getting around than you used to but are usually OK? Can you get around in your own neighborhood on your own but do not travel outside your own neighborhood? Do you require some assistance to travel even in your own neighborhood? Or, are you unable to do it at all?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

TABLE III.3 (continued)

Module	Proportion of Questionnaire	Question Topic	Example of Question	Applicable to Type of Demonstration					
				Application Assistance			Commodity Alternative		Simplified Eligibility
				MI	AZ <sup>11</sup>	ME	CT	NC	FL
		Ability to shop for groceries	Are you able to shop for groceries on your own without any difficulty or advice? Do you find this more difficult than you used to? Do you require frequent advice or assistance from others? Did you never do this and would find it difficult to start now? Did you never do this but could do this now if you have to? Or, are you unable to do it at all?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Availability of transportation	How do you usually get to your local supermarket or grocery store? Walk, bicycle, drive a car, get a ride with friends or relatives, take a bus, take a taxi, use a van from place where you live, local senior citizen bus or van, or something else (specify)?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
			If you wanted to, could you use another form of transportation to the supermarket or grocery store?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Access to grocery stores	How long does it take you to travel to your local supermarket or grocery store? PROBE: By your usual means of transportation.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Ability to fill out forms	Do you have trouble filling out insurance or Social Security forms or assembling tax records? (Never took care of this, has some trouble now, has some trouble but someone helps, has no trouble with this?)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Literacy and language skills	IF SOME TROUBLE: Do you have trouble understanding printed instructions from your doctor or instructions on insurance forms?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

TABLE III.3 (continued)

Module	Proportion of Questionnaire	Question Topic	Example of Question	Applicable to Type of Demonstration					
				Application Assistance			Commodity Alternative		Simplified Eligibility
				MI	AZ <sup>11</sup>	ME	CT	NC	FL
		Problems with the EBT card	Now I'd like to ask you about any problems that you may have had with food stamp benefits on your EBT card In the past two months, . . . Has your EBT card been stolen? Has your EBT card been lost or misplaced? Have any benefits been taken from your card without your consent? That is, has a store subtracted more than they should have or have benefits you were entitled to been missing from your card for some other reason?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
			Do you have trouble remembering your EBT PIN number?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Closing	2%	Expression of appreciation	-----	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Verification of address for mailing of honorarium	-----	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

be collected on respondents' demographic characteristics, health status, and functional limitations. With respect to health status, the emphasis will be learning about dietary restrictions. The functional limitation questions will ask about respondents' ability to shop for groceries and fill out forms alone or with some help.

Nearly half of the survey will be spent asking clients about their awareness of and satisfaction with the demonstrations and FSP in general—the outcome variables for the analysis. Because each pilot has unique features, the questions pertaining to demonstration awareness and satisfaction will vary from site to site, as indicated in Table III.3. For example, respondents in Michigan will be asked if they completed their FSP application at a senior center where information was also collected for the pharmacy benefit program, and respondents in Maine will be asked if they have seen a brochure directed to seniors in Waldo County to “help them stretch their food budget.”<sup>12</sup> There will also be several satisfaction questions addressed to sample members in all sites, so that some cross-site comparisons can be made. For example, all respondents will be asked to indicate their overall satisfaction with the FSP.

## **E. SURVEY DESIGN**

In this section we present the survey design. We discuss the instrument length and mode, languages, eligibility, proxies, pretesting, locating and obtaining participation of clients, and confidentiality.

### **1. Instrument Length and Mode**

To achieve a 75 percent response rate within a reasonable project budget, we recommend that the evaluation administer a telephone survey with mail follow-up. The survey could be

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<sup>12</sup>This question to respondents in Maine will include the main outreach message used in the brochures distributed by the FACES program.

designed to take 15 to 20 minutes to administer by telephone. Initially, the interviewers could try to contact all clients by telephone. A paper version of the survey with a postage-paid return envelope could be mailed to those who do not answer their telephone (after several attempted contacts by the interviewers) or for whom the interviewers do not have a valid telephone number. Some clients who receive the paper version of the survey might choose to respond by telephone after they read the survey questions.

## **2. Languages**

The survey instrument should be translated into English and Spanish because the Hartford area includes a large subgroup of Spanish-speaking FSP participants. Currently, FSP application forms in Connecticut are available in English and Spanish because Spanish is widely spoken.

In addition to Spanish-speaking FSP participants, the Hartford area also includes some elderly FSP participants who speak only Polish or Russian. However, the Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS) has not translated FSP documents into Polish or Russian. Clients who speak Polish or Russian make up a much smaller group than Spanish-speaking clients do, and DSS is usually able to find a Polish or Russian translator when needed.

## **3. Eligibility**

Shortly after interviewers introduce the survey to the sample members that they are able to contact by telephone, the interviewers should determine whether these sample members are eligible to participate in the survey. Sample members are ineligible if:

- The food stamp applicant is deceased
- The sampled food stamp household is not a pure elderly food stamp household

Interviewers will verify the age of the sampled applicant and the ages of all people in the household. The evaluators should consider whether to define people who deny any involvement with the FSP (for example, those who deny submitting an application or who deny receiving food stamp benefits) as ineligible or to code those people as nonrespondents. ERS will also want to work with the evaluators to determine how to treat households that have moved out of the demonstrations' service area. If the sampled applicant moved within a specified time frame after completing the application, ERS might want to code these sampled members as eligible. For example, if the respondent recently participated in the simplified eligibility or assisted application demonstrations, the evaluators could attempt to contact the sampled applicant at their new location.

#### **4. Proxies**

The survey interviewers need to be trained to quickly assess the cognitive capabilities of each survey respondent so they can try to find a proxy for the respondents who seem to have cognitive difficulties. Proxies (or translators) will also be used for those who do not speak fluent English or Spanish, subject to the conditions set forth in Section C.1.c of this chapter.

#### **5. Pretesting**

The survey instrument should be pretested before it is submitted to OMB for clearance. It is useful to think of pretesting in two stages. In the first stage, the questionnaire should be reviewed by the research staff who will be analyzing the data to ensure that the questions reflect the research objectives. During this review, all questions should be examined for relevance to the research objectives. Decisions can be made at this stage that might result in changes to the instrument.

During the second stage, the questionnaire should be empirically tested to identify both overt and covert problems that could affect respondents' comprehension of the questions and responses to individual items. Although standard field testing is useful in identifying problems in survey questions, cognitive testing procedures might prove more successful in evaluating the wording, flow, and appeal of the questionnaire. During cognitive testing, a small number of subjects are interviewed using think-aloud techniques to determine their overall evaluation of the instrument and to examine selected items. This technique requires some training for the study subject as well as the interviewer. Cognitive testing can reveal whether the intent of each question is understood. Although both concurrent and retrospective think-aloud interviews might have application to this study, the retrospective interviews would be effective and the most efficient approach for the pretest.

In the retrospective think-aloud interviews, the questionnaire is administered in the normal manner first, without probing or questioning the response process. The interviewer then asks a series of questions to assess the respondent's evaluation of the questionnaire as a whole. Because respondents have experienced the normal administration of the questionnaire, they are able to address overall questionnaire issues of length, flow, and organization. Respondents are encouraged to report what sticks in their minds as the most difficult questions to answer or as the best and worst features of the questionnaire. In this sense, the gestalt of the questionnaire can be examined.

Respondents are then asked to think back on a selected questions and comment on how they answered them or what was going through their minds at the time they answered the questions. These thoughts could reveal problems with comprehension, retrieval of information, recall, estimation, or with other factors affecting the reporting of responses. Some thoughts might surface that are not as logical or cohesive as usual verbalizations, but they might reveal

underlying problems in the questionnaire that might not be apparent otherwise. Respondents' thoughts and feelings are probed extensively to assure adequate and comprehensible detail to make judgments about questionnaire revisions.

## **6. Locating Sample Members and Gaining Their Cooperation**

To locate sample members and get them to complete the survey, we recommend that the evaluators and pilot sites give clients advance written notice about the survey, work hard to obtain valid telephone numbers and addresses of the clients, and pay clients who complete the survey.

### **a. Provide Advance Written Notice About the Survey**

Clients should receive advance written notice about the survey that describes the study, encourages their cooperation, and guarantees confidentiality of their survey responses. Ideally, this written notice would take two forms: a letter and a notice that accompanies their FSP applications.

Advance letters should contain a return address and use letterhead from an agency—such as the grantee or the grantee's nonprofit partner—that the clients are familiar with. It should be mailed address service requested so that the post office will send address corrections back to the evaluators. Correct addresses will enhance the evaluator's ability to find accurate telephone numbers for clients. The letter should include a toll-free number that clients may call with questions. In addition, because the letter will be signed from a representative from the grantee (such as a food stamp program director) or a nonprofit partner (such as someone from the Community Renewal Team in Connecticut or the Loaves and Fishes Christian Food Ministry in North Carolina), the evaluators and demonstration sites need to work together to draft the

contents of the letter, obtain the appropriate signature on the letter, and obtain valid addresses for the clients.

In addition to an advance letter, it will be helpful if an attachment accompanies the FSP application forms. The attachment should state that some applicants might be asked to participate in a survey and include a toll-free number (maintained by the evaluators) to call with questions.

Staff at the demonstration sites who work directly with FSP applicants—such as caseworkers and staff from the grantees’ nonprofit partners—should also be given information about the survey, because some clients will probably ask these staff about the survey. Much of the basic information that caseworkers and others should know about the survey will appear in the advance letters sent to clients—the purpose of the survey, the voluntary nature of the survey, the confidentiality of the responses, the organizations that are involved, and a telephone number to call with further questions. Staff who work directly with FSP applicants should be able to answer basic questions about the survey and should tell FSP applicants that the survey is legitimate and that the interviewers for the survey are trustworthy.

**b. Obtain Current and Valid Telephone Numbers**

Having an accurate telephone number for each survey respondent decreases the time and cost of locating that respondent. Consequently, it improves the quality of the survey by increasing the response rate and decreasing the potential for bias. In a recent analysis of data on state Medicaid files that included seven surveys conducted in seven states, MPR found that cases that came to MPR with accurate telephone numbers achieved an 80 percent response rate within five weeks. In contrast, cases that had no telephone number achieved a 50 percent response rate at five months (Sinclair 2001).

Every quarter, the evaluators will request the names and contact information of households with elderly clients who completed a FSP application during the quarter. For the simplified and

application assistance pilots, the evaluators will also request names and contact information of those who started but did not complete an application. In some sites, the MIS data might contain accurate telephone numbers.<sup>13</sup> If accurate telephone numbers are not available from MIS data, then the evaluators and grantees need to develop a plan to collect telephone numbers of elderly FSP applicants. For example, caseworkers or application assistants might keep records of their clients' telephone numbers and provide the evaluators with these lists.

The evaluators might also use a computerized directory assistance matching service to look up telephone numbers for all households to be interviewed. These services can usually conduct operator-assisted directory assistance searches as well. For elderly populations, these vendors usually find telephone numbers for 60 to 65 percent of the households using this service. After this service is used, we recommend sending a second letter to households for whom a telephone number is still not available. The second letter should stress how important it is for households with unlisted telephones or no telephones to call the toll-free number. Our experience is that about 20 percent of respondents who receive this second letter call the toll-free number to complete interviews by telephone (Nelson 1996).

For those cases for which an advance letter or computerized matching service does not yield new information, we recommend using one (or more) of several on-line databases, including the National Change Of Address (NCOA) file. These databases are used to update addresses and phone numbers. Most can also be used as electronic reverse directories. The evaluators could look up telephone numbers by street address and generate all addresses or telephone numbers in an area for a particular last name. Interviewers could call relatives and neighbors to locate households to be interviewed.

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<sup>13</sup> North Carolina's MIS does not have a field for clients' telephone numbers.

After exhausting all reasonable sources, the evaluators could send a priority letter to all households for which a telephone number is still unavailable. When the priority letter arrives in a large, brightly colored, cardboard envelope, it captures attention. The enclosed letter should make a final plea for respondents to call the toll-free number. At this stage of the survey process, about 12 percent of the nonlocatable respondents call the toll-free number (Nelson 1996).

The survey contractor could ask respondents about interruptions in telephone service lasting two weeks or more during the past 12 months. In recent work, MPR has been successful in using data of this type for developing nonresponse weighting adjustments. Higher weights are assigned to completed cases with longer lapses in telephone service. For more information, see Hall et al. (1998) and references cited therein.

**c. Pay Respondents Who Complete An Interview**

To encourage households to participate in the survey, we recommend paying \$15 to respondents who complete the survey by telephone and \$10 to those who complete it by mail. We recommend a higher payment for telephone respondents because the quality of the telephone responses will generally be higher. When an interview is conducted by telephone, the interviewers are available to answer questions or explain things to the respondents. In addition, a trained and skilled interviewer will often be able to determine when a respondent misunderstands a question and can clear up the misunderstanding. Furthermore, telephone respondents are less likely to skip questions.

Payments might be made as a check or as a gift certificate. If the payment is made by check, the advance letter should state that the payment will not count toward the determination of the level of FSP benefits that the household receives. Grantees should advise the evaluators about the type of respondent payment (check or gift certificate) that will be most effective at their site.

To protect the confidentiality of the identity of the survey respondents, evaluators should distribute the payments, not the pilot sites.

## **7. Confidentiality**

The evaluators should ensure the confidentiality of all survey participants' data and personal identification information, and all data should be treated as confidential as required by OMB project submission requirements. Survey respondents should be told in an advance letter and at the start of the interview that all information and the information used to contact them will be held in the strictest confidence and that all reported data will only appear in aggregate form. Except for data needed to contact survey sample members, any supplied data files should be masked of personal identifiers or other information that could be used to identify the respondent. Finally, we recommend that access to any personal information be limited to relevant staff and that security measures are taken to prevent access by others.

## **F. ANALYTIC APPROACH**

Univariate and multivariate techniques will be used to evaluate the impact of the demonstrations on client satisfaction. The analysis of client satisfaction can be conducted:

- Separately for each site
- Separately for each of the three demonstration models (simplified eligibility, application assistance, and commodity alternative)
- For all sites combined.

The pooled analysis with all sites will be limited to the outcome measures common to all sites—such as clients' overall satisfaction with the FSP.

Analytic results for the pooled analysis could be presented using weighted or unweighted survey data. For the combined site analysis, the evaluators might want to conduct the analysis

unweighted or using a modified version of the weights depending on how much weight they want each site to play in the analysis. If the analysis is conducted unweighted (or using only the nonresponse adjustments), the influence of each site on the model is determined by the sample size.<sup>14</sup> Alternatively, the weights can be rescaled so that each site plays an equal role in the analysis, or the original weights can be used so that the sites are represented proportionally.

The rest of this section discusses the univariate and multivariate analyses.

## **1. Univariate Analysis**

The univariate analysis can be conducted separately for each site and by pooling sites. In both instances, the evaluators will use the survey sampling weights to compute weighted proportions and mean satisfaction ratings of respondents who provide a given answer to a question about a control or outcome variable of interest (such as “Are you satisfied with the choice of commodities” or “Application process under the demonstration was easier than previous experience”).<sup>15</sup> The evaluators could use SAS version 8 or SUDAAN to compare these statistics across the study subgroups and to test whether any results are significantly different from zero at conventional significance levels, because SAS version 8 and SUDAAN account for sample design effects and the use of survey weights.

We recommend examining differences in awareness and satisfaction levels for a variety of subgroups as the sample sizes permit. The evaluators could examine differences between three *age* subgroups (ages 60 to 64, 65 to 74, and 75+), and two mutually exclusive *racial/ethnic* subgroups (white non-Hispanic and nonwhites plus Hispanics). For example, the evaluators

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<sup>14</sup>If some subgroups are oversampled, they will be over-represented if unweighted data are used.

<sup>15</sup> Sample weighting is described in section C.4. of this chapter.

could compare the overall satisfaction with the application assistance they received through the demonstration among respondents who are age 60 to 64 relative to those age 75 or older. For sites where a survey sample is used (instead of a census), the evaluators can use t-tests to test for statistically significant differences in the mean values. Hypothetically, the evaluators could learn that 50 percent of respondents ages 60 to 64 were “very satisfied” with the assistance they received, compared with 80 percent of respondents ages 75 and older, and that this difference is statistically significant. These descriptive comparisons could be presented in a manner similar to Table III.4A.

Descriptive comparisons can also be made between some of the client satisfaction measures, as illustrated in Table III.4B. For example, the evaluators can investigate whether those who used a demonstration service have higher levels of overall satisfaction with the FSP than those who did not use a demonstration service. In addition, they can examine whether type of assistance received during the application process (for example, received help with obtaining documentation or received transportation) is associated with higher or lower levels of overall satisfaction with the FSP.

## **2. Multivariate Analysis**

Multivariate analyses can be used for key outcome variables within and between sites to identify the client characteristics that are associated with those outcomes in a statistically significant way, after controlling for differences in the respondents’ characteristics (control variables). For example, with a multivariate analysis, evaluators can test whether clients who are white and non-Hispanic are more satisfied overall with the FSP than those who are nonwhite or Hispanic, after controlling for the other variables in the model. For the between-site models the control variables should also control for differences between the sites. Possible control variables include measures of:

TABLE III.4A

DESCRIPTIVE COMPARISON OF SAMPLE MEMBERS

	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3
<b>Demographic Characteristics</b>			
Age			
60 – 64			
65 – 74			
≥ 75			
Gender			
Female			
Male			
Race/Ethnicity			
African American			
White			
Other			
Whether of Hispanic ethnicity			
<b>Food Stamp Experience</b>			
New applicant			
Previous applicant			
<b>Health and Functional Status</b>			
Has condition requiring low-salt diet			
Unable to travel without assistance			

\*Difference is statistically significant at the .05 level, two-tailed test

\*\*Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level, two-tailed test

TABLE III.4B

DESCRIPTIVE COMPARISON OF SAMPLE MEMBERS'  
OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH FSP

	Overall Satisfaction with the FSP						All Sites
	Site 1	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4	Site 5	Site 6	
<b>Other Outcome Measures</b>							
Used Demonstration							
Yes							
No							
Type of Assistance Received							
Someone read or explained things							
Someone completed the form							
Someone obtained documentation							
Someone provided transportation							
Received other assistance							
Received no assistance							

\*Difference is statistically significant at the .05 level, two-tailed test

\*\*Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level, two-tailed test

- Age
- Gender
- Functional/cognitive ability
- Level of benefit or income
- Health status
- Race and ethnicity
- Prior FSP participation
- Education

Three types of models can be estimated.<sup>16</sup> A standard regression model is appropriate for scale-based satisfaction ratings or other continuous outcome variables. A multinomial logit (or probit) model can be used for measures of the change in satisfaction—whether satisfaction increased, decreased, or stayed the same as a result of the demonstration. A logistic (or probit) model should be used for binary outcomes, such as whether or not a client is aware of a demonstration.

A single site regression model that can be estimated is:

$$(1) \quad Y^* = \alpha + \beta X + \varepsilon$$

where  $Y$  is the outcome variable for an individual (and  $Y = 1$  if  $Y^* > 0$ ,  $Y = 0$  otherwise),  $X$  is the set of beneficiary characteristics,  $\varepsilon$  is an error term, and  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  are parameters to be estimated. Interaction terms could also be included in the model as deemed appropriate.

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<sup>16</sup>The evaluators might also want to study quarterly differences with sites; however we suspect the sample sizes will be too small to permit any meaningful inference.

For between-site analysis, a similar model [equation (2)] can be used that includes indicators for site membership and/or program type (as denoted by  $T$ ) to measure the influence of the site/program on the outcome.

$$(2) \quad Y^* = \alpha + \beta X + \gamma T + \varepsilon$$

Either SUDAAN or STATA should be used to estimate the multivariate equations to account for any sample design properties.

Multivariate regression results will be presented in a manner similar to Table III.5.

#### **G. STRUCTURED DISCUSSIONS WITH HOUSEHOLDS THAT STARTED BUT DID NOT COMPLETE A FSP APPLICATION**

To obtain a more comprehensive picture of client satisfaction, it will also be important to obtain the views of elderly households that start but do not complete an FSP application or that start to receive application assistance through the demonstrations but decide not to complete an application. This is especially true in the application assistance and simplified eligibility pilot sites, because a bad experience with the demonstration could be one reason why some households decided not to complete an application.

It will be difficult to include a representative sample of these households in the client survey because it will be very costly and operationally difficult for the sites to give the evaluators a complete and accurate list of everyone who started but did not complete an application. Providing a list would require all caseworkers and application assistants from the demonstrations to meticulously record the name (correctly spelled), address, and telephone number of *every* household that started but did not complete an application. Representatives from the application assistance pilot sites told us that this would be difficult to do. However, these sites should be able to provide a list of *some* of the households who started but did not complete an application.

TABLE III.5  
 OUTCOME VARIABLE(S) AND CLIENT GROUP  
 ESTIMATED ODDS RATIOS

	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3
Intercept			
Age 60 to 64			
Age $\geq 75$			
Nonwhite			
Hispanic			
Female			
Receives Social Security			
Does not have high school education or GED			
Prior FSP participant			
Is on a restricted diet			
Unable to shop for groceries alone			

SOURCE: Logit regression equations estimated with data from client satisfaction survey for the Elderly Nutrition Pilot evaluation.

NOTE: This table contains a partial list of potential control variables for illustrative purposes.

\*Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

\*\*Statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

For example, Maine intends to keep a contact database that lists everyone that the FACES application assistants meet. To identify those who start but do not complete an application, the evaluators can match data from this contact database with data from the state FSP files.

Consequently, we recommend conducting two or three structured discussions at each application assistance and simplified eligibility site with approximately one dozen individuals from pure elderly households that started but did not complete an application. At the application assistance sites, the evaluators should also speak with elderly people who received some assistance through the demonstration but decided not to complete a FSP application.

Participants in the structured discussions should be asked why they decided not to complete the FSP application process—personal issues, burden, problems with demonstration or FSP office staff, etc. In addition, they can be asked many of the questions about demonstration awareness and satisfaction that appear in Table III.3. At the end of each structured discussion session, participants should be paid an honorarium.

Because a purposive sampling process will be used to select households for these structured discussion groups, findings from the structured discussions cannot be generalized to the entire population of those who started but did not complete an application. However, the structured discussions should provide useful insights on client satisfaction for an important group of elderly households who are eligible for food stamp benefits.

## **IV. QUANTIFYING THE COSTS OF THE DEMONSTRATIONS**

The demonstrations will generate new costs for the federal government, state and local FSP offices, and demonstration partners. The specifications for reporting these costs must identify all the important components of costs that can be quantified, such as the costs of demonstration design, staff training, publicity, changes in the administrative costs of the FSP, and changes in food stamp benefits due to the demonstrations. The costs of volunteer time should also be estimated.

This chapter describes the design for quantifying the costs of the demonstration and for assessing the net effect of the demonstrations on FSP expenditures for benefits and administrative costs. Section A describes the research objectives and questions that will be addressed by the cost analysis. We then present an overview of an approach for estimating program costs and the data needed to conduct the analyses. Subsequent sections describe the types of costs that the federal government, demonstration sites, nonprofit partners, and the comparison sites will incur.

### **A. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS**

The objective of the cost analysis is to quantify, to the extent possible, the Federal, State, and local administrative costs of the demonstrations.

The demonstrations could affect the costs of the federal FSP program in two main ways: by affecting the amount of FSP benefits paid and by affecting the administrative cost of providing each dollar of benefits. For the most part, federal funds cover all the costs of the food stamp benefits and 50 percent of the state's costs of administering the program. So the costs to the

federal FSP include the sum of the change in FSP benefits paid and 50 percent of the state and local FSP's costs of administering the demonstration.<sup>1</sup>

The evaluation will also measure the costs to the grantees and their nonprofit partners associated with the start-up of the demonstration, serving clients under the demonstration, and reporting for the USDA and the evaluators. These costs include costs of paid staff and imputed costs of volunteer labor and donated items.

Key research questions include:

- What costs are associated with the initial start-up of the demonstrations?
- What are the major costs associated with the ongoing administration of the demonstrations?
- What benefit amounts are paid out under the demonstrations?
- What is the net effect of the demonstrations on federal FSP expenditures, and expenditures to state and local agencies?

## **B. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

To develop an estimate of demonstration program costs, we recommend that the evaluation rely on an approach that bases cost estimates on information collected through staff interviews about the use of staff and other resources in implementing the program, supplemented by data on costs obtained from the quarterly reports sites submit. We recommend relying primarily on detailed staff interviews that use protocols for examining costs on how staff time is used and how much time is required for various demonstration-related activities. This approach, sometimes referred to as the “building-up” cost estimation approach (see Ohls and Rosenberg 1999), will

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<sup>1</sup>In addition, the federal government will incur costs associated with evaluating the demonstrations. These include the costs of the contracts issued to design and evaluate the demonstrations.

help ensure consistency across all sites in the way costs are measured and will make it possible to include all relevant costs.

Our experience in other FSP evaluation work suggests that administrative cost data as reported either by demonstration sites or by states is seldom sufficiently detailed for meeting the analytic objectives of an evaluation. Often, available administrative data are aggregated into one or only a small number of functional categories (for example, issuance, eligibility, etc.) and/or they are aggregated principally by line item (staff, computer, and other). Neither case makes it possible to focus on the specific costs at issue for a demonstration evaluation, such as the cost changes associated with outreach or the costs of the staff time spent working with their nonprofit partners involved in demonstration operations.

Another problem with administrative data is that the data systems that produce them are usually designed for cost reimbursement or audit purposes, and do not necessarily reflect the types of accounting conventions that would facilitate evaluation work. To take one important example, methods for allocating joint costs are often structured on an *average cost* basis and do not reflect *marginal costs*, which often are more relevant in an evaluation context. Marginal costs, or the change in costs due to the demonstration, are appropriate for activities (such as processing applications) that occur regardless of the demonstration. Further, even within the context of an average cost perspective, cost allocation procedures can often vary dramatically between program offices.

In light of these factors, cost estimation procedures that rely on detailed staff interviews of how staff allocate their time and of how long they typically spend on demonstration-related activities are of particular interest. The resulting information then can be converted to dollar terms, based on salary mid-point information by labor category, together with estimates of fringe and overhead costs.

We recommend this approach because, other than the food benefits themselves, staff time will be by far the largest cost element of these demonstrations. The information about labor costs can be supplemented with direct cost information about any non-labor cost that appears to be important, such as payments to vendors or to other organizations involved in demonstration activities.

Key advantages of this approach of “building-up” cost estimates from detailed interview data are that it allows the evaluators to retain control over how costs are defined, and it makes it possible to disaggregate costs to whatever level of detail is necessary to meet evaluation objectives (Ohls and Rosenberg 1999).

This technique can be used directly to estimate the labor costs associated with the demonstrations, as well as to identify new labor functions associated with these demonstrations and their approximate costs. It also makes it possible to focus specifically on changes in costs associated with demonstration activities, by focusing the questioning protocols on the activities of particular interest. Also, by disaggregating changes in costs in different components, it will be possible to assess the degree to which any changes in direct costs at the FSP offices are offset by costs to the partners.

The quarterly reports are likely to also contain some data on demonstration costs for the evaluation. These reports might offer a convenient way to find out certain types of needed information that is clearly included in disaggregated form in these administrative reports. For example, it is possible that payments to vendors or other third parties would be shown directly as line items in these reports. In addition, it will be important to broadly reconcile the patterns shown in the administrative reports with those shown in the more detailed analysis described above. For instance, if patterns of changes appear to be different in the two sets of reports, it will be important both to avoid errors and to ensure the face validity of the findings to be able to

explain the reasons for the differences, such as possible differences in how key cost elements are allocated across programs.

With regard to the issue of in-kind labor and other donated items, when cost results are sensitive to these items, we recommend developing two sets of cost estimates. One set would be based solely on *monetary* costs, without including donated time or goods. A second set might include donated time and goods valued at roughly their retail market value. For instance, various types of labor time (such as delivering commodity packages) could be valued at roughly the average wage rates of similar workers in the public or private sectors. Similarly, food that is distributed could be valued at its retail prices using a sampling approach, if necessary, to estimate this.<sup>2</sup>

To collect these data, we recommend that the evaluators prepare for each site a set of cost worksheets that request detailed information about demonstration cost components and instructions for filling out the worksheets. After the sites have a chance to review the worksheets, someone from the evaluation team should call the sites to answer questions and help the respondents fill out the worksheets, as needed. The evaluators should carefully review the worksheets to ensure completeness and consistency and follow up with the respondents as needed.

When the data elements from the worksheets are complete and internally consistent, the data can be entered into an Excel spreadsheet template to compute the desired unit costs by component.

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<sup>2</sup>The two approaches above to valuing donated labor time can be thought of as placing a lower bound (that is, zero) and an upper bound (market prices) on the value of donated labor and goods. If desired, possible intermediate approaches could be considered as well, such as using the minimum wage for donated labor and using wholesale prices for donated goods.

## **C. FEDERAL COSTS**

The demonstrations could affect the costs of the federal FSP program by affecting the amount of FSP benefits paid and by affecting the administrative cost of providing each dollar of benefits.

### **1. Changes in the Costs of FSP Benefits**

The demonstrations, if successful, will increase participation and hence the total amount of benefits. As discussed in Chapter II, they might also affect the average value of benefits paid if there is greater FSP participation among low- or high-benefit groups or if households who select the commodity alternative are, on average, eligible for a higher or lower food stamp benefit amount. Table IV.1 illustrates how the evaluators can compute an estimate of the change in total FSP benefits for the elderly for each site. Table IV.2 illustrates how to compute the change in total FSP benefits due to the commodity option in Connecticut and North Carolina. Table IV.3 indicates the distribution of FSP benefits for the individuals/households who selected the commodity option.

### **2. Changes in the Administrative Costs of Providing Benefits**

The evaluation will measure the cost of ongoing administration of the demonstrations, as described in Section D. One-half of the administrative costs incurred by local and state FSP offices will be the change in the federal administrative costs of providing benefits.

## **D. COSTS TO THE STATE/LOCAL GRANTEES AND THEIR NONPROFIT PARTNERS**

The evaluation will measure the costs to the grantees and their nonprofit partners associated with the start-up of the demonstration, serving clients under the demonstration, and reporting for

TABLE IV.1

CHANGE IN AVERAGE FSP BENEFITS FOR  
THE ELDERLY DUE TO DEMONSTRATION

SITE NAME

	Beginning of Demonstration	Year 1	Difference	Year 2	Difference
Treatment Site(s)					
Number of elderly FSP participants					
Average level of benefits					
Total amount of FSP benefits					
Comparison Sites					
Number of elderly FSP participants					
Average level of benefits					
Total amount of FSP benefits					
Treatment-Comparison site difference					
Number of elderly FSP participants					
Average level of benefits					
Total amount of FSP benefits					

NOTE: The total amount of FSP benefits might not equal the product of the number of elderly FSP participants and the average level of benefits because the number of participants will vary from month to month.

TABLE IV.2

CHANGE IN FSP BENEFITS FOR THE ELDERLY WHO  
SELECT THE COMMODITY OPTION

SITE NAME

	Year 1	Year 2	Total
Benefit value of commodity package			
Number of commodity packages delivered			
Total value of commodity benefits			
Total FSP benefits for which demonstration participants are eligible			
Change in FSP Benefits			

NOTE: The benefit value of the commodity package includes the federal cost of the commodities and the shipping cost. It does not include the costs that the federal government pays for storage.

TABLE IV.3

DISTRIBUTION OF FSP BENEFITS  
 AMONG THE ELDERLY WHO SELECT THE COMMODITY OPTION

SITE NAME

	FSP Benefit Amounts for Which Individuals Are Eligible			
	Minimum (\$10 or less)	< Commodity Benefit	≥ Commodity Benefit	75-100% of Maximum Benefit
Year 1				
Year 2				

NOTES: For year 1, the commodity benefit value is \$\_\_\_ (to be determined), the maximum benefit is \$\_\_\_, and a total of \_\_\_ individuals selected the commodity option. For year 2, the commodity benefit value is \$\_\_\_, the maximum benefit is \$\_\_\_, and \_\_\_ individuals selected the commodity option.

the USDA and the evaluators. This section discusses the components of costs that the state/local grantees and their nonprofit partners will incur.

## **1. Demonstration Start-Up Costs**

As indicated in Table IV.4, the demonstration start-up costs for each organization participating in the demonstration include the costs of demonstration design, contracting with demonstration partners, management (hiring and overseeing staff), publicity/outreach, information systems modifications, obtaining waivers from the USDA, and training staff.

For all of these components of cost, with the possible exception of publicity, the primary costs are labor costs. For example, the cost of designing each commodity package demonstration includes the costs of designing the contents of the commodity packages, determining the delivery system, developing a staffing plan, and planning for inventories. For every demonstration activity, evaluators should complete a table similar to Table IV.5 based on interviews with demonstration staff and the grantees' quarterly reports. Table IV.5 lists the type of staff, hours, and hourly rates for all people—paid staff and volunteers—who worked on demonstration activities.

For demonstration activities that would not take place without the demonstration—such as contracting with demonstration partners—total labor hours should be reported in Table IV.5. For demonstration activities that would also occur without the demonstration—such as processing FSP applications and conducting publicity/outreach activities—the evaluators should measure the *change* in labor hours due to the demonstration.

The cost of volunteer labor is an important part of labor costs. Each demonstration will need to identify all the demonstration activities that volunteers perform and develop a system for collecting the number of hours they worked. The sites and evaluators will work together to

TABLE IV.4

COSTS OF IMPLEMENTING THE ELDERLY  
NUTRITION DEMONSTRATIONS

SITE NAME

Type of Cost	Grantee	Partner 1	Partner 2	Partner 3	Total
Demonstration Design					
Simplified application design and production					
Application assistance design					
Commodity package design					
Contracting with demonstration partners					
Management					
Hiring staff					
General oversight and planning					
Publicity/Outreach					
Information systems modifications					
Obtaining waivers from USDA					
Training staff					
Purchasing equipment					
Providing data for the evaluation design					

NOTES: Nominal dollar amounts are shown. Includes imputed costs of volunteer labor and donated items.

TABLE IV.5

LABOR COST OF [ACTIVITY NAME]  
 ORGANIZATION NAME  
 PILOT NAME

Number of People	Type of Staff	Hours per Person	Total Hours	Hourly Rate	Fringe Benefits	Total Labor Costs
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NOTES: A separate table will be prepared for each demonstration activity. Total labor hours will be reported for activities that would not take place without the demonstration, such as contracting with demonstration partners. The change in labor hours due to the demonstration will be reported for demonstration activities that would occur without the demonstration, such as processing FSP applications. Demonstration activities that have a labor component include:

- Demonstration design
- Contracting with demonstration partners
- Demonstration implementation management
- Publicity/outreach
- Management/oversight of demonstration operations
- Information systems modifications
- Obtaining waivers from USDA
- Processing Applications
- Working with demonstration partners
- Working with and paying vendors
- Maintaining commodity package inventories
- Taking orders for commodity packages
- Planning and preparing commodity packages
- Delivering commodity packages
- Providing data and reports to USDA
- Providing data to the evaluators

Nominal dollar amounts are shown

determine how to assign a monetary value to each type of volunteers' time. Possible values that could be placed on the value of volunteer's time include their hourly wage in paid employment, the hourly wage of local workers in the industry who do similar work, or the minimum wage. The approach used to value volunteer time might vary, depending on the nature of the volunteer work.

## **2. Costs of Serving Clients During the Demonstration**

The costs of serving clients during the demonstration include the costs of processing applications (for the simplified application pilot), providing assistance (for the application assistance pilots), and preparing and delivering commodity packages (for the commodity alternative pilots). The evaluators can summarize these costs separately for each participating organization in a manner similar to Table IV.6.

Administrative costs incurred by the FSP offices will change if the demonstration results in a change in the number of FSP participants or in the average amount of time needed to process an application. If the level of FSP participation changes, as determined by the methods described in Chapter II, then the administrative costs associated with this change is the average administrative cost per case multiplied by the change in the number of elderly FSP participants due to the demonstration. If data on average administrative cost per case are not available for the local FSP office(s), then the evaluators can use an estimate of the average administrative cost per case for the state, which should be available. If the demonstration has an effect on the average time needed to process an application (this time should decline in the simplified eligibility pilot), then the evaluators should estimate this change in administrative cost also.

TABLE IV.6

COSTS OF SERVING CLIENTS UNDER THE DEMONSTRATION

ORGANIZATION NAME  
PILOT NAME

Type of Cost	Amount			Total
	Pre-demonstration	Year 1	Year 2	
<b>Labor Costs</b>				
Publicity/Outreach				
Processing applications				
Providing application assistance				
Explaining commodity benefit				
Management				
Working with partners				
Hiring/supervising staff				
Demonstration oversight				
Distributing commodities				
Taking orders from clients				
Ordering USDA commodities				
Producing packages				
Maintaining inventories				
Delivering packages				
<b>Non-labor Costs</b>				
Supplies				
Rent				
Insurance				
Utilities				
Equipment				
Computers				
Transportation				
Storage and refrigeration				
Containers				
Other				
Donated items				
Donated space				
Commodity storage				
Commodity transportation				
Travel				
<b>Total Costs</b>				

NOTES: Nominal dollar amounts are shown. Includes imputed costs of volunteer labor. Total labor hours are reported for activities that would not take place without the demonstration. The change in labor hours due to the demonstration is reported for demonstration activities that would occur without the demonstration.

### **3. Costs of Producing Reports and Providing Data**

Each pilot will produce reports (such as the quarterly reports) for the USDA and provide data to the evaluators. Table IV.7 summarizes these costs.

#### **E. COSTS TO THE COMPARISON SITES**

Except for two comparison counties in the simplified application demonstration, the comparison sites will not directly incur any costs associated with the demonstration. However, as explained below, under some circumstances it will be helpful to obtain information on the general administrative costs the comparison sites incur.

In the simplified demonstration, both the treatment counties (Gadsden and Leon counties) and the comparison counties suggested by Florida's Department of Children and Families (Jackson and Alachua counties) will use a one-page, simplified application for elderly-only households and they will waive the face-to-face interview with these applicants. The primary difference in the application process between the two groups of counties is that the treatment counties will only verify noncitizenship, while the comparison counties must continue with their standard verification procedures. Therefore, the evaluators should collect information from the comparison counties on the costs they incurred to use the simplified application.

If any important changes occur in the administrative environment at any site during the demonstration period—such as new FNS regulations about case processing that are independent of the demonstration—then general information about administrative costs from the comparison sites might be used to help quantify and subtract administrative costs in the demonstration site that are due to the new regulations.

If the evaluators request data directly from any of the comparison sites, the evaluation budget should include funds to reimburse these sites for their costs of providing these data.

TABLE IV.7

REPORTING COSTS

ORGANIZATION NAME

PILOT NAME

Type of Cost	Amount			
	Pre-demonstration	Year 1	Year 2	Total
<b>Reports for USDA</b>				
Quarterly Reports				
Financial Status Report (269A)				
Commodity Reports (Forms 388, 388A, 46, etc.)				
<b>Providing Data to Evaluators</b>				
Participation and benefit data				
Contact information for client survey				
Cost data				
Site visits				
Telephone conversations				
<b>Attending Meetings</b>				
Grantee Orientation Meeting				
Commodity Training—Part 2				
Evaluation Meeting—February 7				
<b>Total Costs</b>				

NOTE: Nominal dollar amounts are shown.

## **V. PROCESS ANALYSIS: DESCRIBING THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS AND ASSESSING EFFECTS ON STAKEHOLDERS**

If the evaluation indicates that elderly food stamp participation or satisfaction increase as a result of the demonstration, USDA might decide to implement these demonstration models elsewhere. The primary goal of the process analysis is therefore to develop a comprehensive understanding of each demonstration—how it was implemented, the problems it encountered, and whether and how it improved the food stamp application and service processes. Those states wishing to implement similar programs can benefit from the lessons learned from the implementation and operations of the pilot programs, as documented through the process study. In addition, the findings from the process analysis can provide a context for interpreting the findings on food stamp participation and client satisfaction by helping to explain *why* any observed change in food stamp participation or client satisfaction occurred. Through the evaluation’s process analysis, the evaluators will also determine what effects the pilot programs had on stakeholders.

This chapter presents the design for the process analysis. Section A presents the research questions for the implementation analysis and the examination of the effects on stakeholders. The second section discusses in detail the topics for the implementation analysis and demonstration effects on stakeholders. Section C describes the data collection approach. The final section describes data analysis and synthesis.

### **A. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

It will be important to be able to replicate any successful demonstration. To this end, the evaluation will describe in detail how each pilot was implemented. Discussions with the demonstration staff should yield answers to the following research questions:

- What steps were taken to implement the demonstrations, including the process for identifying and recruiting nonprofit organizations as partners, outreach efforts, changes to application forms, staff training, and any other administrative changes such as modifications to existing computer systems?
- What problems were encountered in implementing the demonstration, and how were these problems addressed?
- What problems were encountered in establishing and maintaining partnerships among local food stamp agencies, community groups and other stakeholders?
- What lessons were learned from the demonstrations?

The process analysis will also describe the effect of the demonstration on stakeholders.

These demonstrations have four types of stakeholders:

1. The Food Stamp Program
2. The grantees
  - Demonstration staff/managers
  - Caseworkers
  - Systems analysts
  - Fiscal staff
3. The grantees' nonprofit partners
  - Demonstration staff/managers
  - Volunteers
4. Organizations or people that assist low-income elderly
  - Alternate food assistance providers such as food pantries
  - Local Area Agencies on Aging
  - Hunger advocacy groups
  - Resident service coordinators in senior housing complexes
  - Farmers' market coupon programs
  - Meals on Wheels programs (not affiliated with the demonstration)

Through discussions with stakeholders, the evaluators will address the following key research questions:

- What demonstration-related improvements occurred in the food stamp application and delivery process?
- How have the demonstrations affected caseworker caseloads and caseworker customer service in the local food stamp office?

- How have the demonstrations impacted alternate food assistance providers?

## **B. TOPICS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS AND DEMONSTRATION EFFECTS ON STAKEHOLDERS**

To address the research questions, there are six topics that should be explored in the process analysis:

1. Community context and demonstration goals
2. Structure of the demonstration
3. Description of services
4. Implementation process
5. Accomplishments and challenges
6. Lessons learned

The first three topics provide the background and context necessary for understanding the implementation process and the lessons learned. The rest of this section discusses each topic in more detail.

### **1. Community Context and Demonstration Goals**

The community context and demonstration goals section includes information on the policy context, service area, external events, and demonstration goals, as indicated in Table V.1. Stakeholders at each pilot will be asked to discuss elderly participation in the FSP in their service area, describe elderly FSP participants in their service area, and describe the types of food assistance available to low-income elderly people. Key staff in the FSP offices will be asked to describe the FSP structure and services to the elderly before the demonstration. In addition, demonstration management staff at each site will be asked to describe their organization, explain why they decided to participate in the demonstration, and indicate the main goals of the demonstration.

TABLE V.1

COMMUNITY CONTEXT AND DEMONSTRATION GOALS

---

**1. POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 In your view, what are the main reasons why participation rates for the elderly in the Food Stamp Program (FSP) in your community are relatively low?
- 1.2 In your community, what factors could increase elderly FSP participation rates?
- 1.3 How does the FSP participation rate in your service area compare with the national rate of 30 percent?

**2. SERVICE AREA**

- 2.1 Briefly describe your service area—the percentage who are nonwhite, the percentage living below poverty, percentage who are low-income elderly, community activities available for elderly, etc.
- 2.2 How would you describe the “typical” elderly person in your service area who is eligible for food stamps?
- 2.3 Are there any subgroups of elderly that we should be aware of? (for example, particular racial/ethnic groups)
- 2.4 What is the age distribution of elderly FSP participants in your service area?
- 2.5 In addition to food stamps, what types of food assistance are available to low-income elderly?
- 2.6 What kinds of barriers—such as language difficulties and transportation difficulties—do the elderly FSP applicants in your service area face?

**3. FSP OFFICE (BEFORE DEMONSTRATION)**

- 3.1 Please describe the FSP office structure before the demonstration.
- 3.2 Please describe the FSP office’s services for the elderly before the demonstration. For example, did caseworkers receive special training for serving elderly clients? Was there a special application form for elderly clients? Did the elderly have to apply/re-certify in person, or could they apply/re-certify by telephone or mail? Were there any special outreach programs for the elderly?

TABLE V.1 (continued)

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**4. EXTERNAL EVENTS**

- 4.1 Did any external events (for example, a political or economic event) result in any changes in demonstration operations?
- 4.2 Were there any changes in the FSP office operations independent of the demonstration that could have had an effect on FSP participation or client satisfaction? Were there any such changes in the operations of the nonprofit partners?
- 4.3 Were there any factors locally—such as other outreach programs—that might have also had an effect on FSP participation by the elderly?
- 4.4 Were there any factors statewide, regionally, or nationally that might have also had an effect on FSP participation by the elderly?

**5. DEMONSTRATION GOALS**

- 5.1 [For demonstration partners]: Briefly describe your organization. Also, please describe the organizations that you will be working with for this demonstration, such as senior centers, congregate cafes, the Senior Community Services Employment Program (Maine), etc.
  - 5.2 Why did you decide to participate in this demonstration? What were the key factors you considered?
  - 5.3 In your view, what are main goals of the demonstration?
-

Findings from the process analysis will be essential in explaining why changes occurred in FSP participation or client satisfaction and in quantifying how much of any changes are due to the demonstration versus other factors. Therefore, stakeholders should also be asked to describe events independent of the demonstration—such as any changes in the FSP operations or FSP outreach efforts implemented by other government or nonprofit agencies in the service area—that can affect FSP participation and client satisfaction.

## **2. Demonstration Structure**

A second important aspect of documenting the demonstration programs is answering the basic question: Who is doing it? Demonstration directors and managers will be asked to describe their demonstrations' structure by describing their demonstration design, staff, and organization, as indicated in Table V.2. The discussion about demonstration design should include each manager's assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the design and information about changes in the design over time. The evaluators should also ask the directors and key managers at each site to explain why they selected their demonstration partners, describe the organizational linkages that developed, and describe all the staff involved with demonstration operations—including volunteers.

## **3. Description of Demonstration Services**

A clear description of how services are defined and delivered is the core of the process analysis documentation. Managers, caseworkers, and other demonstration staff will be asked to describe how their demonstration serves elderly clients (Table V.3). The evaluators should collect information on how FSP applications for the elderly are usually processed and whether any changes occurred due to the demonstration. For example, at each site it will be important to

TABLE V.2  
DEMONSTRATION STRUCTURE

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**1. DEMONSTRATION DESIGN**

- 1.1 Describe how your demonstration operates, including the service area it covers.
- 1.2 In what ways has your demonstration design changed over time? Why?
- 1.3 What are the strengths of this demonstration design?
- 1.4 What are the weaknesses of this design?
- 1.5 Did you consider other demonstration designs? Please describe.

**2. STAFF AND ORGANIZATION**

- 2.1 What organizations/agencies have been involved with the design and operation of your demonstration?
  - 2.2 What types of organizational linkages developed? How well did these work?
  - 2.3 Why did you select your demonstration partners?
  - 2.4 Who are the key demonstration staff in your organization and what are their roles?
  - 2.5 What other staff from your organization have been involved in providing demonstration services? Have these staff received any training to serve demonstration clients?
  - 2.6 What types of volunteers does your organization use and what are their primary activities?
  - 2.7 Who were the key decision-makers when your organization designed the demonstration?
-

TABLE V.3  
DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

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**1. FSP SERVICES TO ELDERLY APPLICANTS**

- 1.1 Are caseworkers trained to process applications for the elderly any differently from applications for those who are less than 60 years old?
- 1.2 Are elderly people assigned to generic caseworkers or to specific caseworkers whose caseload consists only of elderly or elderly and other adults?
- 1.3 Did staffing responsibilities change in the FSP office to accommodate the elderly pilots? For example, will there be specific caseworkers assigned to the project?
- 1.4 Did application or certification procedures change as a result of the pilot?
- 1.5 How are applications normally received from elderly applicants? (For example, mail or in person?)
- 1.6 Are applications for food stamps taken at the Social Security office?
- 1.7 Approximately how many applications or recertifications does your office process in a quarter for the elderly?
- 1.8 On average, how often is recertification required for elderly clients?
- 1.9 Did the FSP application form used by the elderly change during the demonstration? If yes, please explain.
- 1.10 Approximately how many (or what percentage of) FSP applications are started but not completed every quarter?
- 1.11 Based on your observations, what percentage of the elderly are accompanied by someone who helps them with their application?
- 1.12 How long does it usually take an elderly person to apply for food stamps?
- 1.13 How accessible is your office to public transportation?

**2. SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE SIMPLIFIED ELIGIBILITY DEMONSTRATION**

- 2.1 Describe how the FSP application form was modified for the demonstration.
- 2.2 Describe how the certification process was modified for the demonstration.

TABLE V.3 (continued)

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**3. SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE APPLICATION ASSISTANCE DEMONSTRATIONS**

- 3.1 In what specific ways did your demonstration help clients with their applications?
- 3.2 On average, approximately how much time would application assistants spend with their clients?
- 3.3 For which aspects of the FSP application process do clients seem to need the most help?
- 3.4 If the clients you assisted had not received your assistance, what other alternatives would they have had—with respect to other organizations or with respect to friends or family members?
- 3.5 What approaches did your organization use to identify the clients who were assisted by your demonstration staff or volunteers?
- 3.6 What aspects of application assistance did clients seem to find the most helpful? (For example, meeting with them in their homes, receiving assistance from a peer, explaining FSP eligibility rules, etc.)
- 3.7 To what extent did application assistants help clients who were re-certifying for the FSP?

**4. SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE COMMODITY ALTERNATIVE DEMONSTRATIONS**

- 4.1 How many different commodity packages do you offer? What types of commodities are available in each package? How do the packages differ from each other?
- 4.2 How have the number and contents of the commodity packages changed over time?
- 4.3 What do your clients particularly like about commodity packages? (The shopping is done for them? The option of not using their EBT card? Other aspects?)
- 4.4 Describe how your commodities are distributed.
- 4.5 What percentage of the packages is being delivered directly to homes and what percentage is picked up at a meal site?
- 4.6 To what extent have Meals on Wheels delivery staff or congregate meal staff associated with the demonstration accepted FSP applications?

TABLE V.3 (continued)

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**5. FSP SERVICES PROVIDED BY ALL DEMONSTRATION MODELS**

- 4.7 Approximately how many new applications for the elderly are processed each quarter? What strategies did demonstration staff and volunteers use to reach potential clients?
  - 4.8 Are your demonstration services available only to certain groups of elderly clients, such as pure elderly FSP households, or elderly people who reside in your organization's service area?
  - 4.9 Please describe the "typical" client served by your demonstration with respect to age, race/ethnicity, gender, experience with the FSP, whether a new applicant or someone who is re-certifying for the FSP, and any other characteristics you can identify. Have there been any subgroups of clients that your demonstration served?
  - 4.10 Were there any demonstration-related improvements in the food stamp application process?
  - 4.11 How much shorter in time is the application process?
  - 4.12 Have the demonstrations affected caseworker caseloads and caseworker customer service in the local food stamp office?
  - 4.13 How have the demonstrations affected alternate food assistance providers?
  - 4.14 Have you noticed any change in FSP participation or satisfaction as a result of the demonstration? Please explain.
-

know whether the FSP application form for the elderly was modified (for example, shortened) during the demonstration.

For the simplified eligibility pilot, it will be important to learn how the FSP application form and certification process were modified for the demonstration. Demonstration staff with the application assistance pilots should explain how they recruited and helped elderly FSP applicants and identify the aspects of the FSP application process for which clients needed the most help. Commodity alternative demonstration staff should describe their commodity packages and distribution system and discuss what they think their clients liked about the commodity alternative.

All stakeholders should be asked to assess whether the demonstrations resulted in new elderly applicants to the FSP, better customer service for elderly clients, and higher client satisfaction.

#### **4. Implementation Process**

The success of a pilot might largely depend upon the strength of its implementation process—that is, the planning, outreach, training, and staff that each pilot used (Table V.4). The evaluators should ask the demonstration directors and managers to describe the overall implementation process: the steps involved in planning and implementing the pilot, the key strategic planning decisions made, and the factors that helped and hindered implementation.

In sites where the evaluators find evidence of higher FSP participation levels by the elderly, the increase in participation could be attributed to both the intervention (simplified eligibility, application assistance, or an attractive commodity package) and the pilot's publicity campaign about the intervention. The evaluators should ask demonstration managers to describe the publicity campaign—the populations that were targeted, the main themes used in the campaign,

TABLE V.4  
IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

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**1. OVERALL IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS**

- 1.1 What steps were involved in planning and implementing the demonstration?
- 1.2 What strategic planning decisions (publicity, partnerships, etc) were made to implement the demonstration?
- 1.3 What factors or events helped or hindered implementation?
- 1.4 What difficulties arose?
- 1.5 How were these difficulties resolved?
- 1.6 What factors were most important in successfully implementing the demonstration?

**2. OUTREACH AND PUBLICITY**

- 2.1 What populations did your publicity campaign target?
- 2.2 Describe the various outreach and publicity strategies that have been used.
- 2.3 What were the main messages and themes used in your publicity campaign?
- 2.4 What publicity/outreach strategies were most effective?

**3. TRAINING**

- 3.1 Who received training for demonstration activities?
- 3.2 How were these people trained?
- 3.3 How long did the training take, and how often was there “refresher” training?

**4. PROGRAM OPERATIONS**

- 4.1 Were any program changes initiated due to problems encountered in implementation?

TABLE V.4 (continued)

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- 4.2 What kinds of problems or issues did you have to address when forming or maintaining partnerships among your nonprofit partner(s), community groups, and other stakeholders?
  - 4.3 Were there any deviations from your original implementation schedule? If so, why?
  - 4.4 Were there any changes in staff roles and responsibilities over time?
  - 4.5 Was there any turnover in demonstration staff? Please describe.
-

and the strategies that were most effective. The evaluators should also ask other stakeholders, such as representatives from the Area Agency on Aging (AAA), food pantries, and resident managers in senior housing complexes for their views on the demonstrations' outreach efforts.

Because the demonstrations will provide new services to elderly FSP applicants, it will be important to learn how demonstration staff were trained to perform these new activities. Who received training? How long did the training take, and was there any "refresher" training?

Over time, demonstration operations might change due to problems encountered in implementation. Throughout the demonstration, the evaluators should collect information on deviations in the implementation schedule, changes in staff roles and responsibilities, and issues or problems that arise when forming or maintaining partnerships with nonprofit partners, community groups, and other stakeholders.

Finally, the evaluators should collect data on external events that affect demonstration operations or outcomes. For example, they will need to identify outreach programs by other (non-demonstration) agencies that might have had an effect on FSP participation by the elderly. They will also need to identify other factors (such as a sharp increase in out-of-pocket prescription drug costs) that might affect elderly FSP participation.

## **5. Accomplishments, Challenges, and Lessons Learned**

Across all aspects of the demonstration—planning, implementation, serving clients, and providing data for the USDA and the evaluators—the demonstration managers should be asked to describe their successes, challenges, and lessons learned (Tables V.5 and V.6). Demonstration managers should be asked to identify any unintended effects of the demonstration, such as fraud, higher error rates, or delays in application filing dates. They should also assess the potential for replicating their demonstration in other states. These assessments will help USDA and the evaluators determine the overall effectiveness of each demonstration model.

TABLE V.5  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES

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**1. SUCCESSES**

1.1 What successes did your organization achieve with respect to:

- Demonstration planning?
- Demonstration implementation?
- Serving clients?
- Providing data for the USDA or the evaluators?

1.2 Overall, what were the three main accomplishments of the demonstration?

**2. CHALLENGES**

2.1 What challenges did your organization face with respect to:

- Demonstration planning?
- Demonstration implementation?
- Serving clients?
- Providing data for the USDA or the evaluators?

**3. REPLICATION**

3.1 What is the potential for replicating your demonstration in other states?

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TABLE V.6  
LESSONS LEARNED

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**1. Lessons Learned**

- 1.1 What key lessons have you and/or your organization learned with respect to:
- Demonstration planning?
  - Demonstration implementation?
  - Serving clients?
  - Providing data for the USDA and the evaluators?
- 1.2 Considering what you learned from this experience, are there any things you would do differently? Please explain.
- 1.3 Did the demonstration result in any unintended effects, such as fraud, higher error rates, or delays in application filing dates?
- 1.4 Overall, what were the three main lessons you learned?
-

## **C. DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

To address these research topics, data should be obtained from: (1) continuous monitoring, (2) site visits, (3) quarterly reports submitted by the pilots, and (4) structured discussion groups. The rest of this section describes the data collection plan. Table V.7 summarizes the topics and data sources for the elderly nutrition process analysis.

### **1. Continuous Monitoring**

To keep abreast of changes in program operations and external events that might affect FSP participation, client satisfaction, and program costs, the evaluators should continually monitor each pilot. A telephone call should be scheduled every quarter with two key contact people in each pilot. As appropriate, the evaluators should follow up these calls with telephone calls to other relevant people.

### **2. Site Visits**

In-person case study interviews should be conducted with key stakeholders shortly after the evaluation begins and every year after that. These visits should take approximately two days (excluding travel time), and be scheduled by working closely with the contact person at each pilot and with USDA project staff.

The site visit questions can be developed from the research questions contained in Tables V.1 through V.6. The stakeholders in each site are listed in Tables C.1 through C.6 in Appendix C. Stakeholders who cannot be visited within a two-day site visit should be contacted by telephone. If some stakeholders are reluctant to speak with the evaluators, the evaluators should seek the assistance of the demonstration grantees, nonprofit partners, or the USDA.

TABLE V.7  
TOPICS AND DATA SOURCES FOR THE ELDERLY  
NUTRITION PROCESS ANALYSIS

Research Topic	Data Sources				
	Site Visits			Telephone Discussions	Site Documents (Including Quarterly Reports)
	Interviews	Structured Discussions (with alternate food assistance providers)	Observations		
<b>DEMONSTRATION CONTEXT</b>					
Policy Context	✓	✓		✓	
Service Area	✓	✓		✓	✓
Pre-demonstration FSP	✓				✓
External Events	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Demonstration Goals	✓			✓	✓
<b>DEMONSTRATION STRUCTURE</b>					
Demonstration Design	✓			✓	✓
Staff and Organization	✓		✓	✓	✓
<b>DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES</b>					
FSP Services to Elderly Applicants in General	✓			✓	✓
Services Provided to Demonstration Clients	✓	✓		✓	✓
<b>IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS</b>					
Overall Implementation Process	✓			✓	✓
Outreach and Publicity	✓	✓		✓	✓
Training	✓			✓	✓
Program Operations	✓			✓	✓
<b>ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES</b>					
Successes	✓			✓	✓
Challenges	✓			✓	✓
Replication Elsewhere	✓	✓		✓	
<b>LESSONS LEARNED</b>					
Lessons Learned	✓			✓	✓

As soon as possible after the site visits, the evaluators should begin compiling and synthesizing their notes. We recommend storing, coding, and analyzing the data with computer software (such as Atlas.ti) that is designed to support qualitative data management and analysis. Software packages such as Atlas.ti can be used to systematically code notes from discussions with stakeholders, and queries of the database can be used to help formulate conclusions.

The evaluators should validate their conclusions by triangulating the informants' responses. In other words, informants' reports (across respondent types) should be compared for consistency. In addition, information contained in the demonstrations' quarterly reports can be used for response validation.

### **3. Quarterly Reports**

To keep track of developments at each site, the evaluators should review the quarterly reports and welfare/FSP newsletters (such as *State Capitols Newsletters: Public Assistance and Welfare Trends*). The quarterly reports will contain monthly FSP participation and benefits data in the pilot and comparison areas, activities conducted, major accomplishments, deviations from the proposed plan, difficulties encountered, and solutions developed to overcome difficulties. In addition, the application assistance demonstrations must report the monthly number of elderly people/households that received application assistance, and the commodity alternative sites must report the number of elderly people/households that participated in the pilot and received a commodity package.

### **4. Structured Discussion Groups**

We recommend conducting a structured discussion with alternate food assistance providers at each site. Structured discussions are probably the most effective way to learn about the effect of the demonstrations on alternate food assistance providers. The dynamic of the structured

discussion group and the interactions among participants will stimulate discussions about food assistance and outreach to the elderly, elderly FSP participation, and the effects of the demonstration. This is probably the best way to elicit opinions and explore the direct and indirect impacts the demonstration has had on the alternate assistance providers. To capture the range of possible impacts, it will be helpful to recruit structured discussion group participants representative of the various types of people who serve as alternate food assistance providers for elderly individuals.

The structured discussions should be led by one researcher who serves as a facilitator. This facilitator will lead the discussion using a semi-structured protocol that will promote discussion among the participants. The role of the facilitator is to guide the discussion without biasing it, ensuring that no single respondent dominates the discussion. Another staff person observes, takes notes, and handles the logistics (such as tape recording). Although someone always takes notes, we recommend making a tape recording (and transcript) of each structured discussion session to enable a more careful review of the discussion.

Each structured discussion session should take 60 to 90 minutes. At the end of each session, each respondent will be given a cash honorarium for participating.

#### **D. DATA ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS**

A multifaceted approach to the analysis and interpretation of data collected for the process analysis will be used to produce a comprehensive description of the implementation of the demonstrations and their effects on stakeholders. Implementation analysis presents the challenge of combining information from various sources in a systematic approach for analysis and inference. Thus, we suggest two guiding principles:

- *Create a structure for analysis of the data in advance.* All the information collected for the process analysis must be analyzed in a consistent framework. Therefore, it is

important that an analytic framework for the analysis be developed. The research topics and questions outlined above represent the starting point for the development of such a framework.

- ***Triangulate sources and perspectives.*** It is critical that data collected through different strategies and from different sources be analyzed as a whole. Thus, the plan for analyzing the data should include identification of all sources from which data are to be collected on similar issues, as well as identification of ways in which data from multiple sources can be used to validate findings.

In general, the process analysis will proceed “from the inside out.” In other words, it will focus first on demonstration implementation and services, then on external factors and organizations. Next, the analysis will assess how the services provided through the demonstrations might affect client satisfaction and FSP participation. Ultimately, the analysis will generate lessons and recommendations for program design and assessments of the potential to replicate each demonstration in other states.

Findings can also be synthesized and compared across demonstrations to identify similarities and differences in their implementation and operational experiences. Tabular summaries of key program features can be created to assist in the cross-demonstration analysis. The analysis of cross-site differences can take into account differences in service environment and demonstration model type.



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## **APPENDIX A**

### **COMPARISON SITE SELECTION**



The best comparison sites for the evaluation of the Elderly Nutrition Demonstration will be those that will experience the same trends in elderly FSP participation as the pilot site, all else being equal. In designing this evaluation, we have identified for each pilot up to ten comparison sites in the same state that we expect will experience similar participation patterns.

The process for identifying comparison sites involved two steps. The first step was to identify preliminary comparison sites—the sites that are most similar to the pilot site based on key characteristics. For pilot sites that are counties, preliminary comparison sites are the other counties in the state that are most similar to the pilot county; for pilot sites that are towns, preliminary comparison sites are the other towns in the state that are most similar to the pilot town. We identified similar sites by analyzing data on elderly FSP participation trends, elderly population size, racial composition, and population density of each comparable site in the state. These characteristics were selected because they are correlated with elderly participation levels and patterns. We used these data to construct a similarity index in which a low index value indicates that a site is relatively similar to the pilot site. We selected the sites with the lowest index scores as the preliminary comparison sites. In each state, the number of preliminary comparison sites, as well as the range of similarity index score for those sites, varies.

In the second step, we discussed with state officials the preliminary comparison sites to determine whether they differ from the pilot sites in terms of characteristics not easily measured by the similarity index. For example, we discussed whether important differences existed in FSP service environments, transportation, and FSP supplements and alternatives. We also asked state officials to comment on the face validity of each comparison site. We removed from the preliminary comparison group those sites that were viewed to be a bad match with the pilot site. The sites remaining form the final comparison group for each pilot.

In conducting the analysis, the evaluator will base their findings on the differences observed between the pilot and comparison sites. The evaluator will conduct a sensitivity analysis of the findings by examining other comparison sites. As discussed in Chapter II, the sensitivity analysis will include examining a “second tier” of comparison sites – those sites with the lowest similarity index scores but not in the initial comparison group. The sensitivity analysis also will include examining those sites not in the initial comparison group but with service environment issues similar to the pilot site.

This appendix describes the steps taken to identify all comparison sites. First, we describe the similarity index used to identify similar sites. We then explain the steps taken to identify other similarities and dissimilarities. Finally, we explain the comparison sites chosen for each pilot site and describe special comparison sites that should also be used. The comparison sites identified here represent the best comparison sites given the information available at this time. The comparison sites ultimately used in the evaluation may change before or during the evaluation as new information about the appropriateness of each site becomes available.

## **A. SIMILARITY INDEX**

We used a similarity index to identify preliminary comparison sites – those most similar to the pilot site in each state. To construct the similarity index for each possible comparison site, we selected six key characteristics that are correlated with changes in elderly FSP participation:

1. The number of elderly FSP participants in the site in one month of 2001<sup>1</sup>
2. The percentage change in elderly FSP participation from 2000 to 2001<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Measures of elderly FSP participation were obtained from the state food stamp programs. The counts typically refer to one month in the fall of 2001.

<sup>2</sup>Measures of the change in elderly FSP participation were calculated by using elderly participation counts from the same months of 2000 and 2001. Elderly participation counts were obtained from the state food stamp programs.

3. The percentage of all elderly individuals in the site that participate in the FSP<sup>3</sup>
4. The percentage of all individuals in the site that is elderly<sup>4</sup>
5. The percentage of all individuals in the site that is nonwhite<sup>5</sup>
6. The population density of the site<sup>6</sup>

Sites that are similar along these six characteristics are more likely to have similar changes in the elderly FSP caseload over time.

The similarity index is designed to rank all sites in each state based on how similar they are to the pilot site. The index accounts for differences across sites in the size and in the range of values for each characteristic. The differences are measured in absolute terms so that a difference in one direction for one characteristic does not compensate for a difference in the reverse direction on another item. Additionally, the differences in the characteristic values are measured in relative terms. Specifically, we divide each absolute difference by the total range in values (computed over the potential comparison sites and the demonstration site). The advantage of this process is that if the pilot site has the maximum (minimum) value on the characteristic, a

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<sup>3</sup>The percent of elderly that participate in the FSP was calculated using administrative counts of the number of elderly participants divided by the total number elderly individuals in the site obtained from the 2000 decennial Census. Note that elderly FSP participants include individuals age 60 and over, but total elderly counts in the Census include only individuals age 65 and over. This discrepancy exists because, at the time the index was created, the only counts of elderly individuals available from the 2000 Census were those for individuals age 65 and older. While this will overstate the percentage of elderly age 60 and over that participate in the FSP, the relative size of the overstatement should be consistent across all sites.

<sup>4</sup>The percent of the population that is elderly was calculated using data from the 2000 decennial Census. Elderly individuals are defined in the Census as people age 65 and over.

<sup>5</sup>The percent of the population that is nonwhite was calculated using data from the 2000 decennial Census.

<sup>6</sup>The population density, which is equal to the number of people per square mile, was calculated using data from the 2000 decennial census.

comparison site with the minimum (maximum) value will receive a relative difference value of 1.0 (representing a 100 percent deviation from the demonstration site). Similarly, if the demonstration site has a middle value on the characteristic, a comparison site with a minimum or maximum value will receive a difference value of .50 (representing a 50 percent departure from the demonstration site). Hence, with this approach, the relative differences range from 0 to 1 and can be interpreted like a percentage that reflects the relative departure of the comparison site from the demonstration site in question. The contribution of each characteristic to the overall index is determined using a set of weights. In the end, the comparison site or sites with the lowest score on the index becomes the comparison site(s) that most closely matches the demonstration site with respect to the considered factors.

Formally, this type of metric is computed as in equation (1) below.

$$(1) \quad Index = \sum_i w_i \left[ \frac{|X_{C,i} - X_{D,i}|}{X_{MAX,i} - X_{MIN,i}} \right]$$

In equation (1),  $X_{C,i}$  denotes the value for a specific characteristic (e.g., the number of elderly FSP participants), indexed by  $i$ , for a prospective comparison site. Likewise  $X_{D,i}$  denotes the corresponding value from the demonstration site, and  $X_{MAX,i}$  and  $X_{MIN,i}$  denote the maximum and minimum values of this characteristic among all potential comparison sites (including the demonstration site). Finally,  $w_i$  is the weight that each characteristic is given in computing the index.

To see how this works, suppose that the similarity index is based only on two characteristics: (1) the number of elderly participants at the site and (2) the percentage of non-white people at the site. Also suppose that the demonstration site has a value of 500 applicants for the first characteristic and 20 percent non-white for the second. Among the potential

comparison sites, the range in values on the first characteristic is 300 to 500 (a 200 participant range), and for the second, it is 10 to 30 percent (a 20 percentage point range). In this case, the demonstration site has the maximum value on the first characteristic and a middle value on the second. Finally, suppose that one of the potential comparison sites has a value of 480 participants on the first characteristic and a value of 30 percent on the second characteristic. As a result, this comparison site receives a relative absolute difference of  $(480-500)/200=.10$  for the first characteristic and  $(30 - 20)/20 = .50$  for the second characteristic. If these two characteristics have equal weights, we obtain a similarity index of .30 for this comparison site, representing an average departure from the demonstration site of 30 percent across the two characteristics considered.

The weights used in the similarity index reflect the relative amount of influence that a change in each characteristic is estimated to have in affecting elderly FSP participation. Using site-level data from the demonstration states, we estimated a regression equation to determine the relationship that each of the similarity index component characteristics has on changes in FSP participation. The standardized coefficients from the regression equation were used to construct the weights for the similarity index. Formally, we estimated the following regression equation:

$$(2) \quad \Delta P_i = \alpha X1_i + \delta X2_i + \phi X3_i + \gamma X4_i + \eta X5_i + \varpi X6_i + \varepsilon$$

where,

$\Delta P_i$  = the change in elderly FSP participation from 2000 to 2001 in site  $i$

$X1_i$  = the number of elderly FSP participants in 2000 in site  $i$

$X2_i$  = the percent of all elderly that participated in the FSP in 2000 in site  $i$

$X3_i$  = the percent change in elderly FSP participation from 1999 to 2000 in site  $i$

$X4_i$  = the percent of the population that is nonwhite in 2000 in site  $i$

$X5_i$  = the percent of the population that is elderly in 2000 in site  $i$

$X6_i$  = the population density in 2000 in site  $i$

Because these relationships may be affected by whether the pilot site is a county or a town, this regression was estimated twice: once to create weights for the four states that have county pilot sites (Florida, Maine, Michigan, and North Carolina) and once to create weights for the one state that has town pilot sites (Connecticut). The county-level equation was estimated using data from all counties in Florida, Maine, and North Carolina. (Michigan data were not available when these weights were created). The town-level equation was estimated using data from all towns in Connecticut. Table A.1 presents the final weights developed through these equations.

TABLE A.1  
FINAL WEIGHTS FOR SIMILARITY INDEX

Characteristic	Weights for County Sites	Weights for Town Sites
Number of elderly FSP participants	0.10	0.18
Percent of all elderly that participate	0.26	0.34
Percent change in elderly FSP participation	0.16	0.21
Percent of the population that is nonwhite	0.27	0.10
Percent of the population that is elderly	0.14	0.12
Population density	0.07	0.05
N	210	156
R <sup>2</sup>	0.1359	0.0950

In states with county pilot sites, the similarity index will give the most weight to the percent of the population that is nonwhite and the percent of all elderly that participate when identifying similar sites. In the one state with town pilot sites, the similarity index will give the most weight to three factors: the percent of all elderly that participate, the percent change in elderly participation and the number of elderly participants.

To identify preliminary comparison sites for each pilot site, we selected those sites with the lowest similarity index score. We did not use a constant index threshold to identify comparison sites for each state because the distribution of similar sites varied greatly from state to state. If the threshold is set too low (e.g., all sites with a similarity index less than 10.0) there are some pilot sites for which no comparison sites are selected. If the threshold is set too high (e.g., all sites with a similarity index less than 20.0), there are some pilot sites with dissimilar comparison sites that should be dropped. Instead, we defined the best comparison sites for each state as those that are most similar to the pilot site, given the distribution of similar sites. For each pilot site, we selected from one to ten preliminary comparison sites.

## **B. IDENTIFYING OTHER SIMILARITIES AND DISSIMILARITIES**

The six characteristics we used in the similarity index are not the only characteristics that may be important in determining which sites are the best comparison sites. Other factors such as FSP operations, transportation and other environmental issues, which are more difficult to quantify, may also affect changes in elderly FSP participation over time. We used input from representatives in the pilot states to determine how the preliminary comparison sites differed from the pilot sites in terms of these characteristics.

We sent the list of preliminary comparison sites to the demonstration staff in each state. We then asked the staff to respond to questions such as the following:

- Do any of the preliminary comparison sites have different FSP service environments for the elderly? For example, are there any currently with elderly application procedures that differ from the procedures in the pilot site?
- Do any of the preliminary comparison sites have substantially different food stamp usage circumstances? For example, if the pilot site has an adequate number of grocery stores, are there any sites on the list with so few grocery stores as to be markedly different?

- Do any of the preliminary comparison sites have unique FSP outreach efforts that differ from outreach in the pilot site? For example, are there any sites with unique efforts to increase knowledge of FSP eligibility?
- Are any of the preliminary comparison sites significantly different from the pilot site in terms of compliments and alternatives to the FSP? For example, is there any site with substantially more or fewer food pantries, congregate meal sites, Meals on Wheels, etc.?
- Is transportation to the FSP office for the elderly significantly easier or more complicated in any of the preliminary comparison sites than it is for elderly in the pilot site?
- Do any of the preliminary comparison sites not make a good comparison with the pilot site for some other reason?
- Are there any other sites in the state that are a good match with the pilot site?

Based on the comments from the state representatives, we removed sites from the preliminary comparison group to create the final comparison group for each pilot site.

## **C. SELECTED COMPARISON SITES**

This remainder of this Appendix describes the final comparison sites that were selected for each state. For each state, we describe the characteristics of the pilot and identify the comparison sites. Also, we explain any special steps we used to identify comparison sites for that state. Note that the comparison sites identified in this draft are not necessarily the final set of comparison sites that will be used in the evaluation, as we are still working with demonstration staff to identify the best comparison sites.

### **1. Florida**

Florida is the only demonstration state with two pilot counties. In Florida, the simplified eligibility demonstration will be implemented in both Gadsden and Leon Counties, which are contiguous counties containing the city of Tallahassee and the surrounding area. In 2001, Gadsden County had almost 600 elderly FSP participants, about 6 percent of all elderly in

Gadsden County (Table A.2). The number of elderly participants declined 9.5 percent between 2000 and 2001. The population of Gadsden is predominantly nonwhite; about 12 percent of the population is elderly and there are 471 people per square mile. Leon County, which contains Tallahassee, is larger and has more elderly FSP participants. In 2001, there were 877 elderly FSP participants, about 2.9 percent of all elderly in the county and down 4.6 percent from 2000 (Table A.3). About one-third of Leon County is nonwhite; 8 percent are elderly and there are 815 people per square mile.

Table A.2 shows the comparison sites selected for Gadsden County. Three counties are in the comparison group for Gadsden County—Jackson, Hamilton, and Madison counties. Although Jackson County has a higher similarity index than a few counties not selected (Jackson County has a similarity index score of 21.9), it was included in the comparison group because it was identified by the grantee as an appropriate comparison site when other factors were considered. Hamilton and Madison counties are included because they have the lowest similarity index scores – 15.2 and 15.4, respectively.

Table A.3 shows the seven comparison sites selected for Leon County. All seven counties selected for the comparison group have similarity indices less than or equal to 10.0. Alachua County, which has the second-lowest similarity index score, is also the site identified by the grantee as an appropriate comparison site.

Because of Florida's unique two-county design, two separate types of comparisons can be made in the evaluation. First, the evaluator can compare independently the changes in Gadsden and Leon counties with their respective comparison groups. Second, the evaluator can compare the pooled pilot sites with the pooled comparison counties. Conducting both comparisons will give the evaluator a better understanding of the impact of Florida's demonstration.

TABLE A.2  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

County	Similarity Index	Similarity Index Components						
		Elderly FSP Participants				Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
		Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation				
<b>Pilot County</b>								
Gadsden County	0.0	594	6.1	-9.5	61.3	12.2	471	
<b>Comparison Group</b>								
1 * Jackson County	21.9	463	4.1	-5.9	29.8	14.6	404	
2 * Hamilton County	15.2	93	3.8	-7.9	41.2	11.2	87	
3 Madison County	15.4	224	5.2	-2.6	42.5	14.6	191	
Mean	17.5	260	4.4	-5.5	37.8	13.5	227	
<b>Other Counties</b>								
Jefferson County	17.1	210	6.7	0.5	40.7	14.5	161	
Hardee County	19.7	314	5.4	-5.1	29.3	13.9	214	
Hendry County	21.4	363	6.3	4.3	33.9	10.1	231	
Leon County	23.7	877	2.9	-4.6	33.6	8.3	815	
Taylor County	24.0	217	4.7	-6.1	22.2	14.1	203	
Union County	25.5	104	6.5	2.0	26.4	7.5	80	
Alachua County	25.7	1,209	3.8	-3.0	26.5	9.6	971	
Duval County	25.7	3,420	2.5	-0.4	34.2	10.5	2946	
Orange County	26.9	5,395	3.8	3.0	31.4	10.0	4236	
Columbia County	27.1	512	4.6	-1.9	20.3	14.0	452	
Escambia County	27.8	1,583	2.6	-0.7	27.6	13.3	1347	
Liberty County	27.8	70	5.6	6.1	23.6	10.2	52	
Washington County	28.2	336	5.9	1.5	18.3	15.7	245	
Bradford County	29.2	235	4.4	5.9	23.7	12.9	181	
Calhoun County	29.4	246	8.4	-0.4	20.1	14.0	192	
Gulf County	29.6	142	4.1	-1.4	20.1	16.2	115	
Gilchrist County	30.1	133	5.1	-4.3	9.5	13.6	120	
Lafayette County	30.5	58	4.7	7.4	20.7	12.4	40	
Suwannee County	30.8	410	4.8	-1.4	15.5	16.9	310	
Dixie County	30.8	217	6.6	-2.7	11.2	17.1	174	
Hillsborough County	30.8	6,661	3.4	4.5	24.8	12.0	4978	
Bay County	30.8	1,048	3.4	-2.8	15.8	13.4	881	
Okeechobee County	31.0	186	1.9	-12.7	20.7	16.3	163	
Holmes County	31.9	369	8.0	-4.2	10.2	14.8	310	
Franklin County	32.3	65	2.1	-4.4	18.8	15.7	57	
Putnam County	32.4	798	3.4	1.5	22.1	18.5	625	
Levy County	33.1	387	4.0	-2.0	14.1	17.9	286	
Nassau County	33.8	265	2.9	-3.6	10.0	12.6	224	
Broward County	34.3	9,215	2.0	6.0	29.4	16.1	7020	
Polk County	34.5	3,759	2.7	0.2	20.4	18.3	2963	
Walton County	34.7	301	3.2	-2.0	11.6	15.8	257	
Okaloosa County	35.6	461	1.7	2.4	16.6	12.1	419	
St. Lucie County	36.2	1,269	2.1	-1.6	20.9	22.7	988	

\*Also similar to Leon County

TABLE A.2(Continued)  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

County	Similarity Index Components							
	Similarity Index	Elderly FSP Participants					Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
		Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation	Nonwhite Population (Percent)			
Baker County	36.9	178	5.8	17.1	16.0	9.2	127	
Osceola County	37.1	1,200	4.2	20.2	22.8	11.4	644	
DeSoto County	37.1	221	2.5	11.6	26.7	19.0	163	
Monroe County	37.3	584	2.3	-1.4	9.3	14.6	461	
Glades County	37.9				23.0	18.8	0	
Wakulla County	38.6	138	4.1	13.1	13.9	10.3	107	
Brevard County	39.0	1,927	1.5	-3.2	13.2	19.9	1747	
Marion County	39.1	2,184	2.7	-0.7	15.8	24.5	1754	
St. Johns County	40.2	413	1.5	0.2	9.1	15.9	312	
Sumter County	40.7	472	3.5	4.9	17.4	27.4	376	
Palm Beach County	40.8	5,418	1.5	3.0	20.9	23.2	4056	
Santa Rosa County	41.3	413	2.5	9.0	9.3	11.0	299	
Collier County	41.8	976	1.5	-1.0	13.9	24.5	737	
Volusia County	42.1	2,353	1.5	1.7	13.9	22.1	1850	
Seminole County	42.3	694	1.2	13.8	17.6	10.6	407	
Clay County	42.5	404	2.2	12.2	12.6	9.8	246	
Lake County	43.6	1,240	1.6	-0.3	12.5	26.4	1009	
Pinellas County	43.7	5,001	1.3	2.7	14.1	22.5	4116	
Manatee County	46.2	1,076	1.0	5.5	13.6	24.9	820	
Indian River County	46.3	581	1.3	1.4	12.6	29.2	511	
Lee County	46.6	1,645	1.1	4.4	12.3	25.4	1222	
Citrus County	47.7	713	1.3	-6.3	5.0	32.2	592	
Highlands County	49.3	668	1.6	8.6	16.5	33.0	480	
Pasco County	49.4	1,804	1.1	3.0	6.3	26.8	1423	
Hernando County	49.7	600	1.0	0.3	7.1	30.9	513	
Sarasota County	50.4	1,092	0.7	-0.2	7.4	31.5	941	
Flagler County	50.6	172	1.1	10.3	12.7	28.6	112	
Martin County	51.5	415	0.8	8.9	10.1	28.2	349	
Charlotte County	52.4	612	0.9	1.7	7.4	34.7	506	
Miami-Dade County	52.9	74,916	14.7	0.1	30.3	13.3	59811	
Mean		2,247	3.5	1.3	20.0	17.5	1,755	
Median		472	2.9	0.2	17.9	15.3	406	
Min		58	0.7	-12.7	5.0	7.5	0	
Max		74,916	14.7	20.2	61.3	34.7	59,811	

TABLE A.3  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA

County	Similarity Index	Similarity Index Components					
		Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
		Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation			
Pilot County							
Leon County	0.0	877	2.9	-4.6	33.6	8.3	815
Comparison Group							
1 Alachua County	6.6	1,209	3.8	-3.0	26.5	9.6	971
2 Duval County	4.8	3,420	2.5	-0.4	34.2	10.5	2946
3 * Jackson County	8.0	463	4.1	-5.9	29.8	14.6	404
4 Escambia County	8.0	1,583	2.6	-0.7	27.6	13.3	1347
5 Orange County	8.4	5,395	3.8	3.0	31.4	10.0	4236
6 * Hamilton County	8.7	93	3.8	-7.9	41.2	11.2	87
7 Hardee County	10.0	314	5.4	-5.1	29.3	13.9	214
Mean	7.8	1782	3.7	-2.9	31.5	11.9	1458
Other Counties							
Hendry County	12.0	363	6.3	4.3	33.9	10.1	231
Franklin County	12.6	65	2.1	-4.4	18.8	15.7	57
Hillsborough County	12.8	6,661	3.4	4.5	24.8	12.0	4978
Taylor County	12.8	217	4.7	-6.1	22.2	14.1	203
Madison County	12.9	224	5.2	-2.6	42.5	14.6	191
Bay County	13.0	1,048	3.4	-2.8	15.8	13.4	881
Columbia County	13.9	512	4.6	-1.9	20.3	14.0	452
Union County	14.0	104	6.5	2.0	26.4	7.5	80
Nassau County	14.1	265	2.9	-3.6	10.0	12.6	224
Gulf County	14.5	142	4.1	-1.4	20.1	16.2	115
Broward County	14.5	9,215	2.0	6.0	29.4	16.1	7020
Polk County	14.8	3,759	2.7	0.2	20.4	18.3	2963
Putnam County	14.8	798	3.4	1.5	22.1	18.5	625
Bradford County	15.2	235	4.4	5.9	23.7	12.9	181
Okaloosa County	15.9	461	1.7	2.4	16.6	12.1	419
Okeechobee County	16.2	186	1.9	-12.7	20.7	16.3	163
Liberty County	16.2	70	5.6	6.1	23.6	10.2	52
Jefferson County	16.3	210	6.7	0.5	40.7	14.5	161
St. Lucie County	16.4	1,269	2.1	-1.6	20.9	22.7	988
Walton County	16.5	301	3.2	-2.0	11.6	15.8	257
DeSoto County	17.5	221	2.5	11.6	26.7	19.0	163
Monroe County	17.6	584	2.3	-1.4	9.3	14.6	461
Levy County	17.7	387	4.0	-2.0	14.1	17.9	286
Lafayette County	17.7	58	4.7	7.4	20.7	12.4	40
Glades County	18.2				23.0	18.8	0
Suwannee County	18.3	410	4.8	-1.4	15.5	16.9	310
Gilchrist County	18.7	133	5.1	-4.3	9.5	13.6	120
Brevard County	19.2	1,927	1.5	-3.2	13.2	19.9	1747
Marion County	19.3	2,184	2.7	-0.7	15.8	24.5	1754
Washington County	19.9	336	5.9	1.5	18.3	15.7	245

\*Also similar to Gadsden County

TABLE A.3 (Continued)  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA

County	Similarity Index Components						
	Similarity Index	Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
		Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation			
Santa Rosa County	20.4	413	2.5	9.0	9.3	11.0	299
Clay County	20.4	404	2.2	12.2	12.6	9.8	246
St. Johns County	20.6	413	1.5	0.2	9.1	15.9	312
Palm Beach County	21.0	5,418	1.5	3.0	20.9	23.2	4056
Seminole County	21.0	694	1.2	13.8	17.6	10.6	407
Osceola County	21.5	1,200	4.2	20.2	22.8	11.4	644
Wakulla County	21.5	138	4.1	13.1	13.9	10.3	107
Calhoun County	21.8	246	8.4	-0.4	20.1	14.0	192
Collier County	22.0	976	1.5	-1.0	13.9	24.5	737
Volusia County	22.3	2,353	1.5	1.7	13.9	22.1	1850
Dixie County	23.3	217	6.6	-2.7	11.2	17.1	174
Sumter County	23.4	472	3.5	4.9	17.4	27.4	376
Gadsden County	23.7	594	6.1	-9.5	61.3	12.2	471
Lake County	23.8	1,240	1.6	-0.3	12.5	26.4	1009
Pinellas County	24.0	5,001	1.3	2.7	14.1	22.5	4116
Holmes County	24.3	369	8.0	-4.2	10.2	14.8	310
Baker County	25.2	178	5.8	17.1	16.0	9.2	127
Manatee County	26.4	1,076	1.0	5.5	13.6	24.9	820
Indian River County	26.7	581	1.3	1.4	12.6	29.2	511
Lee County	26.8	1,645	1.1	4.4	12.3	25.4	1222
Highlands County	29.6	668	1.6	8.6	16.5	33.0	480
Pasco County	29.6	1,804	1.1	3.0	6.3	26.8	1423
Citrus County	29.7	713	1.3	-6.3	5.0	32.2	592
Hernando County	30.1	600	1.0	0.3	7.1	30.9	513
Sarasota County	30.6	1,092	0.7	-0.2	7.4	31.5	941
Flagler County	31.0	172	1.1	10.3	12.7	28.6	112
Martin County	31.9	415	0.8	8.9	10.1	28.2	349
Charlotte County	32.8	612	0.9	1.7	7.4	34.7	506
Miami-Dade County	45.2	74,916	14.7	0.1	30.3	13.3	59811
Mean		2,270	3.4	1.4	19.9	17.4	1,773
Median		512	2.9	0.2	17.9	15.3	413
Min		58	0.7	-12.7	5.0	7.5	0
Max		74,916	14.7	20.2	61.3	34.7	59,811

As with all states, sensitivity analysis should be conducted on the impact estimates for Florida. This sensitivity analysis should begin by examining the next tier of similar sites – those with low similarity index scores but that are not in the initial comparison group. In addition, there is a separate set of special comparison sites that should be examined in the sensitivity analysis for Florida. Florida's demonstration involves both a simplified eligibility determination process and a one-page application. Because the one-page application resembles a treatment from the application assistance model and not the simplified eligibility model, USDA requested that Florida implement the one-page application in sites outside the two pilot sites. The demonstration staff agreed to implement the simplified eligibility in two comparison sites identified in their proposal – Alachua County (selected as Leon County's comparison site) and Jackson County (selected as Gadsden County's comparison site). To examine whether some of the effect of the demonstration appears to be driven by the shortened application as opposed to the simplified eligibility rules, the evaluators should compare the pilot sites with the two comparison sites that have the shortened application. If, for instance, the evaluation found that changes in participation in the pilot sites are identical to the changes in the sites with the shortened application, then that would be evidence that the change in participation is due to the shortened application and not the simplified eligibility rules.

One problem that evaluators will face in identifying the impact of Florida's simplified eligibility demonstration is that a separate FSP outreach demonstration is currently underway in the city of Tallahassee (which is located in Leon County). This outreach demonstration directly targets elderly nonparticipants (and it also targets legal immigrants and the working poor). The stated goal of the outreach demonstration is to inform potential clients of the rules and eligibility requirements and to help in the application process. As a result, it will be difficult to distinguish the impact of this outreach demonstration from the impacts of the simplified eligibility

demonstration in Leon County. To address this issue, the evaluators should carefully examine any differences in impacts observed between Leon and Gadsden counties. Evaluators should also use the process analysis and client satisfaction survey to attempt to determine the extent to which Leon County impacts are related to the Elderly Nutrition demonstration.

## **2. Maine**

Maine's application assistance demonstration will be implemented in Waldo County, a predominantly rural county in the south central part of the state. In 2001, there were over 500 elderly FSP participants in Waldo County, reflecting about 10.4 percent of the county's elderly population (Table A.4). Elderly participation declined three percent between 2000 and 2001. The county is almost entirely white (2 percent nonwhite), and 13.6 percent is over 65. There are only 50 people per square mile.

Table A.4 shows the potential comparison sites considered for Waldo County. Of the 15 counties in Maine that were considered, Franklin County was selected as the primary comparison site for Waldo County. Franklin County was selected because it has the lowest similarity index, and because Maine officials indicate that it is an appropriate comparison site.

Because there is only one comparison site for Waldo County, sensitivity analysis will be particularly important in determining whether the observed effects are sensitive to the county selected. In conducting the sensitivity analysis, the evaluator should examine the next most-similar counties (Somerset and Piscataquis counties).

One unique component of Maine's demonstration is that the Rockland Food Stamp office, which serves Waldo County, also serves three other counties. When evaluating the impact of the demonstration in Waldo County, the evaluators should examine whether changes in this office are driving changes in all four counties. The evaluators should compare participation patterns in

TABLE A.4  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR WALDO COUNTY, MAINE

County	Similarity Index	Similarity Index Components					
		Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
		Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation			
Pilot County							
Waldo County	0.0	511	10.4	-2.9	2.1	13.6	50
Comparison Group							
1 Franklin County	15.3	369	8.8	2.5	2.0	14.2	17
Other Counties							
Somerset County	16.7	845	11.6	2.7	2.0	14.3	13
Piscataquis County	17.6	280	9.3	-5.1	2.2	17.4	4
Kennebec County	21.9	1,180	7.1	-4.3	2.5	14.2	135
Androscoggin County	27.5	1,376	9.2	0.4	3.0	14.4	221
Penobscot County	29.7	1,644	8.7	0.3	3.4	13.1	43
Hancock County	26.6	431	5.2	0.2	2.4	16.0	33
Oxford County	27.0	747	8.5	4.6	1.7	16.1	26
York County	27.7	1,293	5.1	-0.5	2.4	13.6	188
Knox County	38.7	390	5.7	6.0	1.7	17.2	108
Sagadahoc County	44.1	228	5.3	4.6	3.5	12.3	139
Aroostook County	43.3	1,914	15.2	-0.7	3.2	17.0	11
Lincoln County	42.0	294	4.8	3.9	1.5	18.2	74
Cumberland County	55.6	1,924	5.4	2.0	4.3	13.3	318
Washington County	68.2	825	14.1	-0.1	6.5	17.3	13
Mean		895	8	1	2.5	15.0	92
Median		747	8	0	2.4	14.3	50
Min		228	5	-5	1.5	12.3	4
Max		1,924	15	6	4.3	18.2	318

Waldo County with average adjusted participation patterns in the three other counties served by the Rockland food stamp office. If they are similar, some differences between Waldo County and Franklin County sites may actually be driven by changes in the Rockland office that are not associated with the demonstration.

### **3. Michigan**

Michigan data have not been received yet. We will create the comparison group when we receive the data (this will become Table A.5).

As with all states, sensitivity analysis should be conducted on the impact estimates for Michigan. This sensitivity analysis should begin by examining the next tier of similar sites – those with low similarity index scores but that are not in the initial comparison group. There also is a second set of sites that should be examined in the sensitivity analysis. Because Michigan's demonstration builds upon the existing MiCAFE on-line application system, a second set of special comparisons sites should be drawn from those counties that have the MiCAFE system in place. The presence or absence of the MiCAFE application may affect elderly participation patterns in the absence of the Elderly Nutrition Demonstration because the application currently prescreens for other nutrition programs and may include some FSP related outreach. It may be the case that the outreach associated with the MiCAFE application is driving the FSP participation trends. To test this hypothesis, the evaluation should compare participation patterns in Genessee County with the average adjusted patterns in other, similar Project FRESH counties.

A second special issue in Michigan is that the city of Saginaw is currently implementing a variety of FSP outreach strategies through a demonstration project. This demonstration does not target directly the elderly. Rather, it targets low-income families with children, former TANF

TABLE A.5  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR GENNESSEE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

County	Similarity Index	Similarity Index Components					
		Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
		Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation			

DATA FORTHCOMING

recipients, and able-bodied adults. Nevertheless, elderly participation patterns in Saginaw County could be affected by this demonstration. Saginaw County is included in the list of 10 comparison counties in part because the demonstration staff initially selected it as the best comparison county for Genessee County. However, the evaluators should examine whether elderly participation patterns in Saginaw County are distinctly different from patterns in the other comparison counties.

#### **4. North Carolina**

North Carolina's commodity alternative demonstration will be implemented in Alamance County. Alamance County is in the central part of the state, between Durham and Greensboro, and contains the city of Burlington. In 2001, there were 484 elderly FSP participants in Alamance County, about 1.6 percent of the county's elderly population (Table A.6). The number of elderly participants increased by 2.1 percent between 2000 and 2001. About a quarter of the county's population is nonwhite and 14 percent of the population is elderly. There are 303 people per square mile in Alamance County.

Table A.6 shows the 8 counties comprising the comparison group selected for Alamance County. Initially, we selected the 9 counties with similarity indices equal to 10.0 or less. Based on discussions with staff from North Carolina, we concluded that Chatham County is not a good comparison site because the county is dissimilar from Alamance County with respect to its degree of urbanization and other factors.

As with the other states, sensitivity analysis should be conducted for the impact estimates in North Carolina. In this case, the sensitivity analysis will be conducted by examining the next tier of similar sites – those with low similarity index scores but that are not in the initial comparison group.

TABLE A.6  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR ALAMANCE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

County	Similarity Index	Similarity Index Components						
		Elderly FSP Participants				Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
		Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation				
<b>Pilot County</b>								
Alamance County	0.0	484	1.6	2.1	24.4	14.1	303	
<b>Comparison Group</b>								
1 Rowan County	5.0	601	1.9	-1.3	20.0	14.0	255	
2 Iredell County	7.6	326	1.4	-2.1	17.8	12.4	214	
3 Stanly County	8.2	275	1.9	6.2	15.3	14.2	147	
4 Cleveland County	8.2	755	3.5	1.6	23.2	13.5	208	
5 Burke County	8.9	395	2.1	-1.5	14.0	13.4	176	
6 Orange County	9.5	323	2.1	-2.1	22.0	8.4	296	
7 Catawba County	9.7	657	2.4	4.8	15.0	12.3	354	
8 Rockingham County	10.0	739	3.2	-3.3	22.7	14.8	162	
Mean	8.4	509	2.3	0.3	18.7	12.9	226	
<b>Other Counties</b>								
Chatham County	10.0	215	2.0	-10.0	25.1	15.3	72	
Gaston County	10.2	1,000	2.5	2.7	17.0	12.6	533	
Craven County	11.3	571	3.1	-3.9	30.1	13.4	131	
Carteret County	11.3	294	1.9	2.4	9.7	17.2	112	
Randolph County	11.3	346	1.4	7.1	10.8	12.1	166	
Camden County	11.6	49	3.0	6.5	19.4	13.6	29	
Cabarrus County	11.9	561	2.3	11.5	16.7	11.6	360	
Person County	12.2	276	3.4	-1.8	31.2	13.7	91	
Davidson County	12.4	927	3.1	3.0	12.9	12.8	267	
Forsyth County	12.4	1,016	1.6	-6.7	31.5	12.6	747	
Brunswick County	13.0	499	3.1	-3.1	17.7	16.9	86	
Union County	13.2	444	2.8	-2.4	17.2	9.0	194	
Lincoln County	13.6	260	2.3	7.0	9.8	11.5	213	
McDowell County	13.6	261	2.6	-1.5	7.8	14.3	95	
Jackson County	13.7	259	3.7	0.0	14.3	13.8	67	
Moore County	13.9	300	1.3	-5.4	19.8	21.8	107	
Buncombe County	14.0	1,299	2.5	-1.7	10.9	15.4	315	
Davie County	14.3	136	1.8	-9.3	9.6	13.8	131	
Lee County	14.4	278	2.6	-13.1	30.0	12.9	191	
Guilford County	14.5	1,668	2.1	1.2	35.5	11.8	648	
Alexander County	15.1	141	2.3	-2.8	8.0	11.9	129	
Rutherford County	15.3	584	3.5	-2.5	13.2	16.0	112	
Perquimans County	15.7	139	3.8	3.0	29.2	19.3	46	
Montgomery County	15.7	236	3.9	-6.7	30.9	14.0	55	
Swain County	15.7	120	3.6	7.1	33.7	15.3	25	
Richmond County	16.0	411	3.4	-7.8	35.2	13.6	98	

TABLE A.6 (Continued)  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR ALAMANCE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

County	Similarity Index	Similarity Index Components					
		Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
		Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation			
Onslow County	16.1	537	3.8	-0.2	27.9	6.3	196
Currituck County	16.5	57	1.6	-10.9	9.6	12.0	69
Pender County	16.5	368	4.5	-9.4	27.3	14.1	47
Wilkes County	16.6	562	3.7	6.0	7.0	14.1	87
Beaufort County	16.7	565	4.7	-1.1	31.6	15.9	54
Henderson County	17.0	622	2.2	-0.5	7.5	21.7	238
Caldwell County	17.1	537	3.2	11.4	8.3	13.3	164
Surry County	17.3	695	4.0	5.0	9.6	15.4	133
New Hanover County	17.7	1,182	4.1	-3.3	20.1	12.8	806
Granville County	17.7	322	3.5	-2.4	39.3	11.4	91
Yadkin County	18.0	299	3.5	-6.0	7.5	14.2	108
Polk County	18.7	87	1.4	0.0	7.7	23.6	77
Wayne County	18.8	887	4.2	-0.6	38.7	11.6	205
Watauga County	18.8	181	2.4	-5.7	3.5	11.0	136
Haywood County	19.0	516	3.2	1.4	3.2	19.0	98
Wake County	19.3	1,990	3.0	3.1	27.6	7.4	753
Pamlico County	19.3	124	3.3	-13.3	26.8	18.8	38
Pasquotank County	19.4	393	4.9	0.3	43.1	14.1	154
Gates County	19.8	116	4.4	-1.7	40.9	14.4	31
Transylvania County	20.6	175	1.9	-6.9	6.3	21.4	78
Harnett County	20.8	770	5.1	-6.7	28.9	10.4	153
Dare County	21.5	69	1.2	23.2	5.3	13.8	78
Wilson County	21.5	711	4.5	-3.7	44.2	12.9	199
Caswell County	21.7	307	5.5	5.1	38.9	13.0	55
Franklin County	21.8	549	6.0	4.2	34.0	11.0	96
Avery County	22.0	219	5.2	2.8	6.0	15.7	70
Sampson County	22.3	645	5.0	-4.0	40.2	12.8	64
Vance County	22.9	431	4.5	0.2	51.8	12.6	169
Graham County	22.9	99	4.4	-2.0	8.1	18.0	27
Ashe County	23.1	275	3.8	-3.5	2.8	18.0	57
Durham County	23.4	725	2.0	-9.5	49.1	9.7	767
Stokes County	23.5	419	5.1	8.3	6.6	11.8	99
Nash County	23.8	980	5.4	-4.7	38.1	12.4	162
Alleghany County	24.6	131	3.9	8.3	4.3	19.2	45
Johnston County	24.7	1,308	6.7	-0.9	21.9	9.8	154
Washington County	24.9	157	4.3	-2.5	51.7	15.5	39
Chowan County	25.0	232	5.2	-4.5	39.5	17.9	84
Anson County	25.2	350	5.2	-1.7	50.5	14.4	48
Lenoir County	25.2	883	6.0	-1.9	43.5	14.6	149
Duplin County	25.3	634	6.0	-3.6	41.3	12.9	60

TABLE A.6 (Continued)  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR ALAMANCE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

County	Similarity Index	Similarity Index Components					
		Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
		Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation			
Pitt County	25.3	1,052	5.2	-4.5	37.9	9.6	205
Cherokee County	25.6	336	4.7	-2.9	5.2	19.7	53
Macon County	26.3	230	2.3	-12.2	2.8	22.4	58
Mitchell County	26.6	226	4.6	-3.8	2.1	18.6	71
Madison County	26.8	286	5.4	-4.7	2.4	15.9	44
Columbus County	27.0	856	6.8	-6.3	36.6	13.8	58
Martin County	27.9	451	6.7	-0.2	47.5	15.2	55
Jones County	28.3	194	7.5	-1.0	39.0	15.4	22
Scotland County	29.2	400	5.7	-5.7	48.5	11.3	113
Cumberland County	29.3	1,529	4.3	-4.4	44.8	7.7	464
Yancey County	30.0	314	6.3	-1.6	2.0	18.2	57
Tyrrell County	30.3	89	7.2	-1.1	43.5	16.1	11
Warren County	30.5	302	5.1	1.3	61.1	17.4	47
Clay County	30.8	118	4.3	11.3	2.0	22.7	41
Mecklenburg County	31.2	2,806	3.0	11.1	36.0	8.6	1320
Hyde County	31.7	143	8.5	-0.7	37.3	16.4	10
Greene County	35.1	252	7.0	-11.0	48.2	12.1	72
Edgecombe County	35.5	921	7.1	0.5	59.9	12.5	110
Hoke County	36.9	244	5.9	-7.6	55.5	7.7	86
Bladen County	39.0	764	10.0	-7.2	42.8	14.2	37
Halifax County	39.5	1,248	8.3	-1.1	57.4	14.9	79
Hertford County	41.6	508	8.3	-5.4	62.6	15.8	64
Northampton County	41.6	591	8.9	3.3	60.9	17.4	41
Bertie County	44.9	543	9.6	-2.2	63.7	16.0	28
Robeson County	45.4	1,628	7.6	-1.6	67.2	10.0	130
Mean		530	4	-1	26.6	14.2	166
Median		400	4	-2	25.1	13.8	98
Min		49	1	-13	2.0	6.3	10
Max		2,806	10	23	67.2	23.6	1,320

## **5. Connecticut**

The process to select comparison sites for Connecticut's commodity alternative demonstration involved more steps than the process in other states because Connecticut's pilot is implemented in multiple towns as opposed to just one or two counties. The Community Resource Team (CRT) in Hartford will be operating the demonstration. The CRT runs local Meals on Wheels (MOW) and congregate meal programs, and the demonstration builds upon these existing programs. There are 19 towns in the Hartford area – including the city of Hartford – that have both MOW and congregate meal programs operated by the CRT. The Connecticut commodity alternative demonstration is designed to implement the commodity alternative in 10 of these towns.

The Connecticut demonstration provides a unique opportunity to randomly select pilot towns from a larger pool of towns that are located in the same metropolitan area. However, because we also want to compare the outcomes of the Connecticut demonstration with the outcomes in other states, we want to ensure that the comparisons made in Connecticut are comparable to those made in the other states. As a result, we recommend three sets of comparisons to explore the impact of Connecticut's demonstration. The first is to compare the participation patterns in the 10 pilot sites with the remaining sites in the Hartford area (referred to as the Hartford region comparison sites). The second is to compare the 10 pilot sites with similar sites selected from throughout the state regardless of the availability congregate meal and MOW services. The third is to compare the 10 pilot sites with similar sites throughout the state that have both congregate meals and MOW services.

MPR worked with the demonstration staff to select the 10 pilot sites from the 19 potential comparison sites. First, Hartford was assigned to the pilot group due to its size. The town of New Haven was selected as the comparison site for Hartford because no other Hartford area

town could serve as a reasonable comparison site. New Haven has both congregate meals and MOW services. Nine of the remaining 18 towns were then randomly selected to be pilot sites. Because the pool of potential pilot sites is small, and because comparisons will be made between the nine pilot towns (excluding Hartford) and the nine Hartford region comparison towns, we wanted to ensure that the pilot towns resemble the comparison towns. To do this, we constructed nine pairs of towns where each pair contained two towns that were similar to each other (similarity was measured using the similarity index). We then randomly selected one town from each pair to be a pilot site and the other to be a Hartford region comparison site.<sup>7</sup> Table A.7 shows the 10 pilot and 10 corresponding Hartford region comparison sites.

The final 10 pilot sites (including Hartford) resemble the 10 Hartford region comparison sites. The average pilot site has 407 elderly FSP participants, reflecting, on average, 4.4 percent of the site's elderly population. The average comparison site has 327 participants, reflecting 3.2 percent of the town's elderly population. The average pilot site is 14.2 percent nonwhite and the average comparison site is 14.5 percent nonwhite. The average pilot site has 2,036 people per square mile and the average comparison site has 2,025 people per square mile. While the average pilot site experienced an four percent increase in elderly FSP participation, the average

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<sup>7</sup>One pair contained the towns of West Hartford and New Britain. The process randomly selected West Hartford as a pilot site and New Britain as a Hartford region comparison site. Based on the preferences of the state, we changed this to make New Britain the pilot site and West Hartford the comparison site. While this diminishes the randomness of the selection process, it retains the similarities between the 9 pilot and 9 comparison sites.

TABLE A.7  
SELECTION OF PILOT AND HARTFORD REGION COMPARISON SITES IN CONNECTICUT

Pair Number	Town	Group	Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
			Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation			
1	Hartford	Pilot	2,695	21.1	0.3	78.3	9.8	7553
1	New Haven	Comparison	1,902	13.1	0.0	57.8	11.8	6529
2	Hebron	Comparison	3	0.6	-50.0	3.1	6.0	220
2	Stafford	Pilot	35	2.4	2.9	4.3	12.2	203
3	South Windsor	Pilot	28	1.2	7.7	8.9	10.4	809
3	Southington	Comparison	81	1.6	-4.7	3.9	13.4	1067
4	Enfield	Pilot	68	1.3	-5.6	7.7	12.8	1271
4	Plymouth	Comparison	22	1.4	15.8	2.3	12.8	556
5	Berlin	Comparison	20	0.7	0.0	4.2	16.8	655
5	East Windsor	Pilot	29	2.2	11.5	8.8	13.5	379
6	Bristol	Comparison	200	2.4	-8.7	7.6	14.3	2234
6	Windsor	Pilot	100	2.5	-2.0	27.2	14.7	930
7	Manchester	Pilot	197	2.5	1.0	11.0	15.1	1882
7	Vernon	Comparison	101	2.6	18.8	8.7	12.8	1675
8	Windsor Locks	Pilot	29	1.5	20.8	6.7	16.3	1325
8	Newington	Comparison	67	1.3	6.3	7.2	18.8	2138
9	East Hartford	Comparison	341	4.4	0.9	22.3	16.5	2630
9	Bloomfield	Pilot	111	2.9	0.0	49.6	20.3	731
10	West Hartford	Comparison	537	4.3	3.7	11.7	22.4	2548
10	New Britain	Pilot	781	6.7	3.3	32.9	16.6	5273
	Average	Pilot	407	4.4	4.0	23.5	14.2	2036
	Average	Comparison	327	3.2	-1.8	12.9	14.5	2025

<sup>a</sup>July 2001

comparison site experienced a decline in elderly FSP participation. However, this is driven by the comparison town of Hebron, where elderly FSP population declined by 50 percent, from 6 people to 3 people. Among the other 9 comparison sites, participation increased by an average of 3.6 percent. The main difference between pilot and comparison sites is that the pilot sites have, on average, proportionately more nonwhite residents. Of the five towns that are more than 25 percent nonwhite, New Haven is the only site selected in the comparison group; the other four towns are pilot sites.<sup>8</sup>

The Hartford region comparison sites will be used to determine whether the demonstration had an impact on FSP participation in the pilot sites relative to similar towns with congregate meals and MOW. Given that trends in elderly FSP participation can be affected both by characteristics idiosyncratic to the Hartford region and by the congregate meal and MOW programs, this comparison group may be the best measure of whether the demonstration affects elderly FSP participation since all sites have those characteristics in common. However, because comparison sites in the other demonstration states were selected with a different methodology, the analysis of the Hartford region comparison sites will not be comparable to the analyses in other states. To generate results that can be compared with the other states, we created a second set of comparison sites using the methodology we used in the other states.

Because there are 10 pilot sites in Connecticut, and because the characteristics of these pilot sites differ, we set out to identify more than the maximum 10 comparison sites for Connecticut. For each pilot site, we identified 5 similar comparison sites using the similarity index

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<sup>8</sup>The discrepancy between pilot and comparison sites in terms of size of the nonwhite population is not driven by the fact that New Britain was not randomly selected as a pilot site, although it does contribute to the discrepancy.

methodology.<sup>9</sup> The union of all similar sites (a total of 42 sites) became our pool of statewide comparison sites (Table A.8).

One of the primary differences between the Hartford region comparison sites and the statewide comparison sites is that all the Hartford region sites have both congregate meal and MOW programs while the state-wide comparison sites may not. Thus, to better understand any differences in findings from these two comparison groups, we created a third comparison group that is drawn from all towns in the state that have both congregate meals and MOW. This comparison group was drawn using the similarity index methodology. For each pilot site, we identified five similar comparison sites from the congregate meal and MOW towns. The union of those sites is the state-wide congregate meal/MOW comparison group (Table A.9).

Combined, the three groups of comparison sites in Connecticut can be used to determine whether the demonstration has any impact relative to similar Hartford-area towns, whether it has an impact relative to all towns that have congregate meals and MOW, and whether it has an impact relative to all towns in the state. For each comparison group, we recommend that the evaluators compare the average change in participation in the pilot sites with the average adjusted change in participation in the comparison sites. To better understand these patterns, we also recommend that the evaluators compare each pilot site with the specific comparison sites selected for that site. (Tables A.10 through A.19 present the similarity indices for each of the 10 pilot towns.)

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<sup>9</sup>Based on discussions with staff from Connecticut, the towns of Glastonbury and Naugatuck are deemed inappropriate comparison towns and are not included in any comparison group, despite low similarity index scores.

TABLE A.8  
CONNECTICUT PILOT AND STATEWIDE COMPARISON TOWNS

	Similarity Index Components					
	Elderly Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
	Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation			
<b>Pilot Towns</b>						
Bloomfield	105	2.7	-4.5	49.6	20.3	731
East Windsor	31	2.3	19.2	8.8	13.5	379
Enfield	70	1.3	2.9	7.7	12.8	1,271
Hartford	2,486	19.5	2.5	78.3	9.8	7,553
Manchester	204	2.6	5.7	11.0	15.1	1,882
New Britain	726	6.2	3.0	32.9	16.6	5,273
South Windsor	30	1.3	20.0	8.9	10.4	809
Stafford	31	2.2	-6.1	4.3	12.2	203
Windsor	89	2.2	-13.6	27.2	14.7	930
Windsor Locks	26	1.3	23.8	6.7	16.3	1,325
Average	380	4.2	5.3	23.5	14.2	2,036
<b>State-Wide Comparison Towns</b>						
Bridgeport	1,654	9.2	-7.6	62.4	13.2	8,548
Bristol	195	2.3	-8.5	7.6	14.3	2,234
Canton	6	0.7	20.0	3.4	11.3	329
Cheshire	38	1.1	5.6	11.5	12.9	788
Clinton	20	1.4	0.0	6.9	10.8	807
Colchester	28	2.2	16.7	4.0	9.7	272
Cromwell	25	1.2	8.7	7.0	16.0	1,008
Derby	49	2.2	-12.5	10.3	18.6	2,390
East Granby	8	1.6	-20.0	4.3	11.6	253
East Hartford	312	4.0	-3.4	22.3	16.5	2,630
East Haven	138	3.1	2.2	4.6	16.4	2,178
Farmington	56	1.7	7.7	6.6	15.8	751
Guilford	32	1.3	-5.9	3.8	12.5	425
Hamden	202	1.9	0.0	15.2	19.9	1,631
Lebanon	9	1.5	28.6	3.3	9.4	120
Meriden	392	4.6	0.8	22.7	15.2	2,377
Middletown	175	3.2	-9.8	19.2	12.4	1,060
Milford	133	1.7	2.3	6.6	15.3	2,208
Montville	37	1.9	-7.5	10.1	11.2	411
New Haven	1,702	11.8	-2.4	57.8	11.8	6,529
New London	278	9.2	1.1	39.3	12.7	4,307
Plainville	52	2.1	4.0	7.4	15.0	1,724
Plymouth	19	1.2	5.6	2.3	12.8	556
Pomfret	9	2.0	12.5	1.9	13.4	84

<sup>a</sup>September 2001

TABLE A.8 (Continued)  
CONNECTICUT PILOT AND STATEWIDE COMPARISON TOWNS

	Similarity Index Components					
	Elderly Participants <sup>a</sup>	Elderly Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation	Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
Portland	18	1.3	5.9	5.1	15.6	378
Putnam	48	3.1	-5.9	4.0	17.4	438
Ridgefield	17	0.7	6.3	4.9	10.8	639
Rocky Hill	26	1.0	30.0	8.6	15.7	1,227
Seymour	36	1.7	-16.3	4.2	14.8	970
Shelton	63	1.2	6.8	6.5	13.4	1,234
Simsbury	23	0.8	21.1	5.1	12.7	642
Southington	74	1.4	-11.9	3.9	13.4	1,067
Stamford	768	5.0	7.0	35.7	14.0	2,937
Stratford	136	1.4	6.3	14.6	19.9	2,787
Torrington	123	1.9	3.4	5.2	18.2	872
Trumbull	61	1.1	13.0	6.7	16.9	1,454
Vernon	93	2.4	9.4	8.7	12.8	1,675
Wallingford	74	1.2	-15.9	6.5	15.2	1,046
Waterbury	1,076	6.2	2.6	31.8	16.5	3,689
West Haven	310	4.0	0.6	23.4	15.1	4,749
Winchester	27	1.6	-6.9	3.0	14.5	353
Windham	203	8.3	-1.9	24.7	11.3	796
Average	208	2.8	2.2	12.9	14.2	1,680

<sup>a</sup>September 2001

TABLE A.9  
CONNECTICUT PILOT AND SERVICE ENVIRONMENT COMPARISON TOWNS

	Similarity Index Components					Population Density
	Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	
	Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation			
<b>Pilot Towns</b>						
Bloomfield	105	2.7	-4.5	49.6	20.3	731
East Windsor	31	2.3	19.2	8.8	13.5	379
Enfield	70	1.3	2.9	7.7	12.8	1,271
Hartford	2,486	19.5	2.5	78.3	9.8	7,553
Manchester	204	2.6	5.7	11.0	15.1	1,882
New Britain	726	6.2	3.0	32.9	16.6	5,273
South Windsor	30	1.3	20.0	8.9	10.4	809
Stafford	31	2.2	-6.1	4.3	12.2	203
Windsor	89	2.2	-13.6	27.2	14.7	930
Windsor Locks	26	1.3	23.8	6.7	16.3	1,325
Average	380	4.2	5.3	23.5	14.2	2,036
<b>Service Environment Comparison Towns</b>						
Berlin	24	0.8	33	4.2	16.8	655
Bridgeport	1,654	9.2	-8	62.4	13.2	8548
Bristol	195	2.3	-8	7.6	14.3	2234
Brookfield	22	1.5	-12	5.2	10.0	737
Clinton	20	1.4	0	6.9	10.8	807
Cromwell	25	1.2	9	7.0	16.0	1008
Derby	49	2.2	-13	10.3	18.6	2390
East Haddam	12	1.3	9	3.0	12.0	137
East Hartford	312	4.0	-3	22.3	16.5	2630
East Haven	138	3.1	2	4.6	16.4	2178
Hamden	202	1.9	0	15.2	19.9	1631
Lebanon	9	1.5	29	3.3	9.4	120
Meriden	392	4.6	1	22.7	15.2	2377
Middletown	175	3.2	-10	19.2	12.4	1060
Milford	133	1.7	2	6.6	15.3	2208
Montville	37	1.9	-8	10.1	11.2	411
New Haven	1,702	11.8	-2	57.8	11.8	6529
New London	278	9.2	1	39.3	12.7	4307
North Branford	22	1.3	-19	3.8	11.8	557
North Haven	49	1.2	29	7.0	19.2	1059
Plainfield	57	3.3	-12	3.3	12.1	343
Plainville	52	2.1	4	7.4	15.0	1724

<sup>a</sup>September 2001

TABLE A.9 (Continued)  
CONNECTICUT PILOT AND SERVICE ENVIRONMENT COMPARISON TOWNS

	Similarity Index Components					
	Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
	Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation			
Plymouth	19	1.2	6	2.3	12.8	556
Pomfret	9	2.0	13	1.9	13.4	84
Portland	18	1.3	6	5.1	15.6	378
Putnam	48	3.1	-6	4.0	17.4	438
Seymour	36	1.7	-16	4.2	14.8	970
Southington	74	1.4	-12	3.9	13.4	1067
Stamford	768	5.0	7	35.7	14.0	2937
Thomaston	13	1.3	0	2.1	13.6	610
Torrington	123	1.9	3	5.2	18.2	872
Trumbull	61	1.1	13	6.7	16.9	1454
Vernon	93	2.4	9	8.7	12.8	1675
Wallingford	74	1.2	-16	6.5	15.2	1046
Waterbury	1076	6.2	3	31.8	16.5	3689
West Haven	310	4.0	1	23.4	15.1	4749
Windham	203	8.3	-2	24.7	11.3	796
Windsor	89	2.2	-14	27.2	14.7	930
Average	226	3.0	0.5	13.8	14.4	1,734

<sup>a</sup>September 2001

TABLE A.10  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR BLOOMFIELD, CONNECTICUT

Similarity Index	Congregate Meals and MOW?	State-Wide Comparison Sites	State-Wide Congregate Meal/MOW Sites	Similarity Index Components						
				Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density	
				Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation				
Pilot Town										
Bloomfield	0.0	Yes			105	2.7	-4.5	49.6	20.3	731
Other Towns										
Hamden	7.5	Yes	1	1	202	1.9	0.0	15.2	19.9	1,631
Windsor	7.8	Yes	2	2	89	2.2	-13.6	27.2	14.7	930
Derby	8.7	Yes	3	3	49	2.2	-12.5	10.3	18.6	2,390
Putnam	8.7	Yes	4	4	48	3.1	-5.9	4.0	17.4	438
Torrington	8.8	Yes	5	5	123	1.9	3.4	5.2	18.2	872
Stratford	9.0	Yes			136	1.4	6.3	14.6	19.9	2,787
Waterford	9.2	Yes			36	1.0	0.0	7.6	20.1	555
Ansonia	9.5	Yes			103	3.6	-4.6	14.8	16.3	2,937
Stonington	10.0	Yes			58	2.0	7.4	3.8	17.3	442
Manchester	10.0	Yes			204	2.6	5.7	11.0	15.1	1,882
Westbrook	10.1	Yes			19	1.9	-20.8	4.2	18.4	355
East Haven	10.1	Yes			138	3.1	2.2	4.6	16.4	2,178
Middletown	10.4	Yes			175	3.2	-9.8	19.2	12.4	1,060
Orange	10.5	Yes			15	0.6	-6.3	6.2	19.2	719
Greenwich	10.5	Yes			83	0.8	5.1	14.2	17.3	1,218
East Hartford	10.6	Yes			312	4.0	-3.4	22.3	16.5	2,630
Newington	10.7	Yes			72	1.4	14.3	7.2	18.8	2,138
Wethersfield	10.8	No			98	1.7	5.4	5.4	23.7	2,016
Thompson	10.9	No			29	2.0	0.0	2.0	15.9	192
Farmington	10.9	No			56	1.7	7.7	6.6	15.8	751
Groton	10.9	Yes			107	2.5	-6.1	16.0	10.4	1,328
Plainville	11.0	Yes			52	2.1	4.0	7.4	15.0	1,724
Old Saybrook	11.1	Yes			9	0.4	0.0	4.9	21.2	646
North Haven	11.3	Yes			49	1.2	28.9	7.0	19.2	1,059
Bristol	11.3	Yes			195	2.3	-8.5	7.6	14.3	2,234
Vernon	11.5	Yes			93	2.4	9.4	8.7	12.8	1,675
Branford	11.5	Yes			59	1.3	-14.5	5.7	16.2	1,238
Milford	11.5	Yes			133	1.7	2.3	6.6	15.3	2,208
Norwalk	11.6	Yes			367	3.5	-1.9	31.4	13.3	3,414
Woodbridge	11.6	Yes			10	0.7	-9.1	8.1	17.2	428
Cromwell	11.9	Yes			25	1.2	8.7	7.0	16.0	1,008
Essex	11.9	Yes			12	0.9	9.1	3.1	22.6	595
East Windsor	12.0	Yes			31	2.3	19.2	8.8	13.5	379
Seymour	12.0	Yes			36	1.7	-16.3	4.2	14.8	970
Winchester	12.0	No			27	1.6	-6.9	3.0	14.5	353
Trumbull	12.0	Yes			61	1.1	13.0	6.7	16.9	1,454
Wallingford	12.1	Yes			74	1.2	-15.9	6.5	15.2	1,046
Glastonbury	12.1	No			63	1.6	5.0	7.7	13.4	560
Danbury	12.1	Yes			299	3.8	-1.6	23.7	12.0	1,551
Portland	12.2	Yes			18	1.3	5.9	5.1	15.6	378
Cornwall	12.3	Yes			1	0.4	0.0	3.2	18.7	33
Stafford	12.3	Yes			31	2.2	-6.1	4.3	12.2	203
Fairfield	12.5	Yes			52	0.5	-17.5	5.3	18.0	1,781
Eastford	12.5	Yes			3	1.4	0.0	2.8	15.4	50
Naugatuck	12.6	Yes			80	2.3	5.3	7.8	11.5	1,842
Plainfield	12.6	Yes			57	3.3	-12.3	3.3	12.1	343
Montville	12.6	Yes			37	1.9	-7.5	10.1	11.2	411
Windsor Locks	12.7	Yes			26	1.3	23.8	6.7	16.3	1,325
Suffield	12.7	Yes			17	1.0	-5.6	4.8	14.9	264
Southington	12.9	Yes			74	1.4	-11.9	3.9	13.4	1,067
West Haven	12.9	Yes			310	4.0	0.6	23.4	15.1	4,749
Killingly	12.9	Yes			106	4.7	-4.5	4.0	14.1	332
Westport	12.9	Yes			16	0.4	-5.9	6.8	15.9	1,206
Chester	13.0	Yes			5	0.8	0.0	3.6	15.8	239
Union	13.0	No			1	0.9	0.0	2.2	16.2	24
Cheshire	13.0	Yes			38	1.1	5.6	11.5	12.9	788

TABLE A.11  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR EAST WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT

Similarity Index	Congregate Meals and MOW?	State-Wide Comparison Sites	State-Wide Congregate Meal/MOW Sites	Similarity Index Components						
				Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density	
				Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation				
Pilot Town										
East Windsor	0.0	Yes		31	2.3	19.2	8.8	13.5	379	
Other Towns										
Pomfret	2.2	Yes	1	1	9	2.0	12.5	1.9	13.4	84
Vernon	2.5	Yes	2	2	93	2.4	9.4	8.7	12.8	1,675
Glastonbury	2.5	No	3		63	1.6	5.0	7.7	13.4	560
Stafford	3.2	Yes	(pilot)	(pilot)	31	2.2	-6.1	4.3	12.2	203
Colchester	3.3	No	4		28	2.2	16.7	4.0	9.7	272
Naugatuck	3.4	Yes	(Excluded)	(Excluded)	80	2.3	5.3	7.8	11.5	1,842
Plainville	3.4	Yes	5	3	52	2.1	4.0	7.4	15.0	1,724
Shelton	3.7	No			63	1.2	6.8	6.5	13.4	1,234
Farmington	3.8	No			56	1.7	7.7	6.6	15.8	751
Simsbury	3.8	No			23	0.8	21.1	5.1	12.7	642
Cheshire	3.8	Yes		4	38	1.1	5.6	11.5	12.9	788
Montville	3.9	Yes		5	37	1.9	-7.5	10.1	11.2	411
South Windsor	4.0	Yes			30	1.3	20.0	8.9	10.4	809
Preston	4.0	No			9	1.2	12.5	5.7	15.1	163
Thompson	4.0	No			29	2.0	0.0	2.0	15.9	192
Thomaston	4.1	Yes			13	1.3	0.0	2.1	13.6	610
Plymouth	4.1	Yes			19	1.2	5.6	2.3	12.8	556
Winchester	4.1	No			27	1.6	-6.9	3.0	14.5	353
Wolcott	4.1	Yes			21	1.0	10.5	4.1	14.4	699
Enfield	4.2	Yes			70	1.3	2.9	7.7	12.8	1,271
East Haddam	4.2	Yes			12	1.3	9.1	3.0	12.0	137
Prospect	4.3	Yes			10	0.8	25.0	4.8	14.6	574
Canterbury	4.4	Yes			11	2.4	37.5	2.7	9.9	117
Portland	4.4	Yes			18	1.3	5.9	5.1	15.6	378
Stonington	4.4	Yes			58	2.0	7.4	3.8	17.3	442
Somers	4.5	No			9	0.8	12.5	11.2	11.9	325
Windsor Locks	4.5	Yes			26	1.3	23.8	6.7	16.3	1,325
Griswold	4.5	Yes			44	3.5	10.0	3.3	11.7	308
Guilford	4.5	No			32	1.3	-5.9	3.8	12.5	425
Bristol	4.6	Yes			195	2.3	-8.5	7.6	14.3	2,234
Cromwell	4.6	Yes			25	1.2	8.7	7.0	16.0	1,008
Southington	4.8	Yes			74	1.4	-11.9	3.9	13.4	1,067
Rocky Hill	4.8	No			26	1.0	30.0	8.6	15.7	1,227
Manchester	4.8	Yes			204	2.6	5.7	11.0	15.1	1,882
Seymour	4.9	Yes			36	1.7	-16.3	4.2	14.8	970
Clinton	4.9	Yes			20	1.4	0.0	6.9	10.8	807
Kent	4.9	No			4	0.9	33.3	7.3	15.1	64
Madison	5.0	No			13	0.6	30.0	3.4	14.2	447
Eastford	5.1	Yes			3	1.4	0.0	2.8	15.4	50
Canton	5.1	No			6	0.7	20.0	3.4	11.3	329
Wilton	5.2	Yes			5	0.2	25.0	5.2	12.8	613
Suffield	5.2	Yes			17	1.0	-5.6	4.8	14.9	264
New Milford	5.2	Yes			42	1.7	-4.5	6.2	9.6	417
Milford	5.2	Yes			133	1.7	2.3	6.6	15.3	2,208
Plainfield	5.2	Yes			57	3.3	-12.3	3.3	12.1	343
Bozrah	5.3	Yes			5	1.5	66.7	2.8	13.6	119
Woodstock	5.4	Yes			7	0.8	0.0	1.5	14.0	108
Harwinton	5.4	Yes			4	0.6	33.3	1.2	13.0	174
Lebanon	5.4	Yes			9	1.5	28.6	3.3	9.4	120
Brooklyn	5.5	Yes			8	0.9	-20.0	7.7	13.0	241
East Granby	5.5	No			8	1.6	-20.0	4.3	11.6	253
Scotland	5.5	Yes			1	0.5	0.0	2.9	13.3	77
Mansfield	5.6	Yes			26	1.7	30.0	17.2	8.7	393
Darien	5.6	Yes			9	0.3	28.6	6.1	14.3	1,413
Watertown	5.6	Yes			31	1.0	-13.9	3.9	14.4	743
Marlborough	5.6	No			11	2.5	0.0	3.5	7.8	245
Groton	5.7	Yes			107	2.5	-6.1	16.0	10.4	1,328

TABLE A.12  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR ENFIELD, CONNECTICUT

	Similarity Index	Congregate Meals and MOW?	Similarity Index Components							
			State-Wide		Elderly FSP Participants					
			Comparison Sites	Congregate Meal/MOW Sites	Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation	Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
Pilot Town										
Enfield	0.0	Yes			70	1.3	2.9	7.7	12.8	1,271
Other Towns										
Shelton	0.9	No	1		63	1.2	6.8	6.5	13.4	1,234
Cheshire	1.5	Yes	2	1	38	1.1	5.6	11.5	12.9	788
Glastonbury	1.6	No	(Excluded)	(Excluded)	63	1.6	5.0	7.7	13.4	560
Plymouth	1.8	Yes	3	2	19	1.2	5.6	2.3	12.8	556
Guilford	2.0	No	4		32	1.3	-5.9	3.8	12.5	425
Southington	2.1	Yes	5	3	74	1.4	-11.9	3.9	13.4	1,067
Thomaston	2.2	Yes		4	13	1.3	0.0	2.1	13.6	610
Clinton	2.3	Yes		5	20	1.4	0.0	6.9	10.8	807
East Haddam	2.6	Yes			12	1.3	9.1	3.0	12.0	137
Cromwell	2.9	Yes			25	1.2	8.7	7.0	16.0	1,008
Simsbury	3.0	No			23	0.8	21.1	5.1	12.7	642
Vernon	3.0	Yes			93	2.4	9.4	8.7	12.8	1,675
Wolcott	3.0	Yes			21	1.0	10.5	4.1	14.4	699
Wallingford	3.1	Yes			74	1.2	-15.9	6.5	15.2	1,046
Naugatuck	3.1	Yes			80	2.3	5.3	7.8	11.5	1,842
South Windsor	3.2	Yes			30	1.3	20.0	8.9	10.4	809
Portland	3.2	Yes			18	1.3	5.9	5.1	15.6	378
North Branford	3.2	Yes			22	1.3	-18.5	3.8	11.8	557
Plainville	3.2	Yes			52	2.1	4.0	7.4	15.0	1,724
Columbia	3.3	Yes			5	0.9	0.0	3.3	11.6	231
Farmington	3.3	No			56	1.7	7.7	6.6	15.8	751
Brooklyn	3.3	Yes			8	0.9	-20.0	7.7	13.0	241
Bethlehem	3.4	Yes			5	1.2	-16.7	2.0	12.3	170
Somers	3.4	No			9	0.8	12.5	11.2	11.9	325
Branford	3.5	Yes			59	1.3	-14.5	5.7	16.2	1,238
Ellington	3.5	No			12	0.9	0.0	3.5	10.7	347
Ridgefield	3.5	No			17	0.7	6.3	4.9	10.8	639
Milford	3.5	Yes			133	1.7	2.3	6.6	15.3	2,208
Preston	3.5	No			9	1.2	12.5	5.7	15.1	163
Watertown	3.6	Yes			31	1.0	-13.9	3.9	14.4	743
Suffield	3.6	Yes			17	1.0	-5.6	4.8	14.9	264
Scotland	3.7	Yes			1	0.5	0.0	2.9	13.3	77
Winchester	3.7	No			27	1.6	-6.9	3.0	14.5	353
Eastford	3.7	Yes			3	1.4	0.0	2.8	15.4	50
Trumbull	3.7	Yes			61	1.1	13.0	6.7	16.9	1,454
Montville	3.7	Yes			37	1.9	-7.5	10.1	11.2	411
Stafford	3.8	Yes			31	2.2	-6.1	4.3	12.2	203
Woodstock	3.8	Yes			7	0.8	0.0	1.5	14.0	108
Beacon Falls	3.8	Yes			8	1.4	-11.1	2.6	10.7	528
Windsor Locks	3.9	Yes			26	1.3	23.8	6.7	16.3	1,325
Brookfield	3.9	Yes			22	1.5	-12.0	5.2	10.0	737
New Milford	3.9	Yes			42	1.7	-4.5	6.2	9.6	417
Seymour	4.0	Yes			36	1.7	-16.3	4.2	14.8	970
East Granby	4.0	No			8	1.6	-20.0	4.3	11.6	253
Pomfret	4.0	Yes			9	2.0	12.5	1.9	13.4	84
Chaplin	4.0	Yes			1	0.4	0.0	2.4	12.1	115
Granby	4.1	No			9	0.9	0.0	3.0	10.1	236
Redding	4.1	Yes			3	0.3	0.0	4.9	11.5	258
East Windsor	4.2	Yes			31	2.3	19.2	8.8	13.5	379
Woodbury	4.2	Yes			8	0.7	-11.1	3.9	13.9	236
Rocky Hill	4.3	No			26	1.0	30.0	8.6	15.7	1,227
Goshen	4.3	Yes			2	0.6	0.0	2.2	14.4	56
Wilton	4.4	Yes			5	0.2	25.0	5.2	12.8	613
Prospect	4.4	Yes			10	0.8	25.0	4.8	14.6	574
Bolton	4.4	No			1	0.2	0.0	4.3	11.4	333
Chester	4.4	Yes			5	0.8	0.0	3.6	15.8	239

TABLE A.13  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR HARTFORD CONNECTICUT

Similarity Index	Congregate Meals and MOW?	State-Wide Comparison Sites	State-Wide Congregate Meal/MOW Sites	Similarity Index Components						
				Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density	
				Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation				
Pilot Town										
Hartford	0.0	Yes			2,486	19.5	2.5	78.3	9.8	7,553
Other Towns										
New Haven	24.0	Yes	1	1	1,702	11.8	-2.4	57.8	11.8	6,529
Bridgeport	29.4	Yes	2	2	1,654	9.2	-7.6	62.4	13.2	8,548
New London	43.0	Yes	3	3	278	9.2	1.1	39.3	12.7	4,307
Waterbury	45.9	Yes	4	4	1,076	6.2	2.6	31.8	16.5	3,689
New Britain	47.3	Yes	(pilot)	(pilot)	726	6.2	3.0	32.9	16.6	5,273
Windham	48.3	Yes	5	5	203	8.3	-1.9	24.7	11.3	796
Stamford	49.0	Yes			768	5.0	7.0	35.7	14.0	2,937
Norwalk	54.3	Yes			367	3.5	-1.9	31.4	13.3	3,414
West Haven	54.9	Yes			310	4.0	0.6	23.4	15.1	4,749
Meriden	55.0	Yes			392	4.6	0.8	22.7	15.2	2,377
Danbury	55.6	Yes			299	3.8	-1.6	23.7	12.0	1,551
Norwich	57.3	Yes			276	4.9	4.9	13.4	15.6	1,262
East Hartford	57.5	Yes			312	4.0	-3.4	22.3	16.5	2,630
Middletown	59.1	Yes			175	3.2	-9.8	19.2	12.4	1,060
Groton	59.8	Yes			107	2.5	-6.1	16.0	10.4	1,328
Killingly	60.2	Yes			106	4.7	-4.5	4.0	14.1	332
West Hartford	60.2	Yes			521	4.2	2.4	11.7	22.4	2,548
Ansonia	60.5	Yes			103	3.6	-4.6	14.8	16.3	2,937
Voluntown	60.6	Yes			11	4.4	22.2	1.8	10.9	59
Naugatuck	61.3	Yes			80	2.3	5.3	7.8	11.5	1,842
Bloomfield	61.3	Yes			105	2.7	-4.5	49.6	20.3	731
Sprague	61.4	Yes			14	4.3	40.0	4.7	11.0	223
Griswold	61.4	Yes			44	3.5	10.0	3.3	11.7	308
Manchester	61.6	Yes			204	2.6	5.7	11.0	15.1	1,882
Vernon	62.0	Yes			93	2.4	9.4	8.7	12.8	1,675
Windsor	62.2	Yes			89	2.2	-13.6	27.2	14.7	930
Plainfield	62.3	Yes			57	3.3	-12.3	3.3	12.1	343
East Haven	62.3	Yes			138	3.1	2.2	4.6	16.4	2,178
Bristol	62.3	Yes			195	2.3	-8.5	7.6	14.3	2,234
New Milford	63.0	Yes			42	1.7	-4.5	6.2	9.6	417
Colchester	63.0	No			28	2.2	16.7	4.0	9.7	272
Montville	63.1	Yes			37	1.9	-7.5	10.1	11.2	411
Marlborough	63.1	No			11	2.5	0.0	3.5	7.8	245
Bethel	63.4	Yes			32	1.9	-23.8	7.6	9.4	1,063
Mansfield	63.5	Yes			26	1.7	30.0	17.2	8.7	393
Clinton	63.6	Yes			20	1.4	0.0	6.9	10.8	807
Milford	63.9	Yes			133	1.7	2.3	6.6	15.3	2,208
Brookfield	63.9	Yes			22	1.5	-12.0	5.2	10.0	737
Plainville	64.1	Yes			52	2.1	4.0	7.4	15.0	1,724
Stafford	64.1	Yes			31	2.2	-6.1	4.3	12.2	203
Enfield	64.1	Yes			70	1.3	2.9	7.7	12.8	1,271
South Windsor	64.2	Yes			30	1.3	20.0	8.9	10.4	809
Canterbury	64.3	Yes			11	2.4	37.5	2.7	9.9	117
East Windsor	64.4	Yes			31	2.3	19.2	8.8	13.5	379
Glastonbury	64.5	No			63	1.6	5.0	7.7	13.4	560
Canaan*	64.6	Yes			5	3.5	-37.5	3.8	13.4	32
Cheshire	64.7	Yes			38	1.1	5.6	11.5	12.9	788
Coventry	64.8	Yes			15	1.4	-11.8	3.1	9.2	298
Beacon Falls	65.0	Yes			8	1.4	-11.1	2.6	10.7	528
Granby	65.0	No			9	0.9	0.0	3.0	10.1	236
Shelton	65.0	No			63	1.2	6.8	6.5	13.4	1,234
Ashford	65.2	Yes			3	0.8	0.0	4.7	9.3	101
Ellington	65.2	No			12	0.9	0.0	3.5	10.7	347
Hamden	65.3	Yes			202	1.9	0.0	15.2	19.9	1,631
Ridgefield	65.3	No			17	0.7	6.3	4.9	10.8	639
Putnam	65.3	Yes			48	3.1	-5.9	4.0	17.4	438

TABLE A.14  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR MANCHESTER, CONNECTICUT

	Similarity Index	Congregate Meals and MOW?	State-Wide Comparison Sites	Congregate Meal/MOW Sites	Similarity Index Components					
					Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
					Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation			
<b>Pilot Town</b>										
Manchester	0.0	Yes			204	2.6	5.7	11.0	15.1	1,882
<b>Other Towns</b>										
Bristol	2.6	Yes	1	1	195	2.3	-8.5	7.6	14.3	2,234
Plainville	2.8	Yes	2	2	52	2.1	4.0	7.4	15.0	1,724
Milford	3.1	Yes	3	3	133	1.7	2.3	6.6	15.3	2,208
Vernon	3.1	Yes	4	4	93	2.4	9.4	8.7	12.8	1,675
East Haven	3.3	Yes	5	5	138	3.1	2.2	4.6	16.4	2,178
Naugatuck	4.1	Yes			80	2.3	5.3	7.8	11.5	1,842
Farmington	4.5	No			56	1.7	7.7	6.6	15.8	751
Ansonia	4.8	Yes			103	3.6	-4.6	14.8	16.3	2,937
East Windsor	4.8	Yes			31	2.3	19.2	8.8	13.5	379
Glastonbury	5.1	No			63	1.6	5.0	7.7	13.4	560
Torrington	5.1	Yes			123	1.9	3.4	5.2	18.2	872
Hamden	5.1	Yes			202	1.9	0.0	15.2	19.9	1,631
Thompson	5.3	No			29	2.0	0.0	2.0	15.9	192
Middletown	5.3	Yes			175	3.2	-9.8	19.2	12.4	1,060
Derby	5.4	Yes			49	2.2	-12.5	10.3	18.6	2,390
Stonington	5.4	Yes			58	2.0	7.4	3.8	17.3	442
Groton	5.4	Yes			107	2.5	-6.1	16.0	10.4	1,328
Cromwell	5.5	Yes			25	1.2	8.7	7.0	16.0	1,008
Shelton	5.5	No			63	1.2	6.8	6.5	13.4	1,234
Norwich	5.6	Yes			276	4.9	4.9	13.4	15.6	1,262
Windsor	5.6	Yes			89	2.2	-13.6	27.2	14.7	930
Portland	5.7	Yes			18	1.3	5.9	5.1	15.6	378
Enfield	5.7	Yes			70	1.3	2.9	7.7	12.8	1,271
Seymour	5.7	Yes			36	1.7	-16.3	4.2	14.8	970
Putnam	5.8	Yes			48	3.1	-5.9	4.0	17.4	438
Wallingford	5.9	Yes			74	1.2	-15.9	6.5	15.2	1,046
Cheshire	5.9	Yes			38	1.1	5.6	11.5	12.9	788
Trumbull	6.0	Yes			61	1.1	13.0	6.7	16.9	1,454
Winchester	6.1	No			27	1.6	-6.9	3.0	14.5	353
Preston	6.1	No			9	1.2	12.5	5.7	15.1	163
Greenwich	6.2	Yes			83	0.8	5.1	14.2	17.3	1,218
Branford	6.2	Yes			59	1.3	-14.5	5.7	16.2	1,238
Windsor Locks	6.2	Yes			26	1.3	23.8	6.7	16.3	1,325
Pomfret	6.3	Yes			9	2.0	12.5	1.9	13.4	84
East Hartford	6.4	Yes			312	4.0	-3.4	22.3	16.5	2,630
Eastford	6.4	Yes			3	1.4	0.0	2.8	15.4	50
Stafford	6.4	Yes			31	2.2	-6.1	4.3	12.2	203
Wolcott	6.5	Yes			21	1.0	10.5	4.1	14.4	699
Newington	6.5	Yes			72	1.4	14.3	7.2	18.8	2,138
Southington	6.5	Yes			74	1.4	-11.9	3.9	13.4	1,067
Stratford	6.5	Yes			136	1.4	6.3	14.6	19.9	2,787
Rocky Hill	6.6	No			26	1.0	30.0	8.6	15.7	1,227
Montville	6.6	Yes			37	1.9	-7.5	10.1	11.2	411
Suffield	6.8	Yes			17	1.0	-5.6	4.8	14.9	264
West Haven	6.8	Yes			310	4.0	0.6	23.4	15.1	4,749
Danbury	6.9	Yes			299	3.8	-1.6	23.7	12.0	1,551
Thomaston	6.9	Yes			13	1.3	0.0	2.1	13.6	610
Meriden	6.9	Yes			392	4.6	0.8	22.7	15.2	2,377
Griswold	6.9	Yes			44	3.5	10.0	3.3	11.7	308
Plainfield	7.0	Yes			57	3.3	-12.3	3.3	12.1	343
Plymouth	7.1	Yes			19	1.2	5.6	2.3	12.8	556
Killingly	7.3	Yes			106	4.7	-4.5	4.0	14.1	332
Watertown	7.3	Yes			31	1.0	-13.9	3.9	14.4	743
Chester	7.3	Yes			5	0.8	0.0	3.6	15.8	239
Westport	7.3	Yes			16	0.4	-5.9	6.8	15.9	1,206
Clinton	7.6	Yes			20	1.4	0.0	6.9	10.8	807
Prospect	7.6	Yes			10	0.8	25.0	4.8	14.6	574

TABLE A.15  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR NEW BRITAIN, CONNECTICUT

	Similarity Index	Congregate Meals and MOW?	State-Wide Comparison Sites	Congregate Meal/MOW Sites	Similarity Index Components					
					Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
					Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation			
Pilot Town										
New Britain	0.0	Yes			726	6.2	3.0	32.9	16.6	5,273
Other Towns										
Waterbury	3.8	Yes	1	1	1,076	6.2	2.6	31.8	16.5	3,689
Stamford	6.1	Yes	2	2	768	5.0	7.0	35.7	14.0	2,937
Meriden	9.4	Yes	3	3	392	4.6	0.8	22.7	15.2	2,377
West Haven	9.5	Yes	4	4	310	4.0	0.6	23.4	15.1	4,749
East Hartford	10.3	Yes	5	5	312	4.0	-3.4	22.3	16.5	2,630
Norwalk	10.9	Yes			367	3.5	-1.9	31.4	13.3	3,414
Norwich	11.1	Yes			276	4.9	4.9	13.4	15.6	1,262
New London	12.3	Yes			278	9.2	1.1	39.3	12.7	4,307
West Hartford	13.0	Yes			521	4.2	2.4	11.7	22.4	2,548
Ansonia	13.5	Yes			103	3.6	-4.6	14.8	16.3	2,937
Danbury	13.8	Yes			299	3.8	-1.6	23.7	12.0	1,551
Windham	14.8	Yes			203	8.3	-1.9	24.7	11.3	796
East Haven	15.3	Yes			138	3.1	2.2	4.6	16.4	2,178
Killingly	15.8	Yes			106	4.7	-4.5	4.0	14.1	332
Manchester	16.0	Yes			204	2.6	5.7	11.0	15.1	1,882
Middletown	16.8	Yes			175	3.2	-9.8	19.2	12.4	1,060
Windsor	17.2	Yes			89	2.2	-13.6	27.2	14.7	930
Bristol	17.8	Yes			195	2.3	-8.5	7.6	14.3	2,234
Hamden	18.0	Yes			202	1.9	0.0	15.2	19.9	1,631
Putnam	18.1	Yes			48	3.1	-5.9	4.0	17.4	438
Milford	18.2	Yes			133	1.7	2.3	6.6	15.3	2,208
Bloomfield	18.2	Yes			105	2.7	-4.5	49.6	20.3	731
Plainville	18.6	Yes			52	2.1	4.0	7.4	15.0	1,724
Derby	18.7	Yes			49	2.2	-12.5	10.3	18.6	2,390
Stratford	18.8	Yes			136	1.4	6.3	14.6	19.9	2,787
Torrington	19.1	Yes			123	1.9	3.4	5.2	18.2	872
Vernon	19.1	Yes			93	2.4	9.4	8.7	12.8	1,675
Greenwich	19.6	Yes			83	0.8	5.1	14.2	17.3	1,218
Stonington	19.7	Yes			58	2.0	7.4	3.8	17.3	442
Farmington	19.7	No			56	1.7	7.7	6.6	15.8	751
Groton	19.9	Yes			107	2.5	-6.1	16.0	10.4	1,328
Griswold	19.9	Yes			44	3.5	10.0	3.3	11.7	308
Naugatuck	20.0	Yes			80	2.3	5.3	7.8	11.5	1,842
Voluntown	20.0	Yes			11	4.4	22.2	1.8	10.9	59
Thompson	20.1	No			29	2.0	0.0	2.0	15.9	192
Trumbull	20.3	Yes			61	1.1	13.0	6.7	16.9	1,454
Bridgeport	20.4	Yes			1,654	9.2	-7.6	62.4	13.2	8,548
Cromwell	20.4	Yes			25	1.2	8.7	7.0	16.0	1,008
Plainfield	20.4	Yes			57	3.3	-12.3	3.3	12.1	343
Newington	20.5	Yes			72	1.4	14.3	7.2	18.8	2,138
Branford	20.6	Yes			59	1.3	-14.5	5.7	16.2	1,238
Sprague	20.7	Yes			14	4.3	40.0	4.7	11.0	223
East Windsor	20.8	Yes			31	2.3	19.2	8.8	13.5	379
Windsor Locks	20.8	Yes			26	1.3	23.8	6.7	16.3	1,325
Glastonbury	20.9	No			63	1.6	5.0	7.7	13.4	560
Portland	21.0	Yes			18	1.3	5.9	5.1	15.6	378
Canaan*	21.1	Yes			5	3.5	-37.5	3.8	13.4	32
Enfield	21.3	Yes			70	1.3	2.9	7.7	12.8	1,271
Seymour	21.4	Yes			36	1.7	-16.3	4.2	14.8	970
Wallingford	21.4	Yes			74	1.2	-15.9	6.5	15.2	1,046
Shelton	21.5	No			63	1.2	6.8	6.5	13.4	1,234
Eastford	21.7	Yes			3	1.4	0.0	2.8	15.4	50
Cheshire	21.7	Yes			38	1.1	5.6	11.5	12.9	788
Winchester	21.7	No			27	1.6	-6.9	3.0	14.5	353
Rocky Hill	21.9	No			26	1.0	30.0	8.6	15.7	1,227

TABLE A.16  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR SOUTH WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT

	Similarity Index	Congregate Meals and MOW?	State-Wide Comparison Sites	State-Wide Congregate Meal/MOW Sites	Similarity Index Components					
					Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
					Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation			
Pilot Town										
South Windsor	0.0	Yes			30	1.3	20.0	8.9	10.4	809
Other Towns										
Clinton	2.0	Yes	1	1	20	1.4	0.0	6.9	10.8	807
Ridgefield	2.7	No	2		17	0.7	6.3	4.9	10.8	639
Canton	2.7	No	3		6	0.7	20.0	3.4	11.3	329
Lebanon	2.8	Yes	4	2	9	1.5	28.6	3.3	9.4	120
Simsbury	2.8	No	5		23	0.8	21.1	5.1	12.7	642
Somers	2.8	No			9	0.8	12.5	11.2	11.9	325
East Haddam	3.0	Yes		3	12	1.3	9.1	3.0	12.0	137
Cheshire	3.0	Yes		4	38	1.1	5.6	11.5	12.9	788
Ellington	3.0	No			12	0.9	0.0	3.5	10.7	347
Brookfield	3.1	Yes		5	22	1.5	-12.0	5.2	10.0	737
Enfield	3.2	Yes			70	1.3	2.9	7.7	12.8	1,271
Colchester	3.2	No			28	2.2	16.7	4.0	9.7	272
Granby	3.2	No			9	0.9	0.0	3.0	10.1	236
New Milford	3.3	Yes			42	1.7	-4.5	6.2	9.6	417
Plymouth	3.4	Yes			19	1.2	5.6	2.3	12.8	556
Shelton	3.4	No			63	1.2	6.8	6.5	13.4	1,234
Beacon Falls	3.4	Yes			8	1.4	-11.1	2.6	10.7	528
Guilford	3.6	No			32	1.3	-5.9	3.8	12.5	425
Montville	3.6	Yes			37	1.9	-7.5	10.1	11.2	411
Mansfield	3.7	Yes			26	1.7	30.0	17.2	8.7	393
Newtown	3.8	Yes			16	0.7	-11.1	5.1	10.5	401
Ashford	3.8	Yes			3	0.8	0.0	4.7	9.3	101
Columbia	3.8	Yes			5	0.9	0.0	3.3	11.6	231
Glastonbury	3.8	No			63	1.6	5.0	7.7	13.4	560
East Windsor	4.0	Yes			31	2.3	19.2	8.8	13.5	379
Coventry	4.0	Yes			15	1.4	-11.8	3.1	9.2	298
Wolcott	4.1	Yes			21	1.0	10.5	4.1	14.4	699
North Branford	4.1	Yes			22	1.3	-18.5	3.8	11.8	557
Thomaston	4.2	Yes			13	1.3	0.0	2.1	13.6	610
Ledyard	4.2	Yes			12	1.0	-14.3	7.8	8.5	388
Durham	4.3	No			2	0.3	0.0	3.2	10.6	277
Wilton	4.3	Yes			5	0.2	25.0	5.2	12.8	613
Prospect	4.3	Yes			10	0.8	25.0	4.8	14.6	574
Preston	4.3	No			9	1.2	12.5	5.7	15.1	163
Cromwell	4.4	Yes			25	1.2	8.7	7.0	16.0	1,008
Windsor Locks	4.4	Yes			26	1.3	23.8	6.7	16.3	1,325
Naugatuck	4.5	Yes			80	2.3	5.3	7.8	11.5	1,842
Oxford	4.5	Yes			9	1.1	-18.2	3.4	9.2	278
Rocky Hill	4.5	No			26	1.0	30.0	8.6	15.7	1,227
Redding	4.5	Yes			3	0.3	0.0	4.9	11.5	258
Bethel	4.6	Yes			32	1.9	-23.8	7.6	9.4	1,063
Canterbury	4.6	Yes			11	2.4	37.5	2.7	9.9	117
East Granby	4.6	No			8	1.6	-20.0	4.3	11.6	253
Bolton	4.8	No			1	0.2	0.0	4.3	11.4	333
Bethlehem	4.8	Yes			5	1.2	-16.7	2.0	12.3	170
Portland	4.8	Yes			18	1.3	5.9	5.1	15.6	378
Weston	4.8	Yes			0	0.0	0.0	5.0	11.3	447
Pomfret	4.9	Yes			9	2.0	12.5	1.9	13.4	84
New Hartford	5.0	No			0	0.0	0.0	2.7	10.1	166
Southington	5.0	Yes			74	1.4	-11.9	3.9	13.4	1,067
Harwinton	5.1	Yes			4	0.6	33.3	1.2	13.0	174
Stafford	5.1	Yes			31	2.2	-6.1	4.3	12.2	203
Vernon	5.1	Yes			93	2.4	9.4	8.7	12.8	1,675
Madison	5.1	No			13	0.6	30.0	3.4	14.2	447
Kent	5.1	No			4	0.9	33.3	7.3	15.1	64
Farmington	5.1	No			56	1.7	7.7	6.6	15.8	751

TABLE A.17  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR STAFFORD, CONNECTICUT

	Similarity Index	Congregate Meals and MOW?	State-Wide Comparison Sites	Congregate Meal/MOW Sites	Similarity Index Components					
					Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
					Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation			
Pilot Town										
Stafford	0.0	Yes			31	2.2	-6.1	4.3	12.2	203
Other Towns										
Guilford	1.9	No	1		32	1.3	-5.9	3.8	12.5	425
Montville	2.0	Yes	2	1	37	1.9	-7.5	10.1	11.2	411
East Granby	2.4	No	3		8	1.6	-20.0	4.3	11.6	253
Pomfret	2.6	Yes	4	2	9	2.0	12.5	1.9	13.4	84
Winchester	2.7	No	5		27	1.6	-6.9	3.0	14.5	353
North Branford	2.7	Yes		3	22	1.3	-18.5	3.8	11.8	557
Plainfield	2.7	Yes		4	57	3.3	-12.3	3.3	12.1	343
East Haddam	2.8	Yes		5	12	1.3	9.1	3.0	12.0	137
Bethlehem	2.8	Yes			5	1.2	-16.7	2.0	12.3	170
New Milford	2.9	Yes			42	1.7	-4.5	6.2	9.6	417
Colchester	2.9	No			28	2.2	16.7	4.0	9.7	272
Beacon Falls	3.0	Yes			8	1.4	-11.1	2.6	10.7	528
Thompson	3.1	No			29	2.0	0.0	2.0	15.9	192
Naugatuck	3.1	Yes			80	2.3	5.3	7.8	11.5	1,842
East Windsor	3.2	Yes			31	2.3	19.2	8.8	13.5	379
Southington	3.2	Yes			74	1.4	-11.9	3.9	13.4	1,067
Glastonbury	3.2	No			63	1.6	5.0	7.7	13.4	560
Plymouth	3.2	Yes			19	1.2	5.6	2.3	12.8	556
Clinton	3.3	Yes			20	1.4	0.0	6.9	10.8	807
Columbia	3.3	Yes			5	0.9	0.0	3.3	11.6	231
Brookfield	3.3	Yes			22	1.5	-12.0	5.2	10.0	737
Thomaston	3.4	Yes			13	1.3	0.0	2.1	13.6	610
Seymour	3.4	Yes			36	1.7	-16.3	4.2	14.8	970
Coventry	3.7	Yes			15	1.4	-11.8	3.1	9.2	298
Ellington	3.7	No			12	0.9	0.0	3.5	10.7	347
Vernon	3.7	Yes			93	2.4	9.4	8.7	12.8	1,675
Marlborough	3.7	No			11	2.5	0.0	3.5	7.8	245
Enfield	3.8	Yes			70	1.3	2.9	7.7	12.8	1,271
Suffield	3.8	Yes			17	1.0	-5.6	4.8	14.9	264
Griswold	3.9	Yes			44	3.5	10.0	3.3	11.7	308
Plainville	3.9	Yes			52	2.1	4.0	7.4	15.0	1,724
Chaplin	4.0	Yes			1	0.4	0.0	2.4	12.1	115
Bethel	4.1	Yes			32	1.9	-23.8	7.6	9.4	1,063
Granby	4.1	No			9	0.9	0.0	3.0	10.1	236
Woodbury	4.2	Yes			8	0.7	-11.1	3.9	13.9	236
Eastford	4.2	Yes			3	1.4	0.0	2.8	15.4	50
Brooklyn	4.2	Yes			8	0.9	-20.0	7.7	13.0	241
Watertown	4.2	Yes			31	1.0	-13.9	3.9	14.4	743
Shelton	4.2	No			63	1.2	6.8	6.5	13.4	1,234
Cheshire	4.2	Yes			38	1.1	5.6	11.5	12.9	788
Newtown	4.3	Yes			16	0.7	-11.1	5.1	10.5	401
Redding	4.3	Yes			3	0.3	0.0	4.9	11.5	258
Groton	4.3	Yes			107	2.5	-6.1	16.0	10.4	1,328
Scotland	4.3	Yes			1	0.5	0.0	2.9	13.3	77
Woodstock	4.5	Yes			7	0.8	0.0	1.5	14.0	108
Bristol	4.5	Yes			195	2.3	-8.5	7.6	14.3	2,234
Ridgefield	4.5	No			17	0.7	6.3	4.9	10.8	639
Stonington	4.6	Yes			58	2.0	7.4	3.8	17.3	442
Portland	4.6	Yes			18	1.3	5.9	5.1	15.6	378
Farmington	4.6	No			56	1.7	7.7	6.6	15.8	751
Bolton	4.6	No			1	0.2	0.0	4.3	11.4	333
Canterbury	4.7	Yes			11	2.4	37.5	2.7	9.9	117
Wolcott	4.7	Yes			21	1.0	10.5	4.1	14.4	699
Simsbury	4.7	No			23	0.8	21.1	5.1	12.7	642
Oxford	4.7	Yes			9	1.1	-18.2	3.4	9.2	278

TABLE A.18  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT

	Similarity Index	Congregate Meals and MOW?	State-Wide Comparison Sites	State-Wide Congregate Meal/MOW Sites	Similarity Index Components					
					Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
					Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation			
Pilot Town										
Windsor	0.0	Yes			89	2.2	-13.6	27.2	14.7	930
Other Towns										
Seymour	4.3	Yes	1	1	36	1.7	-16.3	4.2	14.8	970
Plainville	4.7	Yes	2	2	52	2.1	4.0	7.4	15.0	1,724
Bristol	4.7	Yes	3	3	195	2.3	-8.5	7.6	14.3	2,234
Wallingford	5.0	Yes	4	4	74	1.2	-15.9	6.5	15.2	1,046
Middletown	5.1	Yes	5	5	175	3.2	-9.8	19.2	12.4	1,060
Groton	5.2	Yes			107	2.5	-6.1	16.0	10.4	1,328
Southington	5.3	Yes			74	1.4	-11.9	3.9	13.4	1,067
Winchester	5.3	No			27	1.6	-6.9	3.0	14.5	353
Branford	5.5	Yes			59	1.3	-14.5	5.7	16.2	1,238
Manchester	5.6	Yes			204	2.6	5.7	11.0	15.1	1,882
Vernon	5.6	Yes			93	2.4	9.4	8.7	12.8	1,675
Glastonbury	5.6	No			63	1.6	5.0	7.7	13.4	560
Stafford	5.7	Yes			31	2.2	-6.1	4.3	12.2	203
Derby	5.7	Yes			49	2.2	-12.5	10.3	18.6	2,390
Watertown	5.7	Yes			31	1.0	-13.9	3.9	14.4	743
Farmington	5.7	No			56	1.7	7.7	6.6	15.8	751
Montville	5.7	Yes			37	1.9	-7.5	10.1	11.2	411
Milford	5.8	Yes			133	1.7	2.3	6.6	15.3	2,208
East Windsor	5.8	Yes			31	2.3	19.2	8.8	13.5	379
Thompson	5.9	No			29	2.0	0.0	2.0	15.9	192
Naugatuck	6.2	Yes			80	2.3	5.3	7.8	11.5	1,842
Suffield	6.4	Yes			17	1.0	-5.6	4.8	14.9	264
Cheshire	6.4	Yes			38	1.1	5.6	11.5	12.9	788
Enfield	6.5	Yes			70	1.3	2.9	7.7	12.8	1,271
Torrington	6.5	Yes			123	1.9	3.4	5.2	18.2	872
Shelton	6.6	No			63	1.2	6.8	6.5	13.4	1,234
Stonington	6.6	Yes			58	2.0	7.4	3.8	17.3	442
Ansonia	6.8	Yes			103	3.6	-4.6	14.8	16.3	2,937
Cromwell	6.8	Yes			25	1.2	8.7	7.0	16.0	1,008
Deep River	6.8	Yes			7	1.1	-30.0	4.0	14.6	329
Thomaston	6.9	Yes			13	1.3	0.0	2.1	13.6	610
Greenwich	6.9	Yes			83	0.8	5.1	14.2	17.3	1,218
Portland	6.9	Yes			18	1.3	5.9	5.1	15.6	378
Pomfret	6.9	Yes			9	2.0	12.5	1.9	13.4	84
Eastford	6.9	Yes			3	1.4	0.0	2.8	15.4	50
Westbrook	7.0	Yes			19	1.9	-20.8	4.2	18.4	355
Plainfield	7.0	Yes			57	3.3	-12.3	3.3	12.1	343
Guilford	7.0	No			32	1.3	-5.9	3.8	12.5	425
Brooklyn	7.1	Yes			8	0.9	-20.0	7.7	13.0	241
North Branford	7.1	Yes			22	1.3	-18.5	3.8	11.8	557
Putnam	7.1	Yes			48	3.1	-5.9	4.0	17.4	438
Bethel	7.1	Yes			32	1.9	-23.8	7.6	9.4	1,063
Wolcott	7.2	Yes			21	1.0	10.5	4.1	14.4	699
East Granby	7.2	No			8	1.6	-20.0	4.3	11.6	253
Hamden	7.2	Yes			202	1.9	0.0	15.2	19.9	1,631
Woodbury	7.2	Yes			8	0.7	-11.1	3.9	13.9	236
Preston	7.3	No			9	1.2	12.5	5.7	15.1	163
Brookfield	7.4	Yes			22	1.5	-12.0	5.2	10.0	737
Bethlehem	7.5	Yes			5	1.2	-16.7	2.0	12.3	170
Danbury	7.5	Yes			299	3.8	-1.6	23.7	12.0	1,551
East Haven	7.5	Yes			138	3.1	2.2	4.6	16.4	2,178
Westport	7.6	Yes			16	0.4	-5.9	6.8	15.9	1,206
Clinton	7.6	Yes			20	1.4	0.0	6.9	10.8	807
Woodbridge	7.6	Yes			10	0.7	-9.1	8.1	17.2	428
New Milford	7.7	Yes			42	1.7	-4.5	6.2	9.6	417

TABLE A.19  
SIMILARITY INDEX FOR WINDSOR LOCKS, CONNECTICUT

	Similarity Index	Congregate Meals and MOW?	State-Wide Comparison Sites	State-Wide Congregate Meal/MOW Sites	Similarity Index Components					
					Elderly FSP Participants			Nonwhite Population (Percent)	Age 65+ Population (Percent)	Population Density
					Total	Participation Rate	Percent Change in Participation			
Pilot Town										
Windsor Locks	0.0	Yes			26	1.3	23.8	6.7	16.3	1,325
Other Towns										
Cromwell	1.4	Yes	1	1	25	1.2	8.7	7.0	16.0	1,008
Rocky Hill	1.6	No	2		26	1.0	30.0	8.6	15.7	1,227
Trumbull	1.8	Yes	3	2	61	1.1	13.0	6.7	16.9	1,454
Portland	2.3	Yes	4	3	18	1.3	5.9	5.1	15.6	378
Farmington	2.4	No	5		56	1.7	7.7	6.6	15.8	751
Berlin	2.5	Yes		4	24	0.8	33.3	4.2	16.8	655
Preston	2.6	No			9	1.2	12.5	5.7	15.1	163
North Haven	2.7	Yes		5	49	1.2	28.9	7.0	19.2	1,059
Branford	2.7	Yes			59	1.3	-14.5	5.7	16.2	1,238
Prospect	2.8	Yes			10	0.8	25.0	4.8	14.6	574
Newington	3.0	Yes			72	1.4	14.3	7.2	18.8	2,138
Kent	3.1	No			4	0.9	33.3	7.3	15.1	64
Wolcott	3.2	Yes			21	1.0	10.5	4.1	14.4	699
Shelton	3.2	No			63	1.2	6.8	6.5	13.4	1,234
Eastford	3.4	Yes			3	1.4	0.0	2.8	15.4	50
Darien	3.4	Yes			9	0.3	28.6	6.1	14.3	1,413
Old Lyme	3.6	Yes			8	0.7	14.3	3.1	17.5	287
Plainville	3.7	Yes			52	2.1	4.0	7.4	15.0	1,724
Westport	3.7	Yes			16	0.4	-5.9	6.8	15.9	1,206
Wallingford	3.8	Yes			74	1.2	-15.9	6.5	15.2	1,046
Chester	3.8	Yes			5	0.8	0.0	3.6	15.8	239
Union	3.8	No			1	0.9	0.0	2.2	16.2	24
Simsbury	3.8	No			23	0.8	21.1	5.1	12.7	642
Stonington	3.8	Yes			58	2.0	7.4	3.8	17.3	442
Enfield	3.9	Yes			70	1.3	2.9	7.7	12.8	1,271
Milford	3.9	Yes			133	1.7	2.3	6.6	15.3	2,208
Madison	4.0	No			13	0.6	30.0	3.4	14.2	447
Greenwich	4.0	Yes			83	0.8	5.1	14.2	17.3	1,218
Suffield	4.1	Yes			17	1.0	-5.6	4.8	14.9	264
Thomaston	4.1	Yes			13	1.3	0.0	2.1	13.6	610
Thompson	4.1	No			29	2.0	0.0	2.0	15.9	192
Glastonbury	4.2	No			63	1.6	5.0	7.7	13.4	560
Plymouth	4.4	Yes			19	1.2	5.6	2.3	12.8	556
Woodbridge	4.4	Yes			10	0.7	-9.1	8.1	17.2	428
Cheshire	4.4	Yes			38	1.1	5.6	11.5	12.9	788
South Windsor	4.4	Yes			30	1.3	20.0	8.9	10.4	809
Winchester	4.4	No			27	1.6	-6.9	3.0	14.5	353
East Windsor	4.5	Yes			31	2.3	19.2	8.8	13.5	379
Seymour	4.5	Yes			36	1.7	-16.3	4.2	14.8	970
Torrington	4.6	Yes			123	1.9	3.4	5.2	18.2	872
Watertown	4.7	Yes			31	1.0	-13.9	3.9	14.4	743
Bridgewater	4.7	Yes			1	0.4	0.0	3.3	15.9	108
East Haddam	4.7	Yes			12	1.3	9.1	3.0	12.0	137
Wilton	4.8	Yes			5	0.2	25.0	5.2	12.8	613
Southington	4.9	Yes			74	1.4	-11.9	3.9	13.4	1,067
Waterford	4.9	Yes			36	1.0	0.0	7.6	20.1	555
Pomfret	5.0	Yes			9	2.0	12.5	1.9	13.4	84
Guilford	5.1	No			32	1.3	-5.9	3.8	12.5	425
Hampton	5.1	Yes			1	0.4	0.0	3.5	15.0	64
Clinton	5.2	Yes			20	1.4	0.0	6.9	10.8	807
Orange	5.2	Yes			15	0.6	-6.3	6.2	19.2	719
Avon	5.3	No			6	0.3	-14.3	4.6	15.7	598
Woodstock	5.3	Yes			7	0.8	0.0	1.5	14.0	108

One problem that will arise in understanding the impact of the Connecticut demonstration is that a separate FSP outreach demonstration is currently underway in Hartford. This demonstration directly targets elderly nonparticipants (as well as former TANF recipients, low income families with children, able-bodied adults, and non-English speaking minorities) and provides FSP outreach and education programs to increase awareness of benefits and FSP application procedures. As a result, it will be difficult to distinguish the impact of this demonstration from the impacts of the Elderly Nutrition Demonstration in Hartford and the surrounding towns. To address this issue, the evaluators should use the process analysis and client satisfaction survey to explore the extent to which changes in FSP participation in the Hartford area are related to the Elderly Nutrition demonstration.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **SPECIFICATIONS FOR STATE CASERECORD EXTRACT AND SURVEY CONTACT DATABASE**



The evaluation of the Elderly Nutrition Demonstrations will require access to electronic case records from the data systems of each state participating in the demonstration. A total of 11 extracts will be required: one for each observation month. Each extract should contain information about every active case (elderly and nonelderly) receiving food stamps in the observation month.

In addition to the caserecord extracts, the evaluator will need information to draw the sample for the client satisfaction survey and to contact sample members. The information for the survey should be provided separately from the caserecord extracts.

This appendix contains the specifications for state case record extracts and survey contact databases.

## **A. CASERECORD EXTRACTS**

### **1. Format**

The preferred format for the data will be a flat ASCII file. However, most machine-readable file formats will be acceptable. Files should be named with the following convention:

*ssmmyyyy*

where *ss* is the two-letter state code, *mm* is the month to which the data pertain, and *yyyy* is the year to which the data pertain.

### **2. Supporting Documentation**

Data extracts should be accompanied by supporting documentation. At a minimum, this documentation should include a file layout and a data dictionary. The data dictionary should indicate for each variable the range of logical values and the definitions of each value. Special data dictionaries do not need to be created for this analysis. Existing dictionaries can be used so long as they describe, at a minimum, all of the variables on the caserecord extract.

### 3. Observation Months

There are 11 separate observation months for the analysis. The observation months are defined relative to the start of the demonstration. We define the start of the demonstration as the first month in which someone receives services through the demonstration (i.e., at least one person applies using the simplified application procedures in the simplified application demonstration; at least one person receives application assistance through the application assistance demonstrations; or at least one person applies or opts for commodities in the commodity alternative demonstrations). The 11 observation months include:

- Before Demonstration Start-up:
  - Seven months before demonstration startup (Month -7)
  - Four months before demonstration startup (Month -4)
  - One month before demonstration startup (Month -1)
- During the Demonstration:
  - Third month of the demonstration (Month +3)<sup>1</sup>
  - Sixth month of the demonstration (Month +6)
  - Ninth month of the demonstration (Month +9)
  - Twelfth month of the demonstration (Month +12)
  - Fifteenth month of the demonstration (Month +15)
  - Eighteen month of the demonstration (Month +18)
  - Twenty-first month of the demonstration (Month +21)
  - Twenty-fourth month of the demonstration (Month +24)

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<sup>1</sup>Note that there is no Month 0. Month +1 is the first month of the demonstration (the first month in which someone receives services through the demonstration). If month +1 is July, then Month -1 is June and Month +3 is September. Month -4 and Month +9 should be the same calendar month.

#### **4. Frequency**

The frequency of delivery of these data extracts is subject to the constraints of the state data systems. Extracts can be delivered individually, or multiple extracts can be submitted at once. However, extracts should be submitted within six months of the observation month. The preferred frequency of delivery will be to deliver the extracts individually in the month subsequent to the observation month.

#### **5. Universe**

The universe for each data set for each state is all active food stamp units that received food stamp benefits intended to cover at least one day of the observation month. A food stamp unit is defined as one or more individuals receiving food stamps under the same case. All food stamp units – including those without any elderly people, those not in the pilot site and those not in a comparison site – should be included in the extract. Information on units not receiving food stamps in the observation month should not be included, or detailed instructions on how to identify those records (so they can be deleted) should be provided.

#### **6. Records**

The preferred record format is one record per food stamp unit, with each record containing an array of variables that indicate unit characteristics. If a food stamp unit-level flat file is submitted, multiple variables should be used to present information about individual unit members. For example, if there are four members of a unit, there should be four age variables on that unit's record – one for each unit member. Hierarchal files and person-level flat files also will be accepted.

## 7. Variables

All variables contained in the file should refer to the case characteristics/status in the observation month (as opposed to the characteristics or status at the time of application or some other point in time). Each record in the extract should contain, at a minimum, the following information for each food stamp unit:

- A unique case identifier
- County of client residence
- ZIP Code of client residence
- A code to identify the client's local FSP office
- The number of individuals in the unit
- The dollar amount of the FSP benefit received in the observation month
- The date that the case was opened
- The date that the case was most recently recertified
- The length of the current certification period
- The date of birth of each member of the unit
- The race/ethnicity of each member of the unit
- The gender of each member of the unit
- The unit total gross income
- The unit total net income
- The unit total earned income
- The unit total income from Social Security
- The unit total income from SSI
- The unit total income from other disability benefits (individual or aggregate)

If available, each record also should contain the following variables:

- A code to identify the relationship of individual unit members to the unit head

- Whether the unit received food stamp assistance before the current spell
- Total countable assets of the unit
- The disability status of each member of the unit
- Whether the case received expedited service
- Whether an authorized representative was used to submit the FSP application
- Unit shelter expenses
- Unit medical expense deduction

## **8. Demonstration Participation Status**

For the states implementing the application assistance and commodity alternative models, the evaluator will need to identify which households participated in the demonstration. In other words, they will need to know for every record in the extract, whether the case received application assistance/commodities packages through the demonstration.

Given the constraints of state data systems, it is unlikely that this information can be added to the state extract. Rather, we anticipate that the easiest way to collect the demonstration participation information will be for the demonstration staff to maintain a separate database listing demonstration participants. This database should contain a unique case identifier that is consistent with the identifier on the caserecord extract so that demonstration participants can be identified in the extract by the evaluator.

## **B. SURVEY CONTACT DATABASE**

To conduct the survey of client satisfaction, the evaluator will need information for every elderly FSP case in the pilot site that applies or recertifies for food stamps during the demonstration. Because this information is not needed for all FSP cases in the pilot site, this database *should not* be linked with the caserecord extract described above. This will help maintain the confidentiality of the data for the survey respondents,

## **1. Format**

The preferred format is a Microsoft Excel or comparable spreadsheet file. However, any machine-readable format will be accepted.

## **2. Quarters of Observation**

The survey contact database should be submitted on a quarterly basis. The observation quarters are defined relative to the start of the demonstration. The first observation quarter is the first three months of the demonstration; the observation second quarter is the second three months of the demonstration, etc. The survey contact database should be submitted in the month immediately following each observation quarter (e.g., the database for the first quarter should be submitted in the fourth month of the demonstration). Note that the survey cannot begin, and the databases should not be submitted, until OMB approves the survey. Once OMB approval is received, the demonstration staff should submit databases for any quarters that have passed.

## **3. Survey Eligibility Criteria**

This database should include records for all cases that meet the following criteria *during the quarter of observation*:

- Resided in the pilot site
- Included only individuals age 60 or older
- Applied for food stamps (for all models) or was recertified for food stamps (for simplified application and commodity alternative models only)

## **4. Contents**

The variables in the database should refer to the characteristics/status of each individual in the case at the time of application. The database should include the following information:

- Full name (first, middle, last) of FSP head of household

- Full names (first, middle, last) of other FSP household members
- Date of birth of each household member
- Race/ethnicity of FSP head of household
- FSP benefit amount received in month of application/recertification
- FSP case number
- Social Security number of each household member
- The date the food stamp case was opened
- An indicator of whether the household head received food stamps before the current food stamp case opened
- The date that the household head's prior food stamp case was opened (if available)
- Name of authorized representative, if any
- Physical location (street address, city, and ZIP code)
- Mailing address
- Home telephone number(s)
- Work telephone number (if available)
- Employer name and address (if available)
- Number of individuals in the food stamp unit
- (If available): Whether received assistance through the demonstration (in Maine and Michigan) or whether selected the commodity option (in Connecticut and North Carolina)



## **APPENDIX C**

### **DEMONSTRATION STAKEHOLDERS**



TABLE C.1  
CONNECTICUT STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholder Type	Organization	Key Staff
Grantee	Connecticut Department of Social Services Adult Services Division	Public assistance consultant Food stamp director Program support staff Data systems analyst Fiscal staff
Nonprofit Partner	Community Renewal Team	Director of nutrition and elderly services Assistant director of nutrition Manager of food bank Manager of Meals on Wheels Meals on Wheels volunteers Distribution center volunteers
Food Assistance Organizations	Hartford Food System —Farmer’s market coupons	Director
	End Hunger Connecticut, Inc.	Executive director
	Hartford Volunteer Nurses’ Association —Delivers Meals on Wheels	Director
	Food pantries	Director or manager
Other Stakeholders	North Central Area Agency on Aging	Executive director  Choices/Medisave regional coordinator
	University of Connecticut —Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program	
	Resident Service coordinators —at senior housing complexes	

TABLE C.2

FLORIDA STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholder Type	Organization	Key Staff
Grantee	Florida Dept. of Children and Families Economic Self Sufficiency Services Food Stamp Program	Program administrator Operation review specialist Data systems analysts Government operations consultant Leon County program administrator Gadsden County program administrator Senior public assistance specialists Case workers
Nonprofit Partner	Florida Impact (publicity)	Executive director
Food Assistance Organizations	Food pantries	Director or manager
Other Stakeholders	Area Agency on Aging  Resident service coordinators —at senior housing complexes	Director

TABLE C.3

MAINE STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholder Type	Organization	Key Staff
Grantee	Maine Department of Human Services Bureau of Family Independence Bureau of Elder and Adult Services	Food stamp program manager Manager of community programs Senior Community Services Employment Program coordinator Food stamp supervisor (Rockland) Data systems analysts Case workers
Nonprofit Partners	Waldo County Committee for Social Action/Senior Community Services Employment Program  Muskie School of Public Service Institute for Public Sector Innovations	Project coordinator Senior application assistants  Manager, public welfare training programs Coordinator, Elderly Nutrition Program
Food Assistance Organizations	Food pantries  Farmer's markets	Director or manager
Other Stakeholders	Area Agency on Aging  MBNA (Waldo county's largest employer)  Resident Service coordinators —at senior housing complexes	Director

TABLE C.4  
MICHIGAN STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholder Type	Organization	Key Staff
Grantee	Michigan Family Independence Agency Office of Services to the Aging	Deputy division administrator, Medical and Food Stamp Assistance Chief information officer Policy analyst Supervisor, older adult services Data systems analyst
Nonprofit Partners	Elder Law of Michigan  MiCAFE sites MEPPS sites Michigan Association of Senior Centers	Executive director MiCAFE project manager Call center staff trainers
Food Assistance Organizations	Food pantries Farmer's markets	Director or manager
Other Stakeholders	Area Agency on Aging Michigan Directors of Services to the Aging Resident Service coordinators —at senior housing complexes	Director

TABLE C.5

NORTH CAROLINA STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholder Type	Organization	Key Staff
Grantee	North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Division of Social Services  Division of Aging  Alamance County Department of Social Services  Alamance County Community Services Nutrition Sites	Assistant chief, economic independence section Data systems analyst Director, division of aging  Director Director, income maintenance program Director or manager
Nonprofit Partners	The Loaves and Fishes Christian Food Ministry   Alamance Elder Care  John Robert Kernodle Senior Citizens Center  Meals on Wheels	Executive director Elderly nutrition project coordinator Food bank project coordinator Nutritionist Volunteers  Director or manager  Director or manager  Volunteers or coordinator
Food Assistance Organizations	Food pantries  Farmer’s markets	Director or manager
Other Stakeholders	Area Agency on Aging  Resident Service coordinators —at senior housing complexes	Director