

USDA
Study of Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
Rapid City, SD
November 29, 2012

I want to welcome you here today for this really important consultation on the study of the FDPIR program. My name is Darlene Barnes, and I'm Regional Administrator for Food and Nutrition Service, United States Department of Agriculture.

Before we get started I'd like to ask Kenny Chapman from the Santee Nation to say a blessing please.

Let us pray. Lord God, creator of Heaven and Earth, we thank you for this moment you've allowed us to come together and to look to you for direction and wisdom and health, Lord God. We pray that you would be with us. You tell us in your Word that where two or three are gathered in my name, you tell us, that there you would be in the midst, and we thank you for your presence. Bless each one, Lord God, with wisdom and forethought, Lord God, to make the decisions that need to be made regarding Native Americans or whoever else may need these programs to succeed. We thank you for hearing our prayers and answering our prayers. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Thank you, Kenny.

Once again, I want to welcome everyone here for the consultation. I'd also like to go around the table and have introductions, and so I'll start to my left here.

Good morning. Hi. My name is Barbara Lopez. I work for the Food and Nutrition Service. I've been with the agency for almost five years now. I work in the food distribution division and I focus on FDPIR in the policy department. And my primary role is to be one of the coordinators for the study and I work closely with the research team as well as the FNS research team. I'm involved in a lot of the consultations and I hope that personally my role can be to be as a resource for all of you, so if there is anything that you all need, just please let me know.

Hello. I'm Suzanne Bard from NORC at the University of Chicago. We're the ones that will be collecting the data from respondents, and I have been in data collection since 1977. We started out as respondents, and that's how I found out about this.

Hi, I'm Nancy Pindus with the Urban Institute. I'm the project director of the study. I've been with the Urban Institute for over 20 years, and we do a lot of research. We're a nonprofit organization researching a number of federal programs and other programs for disadvantaged populations. I've done a lot of work over the years for USDA and for FNS and this is my second study of FDPIR.

Good morning. My name is Walter Hillabrant. I'm Citizen Potawatomi, (inaudible). I'm the President of Support Services International, which is a subcontractor on this study, and I've been working in Indian Country since 1980.

Good morning everyone. My name's Charles Gates. Everybody calls me Red, that's my nickname so feel free to do that. Sometimes I don't answer to the name of Charles. I've been the Program Director for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe since 1982, and I have been delegated officially to represent the tribal chairman at this – again, tribal consultation. I know that's the term used. Our tribe does not recognize it as such. And I was also asked to convey that message.

Good morning. My name is Mary Greene-Trottier, and I'm here representing Roger Yankton, the Chairman of the Spirit Lake Tribe. I'm a program director for the food distribution program – not quite as long as Red, but pretty close. I also serve on the national board and our regional board.

Good morning. I'm Ruth Rifle. I'm the Program Director for the Rosewood Sioux Tribe. I have been with the program – I just started my twenty-fifth year. I've been a director for six. I'm glad we're part of the study. It will be interesting.

Good morning. My name is Alvin Bettelyoun. I am the new councilman for the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. I'm here proudly to represent 42,540 enrolled members for the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. I worked for the tribal courthouse for 14 years and law enforcement for eight as a police officer. I know the importance of

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statistics here, that's why we're here to help you and our commodity program director here, and to relay it to the other councilmen on the Rosebud.

Good morning, everyone. My name is Brian Hart. I'm from the Corn Creek community here representing the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. I'm also new to the program here, so I find this interesting because I have relatives and people in my community who are recipients of the distribution program, and I'm interested to see where we're heading with this program. Thank you.

I'm Debbie Hammock. I'm the Branch Chief for community nutrition programs with /FNS. I'm new to the position so I look forward to working with each and every one of you. Thank you.

I'm Kathy Sweitzer and I work with Food and Nutrition Service, and I've worked with the FDPIR program since 1991.

Good morning everybody. I'm Greg Breasher. I'm the Food Distribution Division team lead. I've been with FNS for the last two years; USDA for nearly 11. I just want to echo what Barbara said. I'd like you to consider me a resource on anything you need here. I'd be glad to act as a liaison for you on anything you need from the region. Thanks.

My name is Kenny Chapman. I'm with the USDA Food Distribution Program in the Santee Sioux Nation. I'm here on behalf of the Santee Sioux Nation and Roger Trudell, our Chairman, who asked me to sit in here. I'm also with the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs and am very much interested in doing what I can to continue this food distribution program because it's very much needed. Thank you.

Thank you, everyone. I'm really appreciative that you're here today to hear the dialogue and to participate in this dialogue. The last time that the FDPIR program was looked at was back in 1990, and actually it was just not too long after I had joined FNS. And this is a really critical program. We all know that. And back then, in 1990 when they did do the review of the program, changes were made. And changes continue to be made to make this program as best as it can be for the people who need it.

This study is to continue that. It's to take a look and talk to participants and look at the program. Because it's so key and because it's such an important program, we just want to make sure that we have enough information to continue to make improvements where needed, if needed. Also its key to us when the time comes to talk to Congress about all of the nutrition assistance programs, we will have clear and good data from participants themselves to continue to talk about how important it is and the value that this program brings to many, many people on reservations across the country.

I know that you all are familiar with the program, and I know just from a national standpoint that it provides food assistance and nutrition education to approximately 276 tribes and Indian tribal organizations along with five state agencies.

This study is a national study, and given resource constraints, not all Indian tribal organizations are going to be involved in the study, and we'll learn more about how the different tribes or Indian tribal organizations were selected.

We have a lot to cover today, lots of details, and I invite an open dialogue and I invite your questions, and I'm going to turn it over to Greg to go over some logistics and an agenda review.

Thank you, Darlene. Once again, good morning, everybody. You should have meeting materials which include today's agenda, the list of invited tribes, copy of the presentation, a document that describes what sampling is, which we will hear more about today, and a template letter for our research team to receive approval from your tribe to visit your reservation.

So the template letter is provided as a resource, and we will discuss the approval process further during today's meeting. Can you please indicate if you are missing any materials? Anybody missing anything?

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Okay. Great. We also have a sign in sheet which is going around. We've passed that around. We can make sure everybody signed it if we need to pass it around again. Are we all signed in? I think we're okay there.

And again, as a reminder, today's meeting is being recorded and will be made part of the official USDA consultation record. You will notice we have microphones around the table which are connected to the recording machine. We encourage everyone here to please use the microphones to make sure we capture your comment for the record.

Regarding today's agenda, we have divided the meeting into three general segments today. In the first segment we will provide an overview of the research involved, details about participant profiles and program information that will be used in this study. We'll also be covering timelines in this first section. And we'll be stopping throughout this section to take your questions and receive your feedback.

The second section will cover how the study will be conducted and will include details on sampling and the data collection piece, which includes case record reviews, the proposed surveys, and the site visits.

The final section will cover tribal involvement. Here we will be consulting with you on the approval process and/or permissions for the research team to come on your reservation for the site visits and interviews. We will also discuss outreach opportunities in scheduling our visits with you.

We will then conclude with next steps, we'll review any action items that have come up during today's meeting, and discuss with you a general timeline of events as well.

Are there any initial questions in terms of the agenda or any items you'd like to include?

[Charles Gates] I guess just for the list of tribes invited to participate, I've been asked to add North Dakota/South Dakota. We're a little touchy about that. We're in both states. We operate in both states.

Will do. Thanks, Red.

Yeah.

With that, I will turn it back to Darlene.

Thank you, Greg.

From here I'm going to turn it over to the research team to begin the review of the study.

Okay. Thank you.

Well, I'm really, really happy to be here today, and just want to express our appreciation for your coming today and to let you know that we're pleased to be working on this study – the Urban Institute with Support Services International conducted a much study of FDPIR back in 2008-2009. We went to a small number of tribes. We had terrific cooperation from a lot of FDPIR directors and staff and support from the tribal leaders, so we really do enjoy working with this program and enjoyed our experiences then, so we really look forward to working with you again and providing the information that will improve the program for the participants and for ITOs.

A little bit more about our study team. We're a contractor to USDA FNS. The Urban Institute is what's called the prime contractor. We're a nonprofit research organization based in Washington, D.C. Besides myself, other names you'll be hearing are Diane Levi, who's the Project Manager, and Chris Narducci, who's a research associate, NORC at the University of Chicago, Suzanne Bard and Carol Hafford are the two people who will be leading the outreach and the survey and case record review components of the study, and they have lots of experience, both in data collection and survey research, but also in working in tribal areas, so they're very well suited for this project.

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Walter is going to be one of the key people on our site visit team as well as helping with the whole design of the study and he worked with us on the earlier FDPIR study.

I'm going to try and go through some of this – give you the big picture of the study. We want to have enough time for discussion so I'm going to try not to go into too much detail at this point, but, you know, anything – either stop me with questions or when we have breaks for the consultation time, please jump in.

The key topics of the study are first to provide a profile of participants because we need an updated national profile. As Darlene said, the last one was done in 1990, so you can imagine that a few things have changed since then. And that way we'll be able to understand any changes in the demographics in how the program has changed nationally, so it will include information about things like participant age, gender, household composition, employment status, indicators of economic hardship, and changes in circumstances that might affect eligibility. So things like that.

Next slide. Another key topic will be some other participant information that is actually going to show how the program affects or helps FDPIR participants, so that's information we're going to be asking participants about themselves about how they store and prepare food, how they pick up and acquire food, any barriers to accessing benefits, other sources of food that they have, and what role FDPIR plays in their household and what factors influence participation in FDPIR or in other food assistance programs.

Then to complement all this information about participants, we are also going to learn more about program services and activities across the sites. And for that we – for issues about program operations, because we know from other work that the programs vary a lot across the country, so looking at what they do, what kinds of nutrition education is going on, different ways that foods are distributed, factors that program directors think may be affecting participation, things that could improve the program, things that they would like to see, areas where they may want more flexibility or where they have heard from participants about particular needs.

Just to give you a quick sort of tentative timeline – I always say tentative because there's always a lot of hoops to jump through on federal contracts to get approvals and things, so this is the plan now. We did have an initial set of telephone consultations back in January of 2012, and then prepared a study plan. We're now still towards the end of the process of designing and pretesting our instruments, and that's the draft instruments that we have copies of here and that are on the website. So that – we're now pretesting those instruments. We've got a few tribes that are not in the sample that have agreed to help us have a few people take the survey and have a few others do interviews with us on the telephone and some on site for our program information, and we'll be using those to revise the guides, which means that they're not final yet, which is why it is a good time for you all to look at it and give us feedback as well because they are not final yet. So just so you know there's time to get your input in there.

And then we'll be having these consultations and information from these consultations, the three in person and then the next telephone consultation will be also used to revise things.

Nancy, there's a question. Excuse me.

Okay.

Yes. In regards to some of the information received from the computers, it would be nice if we would have someone like yourself come to our program so we can talk one-to-one basis and let you know what we need, what needs to be done, what should be done, and how we can improve the program by talking to you face to face. I think that – rather than just giving a survey and filling it out, I think that's what I think would be better if you would be able, if you can, come to our programs and we could discuss it.

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And we will actually be doing some site visits. We're going to – what did we say – 17 of the – we can't go to all of them for budget reasons, but we are going to be going to 17 of the tribes in the study, so we very much want to do that. I think that's – you're absolutely right.

Very good. Thank you.

Is that prior to the –

No, that's as part of the study.

Is anybody going to the reservations prior to the study or –

For some of the pre-tests we are. Suzanne's been to a couple already.

And while we're making some of the negotiations to the study there will be visits.

Yeah, so there will be –

Are you coming to the Rosebud?

Sure.

I'm sure my fellow councilmen, they – they're really – like that.

Yeah, we hope to.

You will see when I cover that that there's going to be lots of interaction.

Who – I have a question. This is Charles Gates. Who requested this study?

Well, it was done through our Office of Research and Analysis, which is the research area for the Food and Nutrition Service.

Could I ask for what reason? Was there a reason for wanting to do this study?

I think that people see it as a critical program, and when research dollars are given to the Food and Nutrition Service they look at different programs, whether it's SNAP, or school lunch, or what have you, and they decide what programs to review, and I think that because it's been such a long time since FDPIR was looked at – that's how I understand it.

Okay. I guess I just want to say this up front. Our tribal members, participants, get very leery of studies and surveys because we've been studied to death, you know, and some not very good results resulted from it, so I just – they want me to find out, you know, we'll get more into that. I'll have some other questions and comments, so thank you.

I will tell you that FNS thinks this is a key program, very key program. Very critical, and many of you have been involved with improvements of the program along the way, and this program is great. We just want to make sure that if there's something we can do more, that's what this study is about – is what – to take something that is working and helping people and seeing if we can make it even better than it is now.

Okay. One final question before – where does the money come from for this study?

USDA receives, in their budget, they get money for research.

Okay.

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And so it goes into our Office of Research and Analysis, ORA. I don't know if you know Stephen Carlson. He's the Associated Administrator over that area, so - .

Okay. I'm sure -

It's appropriate money.

Yes. I'm sure there's questions. It's good information for us to have. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thanks.

So we are finishing up pre-testing now and then we have these consultations. All of that, the input we get for the design and for instruments and everything, then gets put into a final package that has to be sent by FNS to the Office of Management and Budget for approval. So that's why we want the input first before we put in that package for approval. And that can take several months, so we are anticipating that data collection wouldn't begin until August of 2013 because we're not allowed to start data collection until it's approved by the Office of Management and Budget. But there will be a lot of outreach and efforts with the tribes that are participating prior to beginning that data collection. So you'll be hearing from us before August for sure.

And then there will - once the data collection is done, there will be a report produced and a briefing. While there's not a formal process with tribes to review drafts of the final report, you are going to be kept updated of the progress of the study by us and on the FNS website. And the tribes that participate in the site visits in particular will be asked to - for that we'll be interviewing program administrators and staff and we'll certainly be sending drafts back to you to make sure that what we've written up from our site visit is accurate, so you will be getting information to review about your program before it goes into a final report.

And then the final report would be expected in late 2014. That would combine the findings from (inaudible), all of these data collection components which I'm going to be discussing next.

Are there any more questions before I go into sort of the next (inaudible) details?

Not a question, but something else I wanted to just add when I was saying earlier about, you know, the importance of the program and also when we're talking to Congress. We're always looking for ways to have pilots and more money, and so I think that this study will help do that as well is to, hopefully, you know, maybe get more money for the program so that we can do more pilots or have other kinds of grants, etc. So just to keep that in mind, that's key, because I know that that's something we have struggled with in the past. Thank you.

Any other questions or - ? Go on then.

So we're going to do a little bit more, provide a little bit more detail that describes the whole project and the data that we plan to collect, what we hope to learn. Again, feel free to jump in with questions because I don't want to give too much detail at the front end here.

So the study of the participants, we'll be doing a review of case records and a survey of participating households. That is being done on a nationally representative sample, and what that means is basically because we can't go to every program and interview everyone, we're trying to pull a sample that is going to be statistically representative of the nationally participating - all the participating households nationally. And so we've selected a sample based on monthly participation data in fiscal year 2011 and looked in addition to size, we've look at - try to distribute across the regions of the country that have FDPIR programs, and looked also as well at participation trends so that we have some programs that have had increases, some that have had decreases, some that have stayed about the same. So that's how we've drawn the sample. And so we've done it by tribes, which is how you all have been selected for this

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survey. There are – the six largest tribes are what we call certainty tribes where we've made sure to include those because they included so many participants. And then small programs are representative but in proportion to their participating number of households.

Nancy, we have another question.

Yes?

Yes, if I may. My name is Kenny Chapman, and like I said I'm from the Santee Sioux Nation. And by any chance have you ever been to any of these Indian reservations?

Yeah, not necessarily to all of these, but to some, yes.

Okay. Because I know it's a lot different than when you get a survey or information on the computer. I think it would be a good idea to be there personally, take a look just what you're dealing with.

Oh, yes, for sure. And Suzanne will be talking more about that –

Thank you.

Because they actually are doing that sort of on-the-ground work.

Thank you.

So basically that sample has been designed to produce good national estimates, which means we never will be able to present those results in terms of one tribe. We're never going to say, this is what X tribe looks like. It's going to be what the national picture looks like.

In terms of what we'll be using the sample for, we'll be doing for the case records and the household study, and that will allow us to make statements by groups of sites but not by individual sites. And we will be working at each of the selected sites, we'll be working with you to select the sample of participants at each site because at each tribe, as you say, it's different, you know, how far apart households are, whether your records are electronic or paper records, and how to pull that information, so that's when we are working separately with each tribe for that.

There's a lot of other pieces of information to this survey, and sources of information, so I just want to mention that so you know it's not only a participant survey that we're doing. We might be in different order. I don't know.

Oh, sorry.

It's all right. I think this should be one source – there. Okay.

So this is – we will be using census and other data, just nationally, to look at demographic and other factors that might be affecting changes in participation. We'll also be using FNS administrative data that they have on participation trends over time and on their rules about food benefit levels and also – so there are other pieces of information that we're using and that FNS is providing for us.

And then there's new data collection, and that's the case record reviews, the participant surveys, and the site visits to the programs.

Quick question. Charles Gates again. How are you planning to select the participants, at random or at the site, just somebody that comes in?

No, there's a – (inaudible) about that.

They're going to be selected at random from the records.

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From the records? You're not going to talk directly to the participants?

We're going to talk to them, but if we just talked to people who came in, we wouldn't get a full picture, or if we selected them some other way, for instance if the food director said, oh, interview these people, that, too, would not be a true picture. So they're randomly selected from the client's of the commodities program.

When you say random, are the participants going to be notified that they've been selected?

Yes, and I'm going to go through all that and there is going to be –

Okay.

Lots of notices – there's going to be lots of communication –

Didn't mean to jump ahead.

That's okay. That's okay. And we know it's important to make sure we talk about that.

Yes.

No, I'm going to lay out clearly how we're going to work with the tribes and then how we're going to work with the participants.

And earlier I did state, you know, a lot of them may not want to participate.

Well, the – yes. The challenge there is that people naturally think, oh, they're going to take the program away from me, so they will be fully briefed on confidentiality, that no one's going to know that it was them. So – but that's a natural feeling, that if I say something, it's going to be ended.

Thank you.

Again, I have this question regarding delivery to the elderly. Are you going to bring this subject up later on?

Yeah, it's one of the questions in terms of the program operations, we'll definitely be talking about it.

Right.

Okay, if we're going to discuss it later on, then I have something I need - .

Go ahead.

I would – you know, it would be nice if we had funding specifically for the elderly because since I've started about 16 years ago, I've been driving my own pickup delivering commodities to the elderly and using my own gas. And I was wondering if something could be done regarding this so we can use a program bus or whatever, a vehicle to deliver gas, and gas for the delivery of commodities to the elderly. They don't have cars, they can't drive.

No. Yeah, we did see that at some of the places we visited in the last study.

Thank you.

So on the case record reviews, that would be to obtain the information that describes participants and their characteristics, so things that you already have in your case records that we don't need to again ask the participant about because you've already gotten that information for them, so we'd be using them for that.

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In order to research the case files, do you need to get permission from those individuals prior to that or how is – how are you – what access are you utilizing to obtain those records?

It's going to be worked out individually with each tribe because, of course, records are in different formats in different programs, so a lot of that is up to the tribe. We have just to – the case record information itself, once we obtain it, it's never going to be linked to an individual. We're using it to develop a national profile. But we internally, within our institutions, we have to demonstrate to our institutional review boards that we're protecting the confidentiality of any of that information and not getting – we'll only be pulling the data we need, like about demographic characteristics, we won't be tying it to, say, a social security number of something like that. So we have to make sure we have protections, but then, when we go to the tribe and say this is what we want to do, they may have other requirements before they'll allow us to access that data. So we have to work with each tribe to figure that out.

Can I jump in and say I think the answer to your question is no. And that's because for this demographic data, we're not so much interested in the individual side, which is another whole facet of the study, we want to just get the big picture about the data. So when we work with the tribes, we'll probably be stripping out all that personal identifying information to get – that's just one facet of the study, right?

Okay, so then the case record review will get that information, and the goal here, again, will be to minimize the burden. Many programs do use paper records, so it might involve a visit by one of our research team to the FDPIR office to abstract the participant information and, as Walter was saying, that we would only abstract what we need and then there would be protections about privacy.

And then for the participant surveys, that's where we're going to be asking about their participation in FDPIR and other assistance programs, their access to food stores, and this will provide a way – be a way for participants to share their thoughts and suggestions about the FDPIR program in their community. So we would be asking the head of the household to participate, and it would be about 32 interviews in each site, either in person or by telephone, again worked out with the tribe and the participant what's the most convenient way for them. Yes?

We have some pretty remote tailgate sites that we distribute to. Will there be somebody from your research team available to go around?

Yes, there will.

Yeah, we've already seen some of the – yes, we'll definitely be – we'll have someone assigned to a small number of sites and that's the sites that they will work with so that they can, depending on the schedule when the tailgates are, they can be there and be accessible for interviews.

When you do go to these interviews, most of our people, some of them are traditional people. The elderly, most of them just speak Lakota, so are you going to need someone there to relay – or interpret – excuse me.

Right. Yes, we would work that out with the tribes, and they could suggest an interpreter or a family member could interpret.

That was one of my concerns, too.

Um hmm.

We have (inaudible) certification (inaudible) are fluent writing, speaking. We do have a large number of older, elderly that like the program and they prefer their own language.

That's good. We can work with that.

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That's a lot of the outreach is going to be to discuss those particular situations that each tribe has so we can figure out how to – because it really has to be worked out on a case-by-case basis.

So what we have is there will be a field interviewer that's assigned to the site to conduct the interviews, working with the tribe, and it will be done so that that field interviewer would only have a couple of sites so that they would really get to know the situation in those particular sites so that they could work with the FDPIR program. The information will be, as Sam mentioned before, the participant information will be kept confidential and anonymous so we won't collect any identifying information tying those responses to that person.

And then the next primary data collection component will be site visits. We'll be going to 17 of the 25 programs in the study, so we'll be talking with FDPIR directors, with tribal leaders, and with staff of FDPIR programs. We'll also be discussing setting up some discussion groups with FDPIR participants and what we're calling eligible non-participants – we really don't know for sure, nobody's doing an eligibility check, but people who would be thought to be eligible for the FDPIR program but for one reason or another are not participating. So there needs to be some small group discussions to hear about participants, things they like or don't like about the program, why they've chosen to participate. A lot of – when we did this last time there was information about why some times of the year they like to be on it and other times they switch off and things like that just to understand better about the participant perspective.

And we'd also be looking at the facilities, you know, getting a tour of the warehouse and things like that, and looking at some of the tailgate sites and the different methods that tribes use to distribute food.

Any more questions?

I have a question. When you do come to Rosebud, I hope you use us as a pilot. We do have councilmen – our councilmen – relay it back to our individual communities. That way our elderly and everyone else in the communities will receive you better than if – I'm glad we're here to discuss this because we could actually relay it prior to so they'll be ready for this.

One of the things we arm the interviewers with, because we get this question a lot, well, does my tribal council know about this, that you're doing this. And they will have a name, hopefully, to refer the people to if they have a question about the legitimacy of the study.

And one thing I did want to mention, too, is we said we're going to 17 of the 25 programs, so we haven't actually – those who are in the sample of 25, we know, and you've been informed about that. We haven't actually selected who those 17 sites are yet, and that's part of what's going to be going on next phase of this study. What we mostly want to do is get a diversity of tribes so that we can look at all different kinds of situations. So we're really going to try and look at the size of the FDPIR program, what region they're in, some data on unemployment and other economic factors, seeing if they had a change in participation, either increase or decrease, and program administration, so we want to make sure we get some that have a supermarket model, some that have tailgate sites, some that do home delivery, so we get a range of sites, and some that do different ways of nutrition education. So our main goal here is really to get as much diversity as we can, and, of course, the tribe has to agree to have us come and do site visits. That's the other piece of that. And we'll be getting input from the FNS regional offices and the NAFTPIR committees as well if they have suggestions about what would be good places to visit to get a wide range.

Of the ones that you don't go visit, how will you get information from the ones that you don't go visit? The other eight or whatever it would be.

Yeah, right. Well we will have some because there will still be outreach activities going on there because they will be involved in the survey, so we'll have some information that way, just to understand how it works in order to field the survey.

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Are you guys going to do the actual footwork in order to go to these different houses and people? Or are you going to somehow utilize us as maybe councilman or director and her workers and to actually find out what you need? Or, I guess, are you going to be there? Or your crews or your teams or –

Yes.

We'll be there. There's a couple things. Yes, we're going to be there. And they will be working with the council or the tribal officials to get the overview. But – and we, as I said, we're going to give the people someone's phone number from the tribe that they can call and verify that this is legitimate. But we won't be giving like the 32 names to the tribe and say this is who we're going to interview because that would interfere with confidentiality. And so they would naturally think, besides getting, you know, questions about the program in the future, they'd think well, you're going to – if the council knows who is going to be interviewed, you're going to go tell the council I'm really happy with this program or not happy with it, so there's that confidentiality issue in there that we have to take into consideration and assure the people that their names will be separated from the data and no one knows that it's their answers.

And the tribes will be – yes?

Yes, Kenny Chapman again, from Santee. At times I think there is some funding that I think we should be able to utilize because there are some that return funding at the end of the fiscal year.

Um hmm.

And I don't know if you're aware of that, but I'm – and my program is always underfunded and we always need some extra money for this and for that and it's not very easy to get at. They said it has to go back for that fiscal year (inaudible) you know.

And is it possible we can work something out to be able to utilize some of that funding that's being returned?

I see she's writing that down very diligently. This would be in their realm.

I'll have to get back to you on that. That would be a regional.

Okay.

You could talk to Ms. Sweitzer.

Okay. I'm sorry. I guess I didn't know.

That's good.

That's all right.

Thank you.

I wrote it down.

And I think that the tribes would be helping in terms of the outreach, in terms of getting the word out to participants in the survey, but also arranging interviews so that – and we'll talk about this some more later – but sometimes the individual may not have a home telephone, or sometimes they may not want something coming to their house, so there might be – the program might be helpful in setting up an office within their own program, a private office where we could interview that person, or we would give out a cell phone number, that they could call, an 800 number, and maybe they could use a phone that's at the FDPIR office to make that call to have the interview on the telephone. So there are a lot of different ways

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we might work it out, but in any of those cases we'd need the cooperation of the tribe and the FDPIR program to individualize it so it works best for them.

I get – Charles Gates, again, from Standing Rock. When you select these participants – I'm mostly concerned about the participants because I just feel that there's going to be some reluctant participants that may not want to be studied, so to speak. I was planning on – I think a lot of our tribes have radio stations – on notifying this – notifying the people, but I'm afraid they would all back off, you know. And they are, they're truly reluctant to share information with – I'll say it like this – federal government program.

Well the interviewers will be well trained and have a lot of experience in gaining cooperation, because, you know, the first thing of any person is, I don't want to do this, or you've got the wrong person. So they'll say, well, why did you choose me, that other lady down the street just loves the program, go talk to her, I don't have time. So the interviewers are trained in all of this that they – first of all to be very good listeners and to answer the people's concerns.

Okay, thank you.

I kind of wanted to respond to two interrelated things. I think one of the is is that this process is almost parallel to what you were talking about right there. So we come in here and you say, who are these people and what are they doing and why is this study really being done, and so I think a latent agenda item is to convince you all that we're legitimate, trying to do the right thing, and trying to do it well. So we're really going to rely on – and this has been said before but I just wanted to say it, too, is we're really going to rely on the program people, you know, so as this planning develops and it's going to be a process. And I'm both a pessimist and an optimist. I've done this work so long that I know that no matter how well we do it, and no matter how many times it's been said, there will be somebody who will come up and say, what is this, why didn't you tell me about it, I didn't – I never heard about this, even though they got five emails, but anyway. But we know that problem, and we think that the – you really hit the problem well. It's going to be hard and it'll – and you're part of that solution, not just us, so that if people kind of have heard, you know I could imagine putting up in the distribution sites, for example, this study is happening, these people aren't all bad, you know, this information – you know, this has been said. I can't speak for USDA, but here's – there's a lot of stakeholders who are interested in this kind of information, and, you know, it's like OMB, their job is to review this research, and they're trying to protect – we're going into some tough budget periods and programs need to justify, and they just need to explain, here's who we serve, here's how we do it, and stuff like that, and that's important. And from my perspective, USDA's being proactive, in a sense, because you know, there's a new Congress. We have to keep doing these studies over and over because Congress keeps getting new people into it who've never even heard of FDPIR, you know. I mean there's people up there who scarcely know what Indians are, you know, if they come from some other state, you know. But, anyway, my boring point in conclusion is we've got to work together to overcome some of those barriers. And we can't do it by ourselves without you.

I think part of that would include outreach. When the census came, they had posters developed, they had (inaudible), they had stickers, and I feel that would be a part of it to get the programs on board with letting their people know that this study is coming to your reservation, and if you want to be a part of it.

Yeah, the census had a lot of – it didn't go well on our reservation I know, and they had to come back and repeat it, and they did. They brought out all the materials, posters, participate they even offered –

(Inaudible.)

Yeah.

Some incentives.

And they responded much more positively. There's that trust factor.

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Absolutely.

And part of the census, I know when they came to do my census when I was at work, and they did a short version of it, and then I was randomly selected to do the long version, so I think that would be crucial to obtaining some of your information is don't bombard them with the 45 piece of paperwork that's going to be overwhelming and they're just going to shut down and not participate.

Right. We asked – they're not going to get the questionnaire themselves, so we ask questions.

Right. But with any survey, if it's going to take longer than five to ten minutes –

Absolutely.

I seen from your sample it was 45 minutes?

Yeah.

That's not going to happen.

But they also get a gratuity of –

Gift cards are not going to make a difference.

Okay.

[Session Break]

Thank you; and I know we are just coming off break, and I did want to just recognize that Bonnie Ghostdog has joined us from Pine Ridge, and welcome, Bonnie. We are now moving into part three. Is that correct?

That's correct.

I will turn it back over to the research team.

Great, since Bonnie has just joined us, I am going to do like a really, really quick recap of what we talked about, and then make sure that you get the materials later. And, if you have questions after we're done, happy to talk further with you.

This study – it's being done by USDA because a study of the overall FDPIR program and participation in a national setting has not been done since 1990, so to see how things have changed in terms of the demographics and the participation and the needs of the programs. It's really being done so that USDA has the information to improve and consider any needed changes to the program.

There are a lot of components to this study. We are looking at demographic data, like Census data and FNS administrative data. But, we'll also be conducting case record reviews and surveys for participating FDPIR households and a sample of programs across the country, and then conducting site visits to get information about how the programs operate to a smaller group of the sites in the study. We've got draft instruments, and we are going to discuss the process of how we collect the data, next. So, what we are really wanting is both, to get your feedback on, either today or after you've had a chance to look at these more on all of these materials, and on the surveys and any improvements because they are not final yet.

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Also, we are going to be beginning, after these consultations are completed in the spring, an extension outreach process with the tribes that are participating, so wanting to get you aware of it and suggestions from you about how to proceed with that. I think that's a quick recap, and I think Suzanne Barr, who is going to be leading the survey effort at NORC, will tell us some more about the next section, which is the Tribal involvement and how we are collecting the data. And then, Walter Hillabrant about the site-visit aspect of the study.

I would like to just make a few comments before we get into this. When an announcement was first made for this study, I was more than a little bit upset about it because the term, and I've heard it two or three times this morning, was to see how we can look at making the program more beneficial, or improve the program. And, I just sat back in my chair, and I said, "Boy, what do they think we've been doing for the last 22 years?" We feel that this program has made tremendous improvement, and they are all beneficial to our people. And, I wasn't going to say this, but it always seems like we are in competition with SNAP for food stamps. That being said, I believe at one of the teleconferences I said, "You guys should be doing a study of food stamps," and I didn't get any answer from it or any reaction, but I still feel that way. And, when you talk about beneficial,

I think that the thing that bothers me the most, and I think our National Board, is that the lack of knowledge, not only by the feds and congressional people, but our own Tribal leaders, sometimes, and sometimes, our own people. Sometimes, Tribal magazines like this, this is – I don't know how many of you – I subscribe to it, it is Indian Country Today. And, that paper was originally started in Pine Ridge by Oglala, Kim Dioco (sp). Then, it was purchased by the Oneidas, and they went into the weekly magazine. There's a story in here about sugar diabetes in the Portland area, and it is titled, No Sugar Coating Allowed. Have you seen this, Walter? Okay. It says, "Poverty is higher on most reservations, which are also nutrition deserts. You are lucky if you can find a vegetable within 50 miles." And then, there's a cartoon on the back, here, and I'm going to pass this around, but it says, "Federal food supplied to reservations and to the urban poor tends to be high calorie, low nutrition. You are lucky if you find a vegetable within 50 miles." And, if you've seen – but, I'd just like you to take a look at it and the other one. I subscribe to that magazine, and I get on Indians.com, (inaudible) and I try to keep abreast of positive things about our program – few and far between.

So, I'm hoping that part of this study will report to the higher ups, especially Congress, because this program, there was a study done on a healthy-eating index, and we rated 82, I believe, out of 100, and SNAP rated 54, so I'd like to get to 98 or maybe 99. I know no program is perfect, but that's my concern. And, I think that a lot of our program directors, we're fighting a, kind of like, a losing cause. People are going to SNAP because they can find a lot of junk food. We are still hearing in magazines like that, and sometimes by other Tribal leaders, that we're the cause of the ongoing diabetes program. We started making changes 22 years ago, and I hope that's brought out in this study. Thank you.

Yes, that's good.

Thank you.

That was my next question, is any of the nutritional data from what our participants' consume, utilizing the 152 reports, is that going to be compiled and made a part of this?

I think if it is available through FNS Administrative that we can do that. We are not going to be asking participants to do (inaudible) calls and things, or anything like that.

It's already there.

I'm really glad you made that point, and I think you saw by some of our notes is that we were – this is the way this is supposed to work is you helping us do a better job. What's been said about that is something that we have thought about and saw in the prior study. And, I can't help but blurting out is that you are

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really right; over 22 years, there's really been a change in the composition of the foods that are available. So, some of that thinking is legacy thinking from the past, not the present.

But anyway, the other place we can get it will be in the staff – the director and staff interviews, in addition to the administrative data. Because, we did get some of that last time, and people were talking about – and actually, one of the that we look at isn't just FDPIR, but I think we are going to be looking at – at least, we did last time, at other alternative sources, like there's food banks, and sometimes tribes bring in, like in fishing season and stuff like that, make certain foods available, so it's not just that. Then, the final thing I've got to blurt out is you think that tribes get studied to death and FDPIR, SNAP really – SNAP really is looked at, but it is not going to be looked at in this study as a comparative thing, so much. There will be some components of that, but there will be other research that we refer to from SNAP that will be addressed in this study.

When we talk about the food and the gardening, we – my program is working with our college, and we started a gardening program. And, our college bought a tractor with a tiller; tilling up ground so people could put in a garden. So, they are getting good, fresh gardening and no chemicals, you know. That's the problem, right now, there's too much chemicals. You eat a – I'm an organic farmer. When I come from Vietnam, saw what it did to the country that I fought for, and see what it did to killing wildlife and this chemicals and you tell – eat a chicken from my farm, as opposed to one you get in a food market, there's a big difference. You see that red stuff next to the bone on a chicken, that's chemicals. You look on the chickens that I raise at home without chemicals, you don't find that. There's a big difference. It smells better, tastes better, and it's a whole lot better. Chemicals will do that, and everything that we are eating has chemicals, and that's what creates problems with your pancreas, which causes the reduction of insulin in your system to prevent diabetes. Diabetes is caused from a secretion – less secretion of the pancreas into your body to fight off that, that's the reason why. And, I brought this up at Las Vegas, and the people up there on the stage, they didn't want to hear it. They kept pointing to someone else, and I said, "No, wait, I'm not done yet. I still got some more things I want to say," but they didn't want to hear it. But, it is really – it's a big problem.

I think it's a good point, though, we talk about improving the program. We need to maybe put in there, continuous improvement, because it is not as if it hasn't improved.

One final comment, I guess, I'm a little bit frustrated that more Tribal leaders aren't here, or program directors. I want to commend the two young men for coming in, showing an interest. But again, I think it relates to this study. There is a little apprehension about this, you know, and some of them may feel that. Our Chairman called me right away, and said, "I want you to go and represent the tribe." He's down here today, and maybe he'll stop in later, but I am a little bit frustrated by that, and I think the program directors probably are, too. Sometimes, you are getting into Tribal involvement, so I don't know if you mean Councilmen, or other people in the other areas, but there seems to be – I know I asked a question. I said, "Hey, how come you guys never come over, stop over and visit, see what we are doing?" Sometimes I share samples of the new seasonal fruit that we have, and – oh, it's good, and we'll have to stop over. Some of them never show up, you know? So, we're used to that.

We're getting used to it.

Yes. But, I do commend the two young men for showing up.

Just a quick comment, so we have two additional in-person consultation sessions. The next one is December 6 in Oklahoma City, and then there's one, December 13, in San Francisco. And, folks have been registering to those sessions, as well. Maybe, what would be helpful for everybody is at the end of the sessions, I can send out a list of who participated for everybody to know. And then, we'll have a final one in January, which is more of a conference call, to also offer consultation, then, for anybody that, perhaps, could not make any of the in-person sessions or would like to join for a second time. So, we could do a nice roster, just I think it would be helpful for folks to know who attended the sessions.

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This is Kenny Chapman in Santee again. I wanted to say, again, and I thank you for announcing this a while ago regarding Senators and Congressmen. They probably don't know what a reservation is like, really. For that reason, I see a lot of the Chairmen don't think it is all that important. They don't realize the fact that a lot of those people in Washington DC don't know, never been to a reservation, but I'm going to let them know when I get home, and let our Chairman know so he'll be coming to these meetings when it's called. Thank you.

I am going to talk about our outreach to the tribes, and then our – the actual fieldwork and somewhat how we go about it. We have talked about some of this, but I want you to know that our goal is to work in conjunction with the tribes in conducting the various study components that I mentioned this morning. Tribal involvement is very important to this study.

Now, we are going to be reaching out to the tribes, individually, and respectfully ask that you work with us in a number of ways to conduct this study, using methods that pose the least burden and the most benefit. So, we are going to work with our outreach staff to tailor information, materials, procedures, and schedules. Scheduling is very important. We know that there are different things that go on at different times of the year or month. We are looking for you to advise us about Tribal protocols for conducting research in the different communities, such as obtaining Tribal resolutions, and just the logistical planning for the data collection. Also, helping us encouraging participation in the surveys at the different sites.

Nancy mentioned that we have to submit our whole plan and all of the instruments that go along with it to the Office of Management and Budget, OMB, for review, and that we can't start until we have their go ahead. Also, all components of this study are going to be reviewed by the IRB boards at both Urban Institute and at NORC. This will ensure that participants are provided an informed consent and that their confidentiality is protected. We mentioned that, too, this morning.

Now, any personal identifiers for, as you mentioned, for the tribes or the people are removed from all of the data collected, and there is a lot done to make sure all of this data is stored very securely. It's also important to note that participation in this study may offer opportunities to build Tribal capacity to conduct similar studies. Some of the examples are learning how to pull a sample of case records, abstracting data, helping with logistical considerations for conducting focus groups for some of these site visits, as Nancy mentioned, our focus groups. We are working on another Tribal study, and we are already teaching another tribe that weren't selected how to do their own studies. We want to ensure from you – from the tribes and the ITOs that it is just the very best effective communication possible. We know it is a somewhat slow process to talk to the right people, to answer everyone's questions, to get the procedures, so we are ready with lots of patience, hope you are, too.

One key task we will accomplish through the telephone outreach is to understand the requirements for research for each tribe. It seems like over the past decades, tribes, as sovereign nations, have heightened their stewardship of oversight to research conducted, so we want to make sure that we follow all of those protocols. Some of you may have your own IRBs, some of you may have special committees that we go to, so we are ready to, first of all, inquire what that is, and to go through all of the procedures.

There is a template that you will find that FN has developed. It is an approval letter that we shared today; and this is only a sample, but it may help your Tribal Council in considering the finality of the approval process. We will also develop policies for data sharing and adhere to any additional requirements that the tribe may have.

In addition, we will continue to build on Tribal consultations that are conducted, the one today, and then the two to follow, and the one, later, on the phone. We are going to honor individual community schedules, community events, and communication preferences. Also, allow time for internal communication and decision making. And, throughout this process, we will still be communicating with the NAFDPIR and FNS, that's me. So, as I mentioned, we expect this be an extended process and don't want to hurry anyone and don't want to miss any steps.

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There are several steps to the outreach. First of all, we will do our advanced research. We have already started that. We've been visiting websites; we've been visiting the FDPIR sites, just to get an idea of the Tribal history, cultural context, Tribal leadership. It helps us understand the size of a place, and it has been very interesting. Then, we are going to send information to a Tribally designated contact, and this information will include a cover letter. And, we are in the process of finalizing a brochure that will be distributed to the household respondents, the client respondents. There's going to be a fact sheet that – and, all of these will be suitable for reproduction, say, in your Tribal newspaper or on your Tribal website, for people to go to. These materials will also be posted on the FNS website, and I think most of you have that address. It is some of the materials, today. After we send all of the materials, the first thing we'll do is call up to see if the materials have been received, if the materials need – where they need to be dispensed to other people, and also if there's any questions, initial questions, before we start the gaining of cooperation. You look like you have a question – no, okay.

Then, each place will start taking its own route to get where we want to get. So, there will probably be a follow-up conference call that we are going to talk about the study methodology, talk about the case record review, as Nancy outlined today. We are going to talk about confidentiality, and maybe, the appointment of a Tribal liaison. We have sometimes found that if they say, yes, we would like you to work with so-and-so to coordinate all of these activities, that it saves a lot of wasting time of other people as we call them up about this person, and who should I call to ask this, and it works out really well, so I'd like you to think about that. We will work with our field interviewers from the Tribal protocols and etiquette to observe when visiting the site. The interviewers will be well trained in all of this before they ever even visit a site.

I think we mentioned about negotiating a data-sharing agreement with each tribe and draft a memorandum that details the Tribally specific protocols so that we all know we are kind of on the same page. Especially, when you are working with several, you want to make sure that you are 100% following what this tribe wants.

We are very willing to make a presentation before the Tribal Council and, as I said, the IRB, or you may have a research committee, or even before the community. We plan to do that in the manner most conducive to each tribe. The study team may be asked to prepare a Tribal resolution in advance of the meeting, just to help out or – most places are real used to doing this. So, we could come and present, and we'll have PowerPoints, and all of the different materials available.

Suzanne, sorry to interrupt, just to clarify, so one of the first steps that would be involved, would that actually be a telephone call to the FDPIR program director, followed by a letter?

No, the first – well, yes, it depends. The first step would probably be a phone call, and I'm sending this information. Because, we have found when people are expecting the information, they are more likely to look at it than if the open it up and say, no that – especially, if it is not going to the exact right person – that, oh, this isn't me. But often, what probably happens is somebody will look at it and send it immediately to the Food Director of the program, so they'll take care of you and tell you how to arrange this. But, it is good to follow up before the mail gets lost.

I have a comment, you mentioned the Tribal liaison; we've had liaisons –

For everything.

Well, no, they've tried to institute that (inaudible) one person contact for the program, but it didn't work out. Whenever something for this program goes on the Tribal Chairman's desk, it ends up on Red's desk, you know, so we do have committees that are assigned to certain programs. I report to, what's called – they still use the old term, Health Education and Welfare Committee, so that would be the person that will receive (inaudible). And, it will probably be different, and I'm glad you are doing that, because it might be different for other tribe –

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For different places, exactly.

The first thing we'd start with is the protocol for the case record reviews. NORC is testing ways to access the FDPIR case records and obtain the data. Some places will have electronic records, so the scenarios for this task will be refined as we learn about record keeping for each ITO in the sample and discuss your preferred procedures for the case record review. Now, for sites that don't have electronic records, the NORC staff has developed a template on a secure laptop and will arrange a site visit just for that activity to the tribe. These visits are about one or two, three days in duration, depending on the volume. Another option, if the records – a shipment of case records, NORC will cover the cost of the copying and the shipping. And, procedures for a secure data transfer of paper case records will be negotiated in that data-sharing agreement that I just mentioned. The information abstract, it is based on the mandatory elements for a case record as defined by the FNS regulations and handbook.

For the participant sample, the sample of case records is going to serve as the sample for the participant interviews. So, we are going to contact each ITO to obtain a list of participants for a certain reference month, and it is going to be different for different places, depending on, after we've gone through this outreach. The reference month is the month selected for obtaining a sample of participants. For example, it could be June of 2013. And, for tribes with electronic records, the sample selection could occur before any site visits. There's detailed procedures being developed; and of course, we are always looking for your ideas and feedback.

For the participant survey, there are some basic steps. The FDIR program staff will be asked to distribute a brochure to participants in advance. Then, the field interviewer will obtain consent before interviewing, and then conduct the interviews by telephone or in person. It is estimated, hopefully, that it is a 30-minute interview for each household sampled, and as we mentioned earlier, the \$25 incentive. Our plans are to have the most experienced NORC field staff working on these. Hopefully, many that have had many years of experience survey, interacting with, and providing types of assistance for local sites. This is, even though it is a participant survey, it is also a site survey, so we want people that are used to visiting sites. And they may, hopefully, have experience conducting Tribal interviews. They could be either Native American or Alaska Native themselves, that would be a plus for us. There are many – you mentioned the Census, there are many good Census interviewers out there that were hired on each of the sites that did well. I heard they did very well and that their experience would bode well for this, so we'll be looking for those types of people, too. NORC has a field-management system that will give these people lots of support – good training, and then lots of support throughout the whole field period.

It is very important that we obtain consent, as we mentioned, and maintain confidentiality. And, consent is going to be gotten from everyone prior to the interview. The consents are written in an easy-to-understand language so that all the respondents have an opportunity to know what their rights as a survey participant. In fact, these consent statements are going to be on the back of the letters that are sent to them because it is a long statement and it is required. And, rather than just have the interviewer read it off, and they say, yes or no, it's important that they understand this. One of our goals is that we don't want to interview anyone that's not a good informed respondent before the interview has started that we want all of their questions answered. We want them to know about survey research, in layman's terms and how it works, and then start the interview. The survey questions, too, will focus on information that can't be obtained from the case records. We need real people to tell us their feelings.

Now, the brochure that I mentioned is going to include a whole list of frequently asked questions. How did I get chosen? Are my Tribal officials aware of this study? Do you have to come to my house and do this? And all of the questions that we anticipate people will have, so even before an interviewer talks to them, they will probably know all this. Any questions?

So, what will the interviewer – what will their tasks be? Well, they are going to make an initial visit to the site to meet the Tribal leaders, and kind of, kick off the data collection. Then, they will also answer any questions that the sites may have, that the Tribal leaders may have, kind of work with the program staff so that the staff also feels comfortable. I imagine many of the people come to the staff and say, "What is

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this about?" So, there will be information provided that you will know everything that we know and can explain it to the people, they may have more trust.

The field interviewer is going to observe the food distribution process on a distribution day, at least, monthly. Now, I know that many places have different types. Everybody doesn't come the same day, but this will all be learned before they go. I had the opportunity to spend a day at one, recently, up in Wisconsin. It was just – I felt very, very welcome, and it just was a wonderful experience for me, so I'm sure the interviewers will feel the same. They are not there to watch and see if anything's wrong, they are there to learn how it goes.

As Nancy mentioned, we are mindful that individuals might have preferences and circumstances that necessitate doing it on the phone, or not doing it on the phone, doing it at another place. We realize that, also, there are costs if they use their cell phone, so we are used to suggesting places or alternatives that would work out for the people that are participating.

As I said, we are going to work proactively with each ITO to develop and implement site-specific solutions that facilitate cooperation and minimize the inconvenience or burdandce for everyone over the 20-week data-collection period. It may not take 20 weeks at some places, it depends on schedules, weather – although, we go from next summer well into the fall, so weather should be pretty good. We have found, though, that providing incentives is beneficial in gaining respondent cooperation and demonstrates to the respondents that we value their time. So, we are not saying we are paying you for the time, but since you are giving us the time, here is a little gift that they could, hopefully, use. And, we'll work with each site to determine if it should be cash, if it should be – somebody mentioned that the nearest grocery store was 70 miles, so with the cost of gas, we don't want to give them a gift certificate to the grocery store, that would be – but sometimes, there's a little local place –

Comment – I hope that \$25 doesn't make them ineligible.

Now, I know – we have gotten, over the years, questions, "Do I have to report this on my taxes?" It used to be just \$10, so we'll tell them they don't have to tell you. Okay?

So, the survey questions are going to address the extent of participation in other nutritional assistance programs, such as SNAP or Head Start, or you mentioned, meals for the elderly. And, it is going to cover access to food stores, such as local grocery stores or the big box stores. It is going to cover access to facilities for storing and preparing foods, such as a freezer and a microwave, stove, that type of thing. And, the perceptions of FDPIR, and the reasons for FDPIR participation and for switching between FDPIR and SNAP.

Now, any questions about the process of the interviewing?

The training for the interviewers will be, probably, over a couple of days and will talk about if they have not had experience dealing with tribes and all, there will be sections on that. They do a few practice interviews, first, and learn all about the study.

Are you hiring local people to conduct the surveys?

Yes, as local as possible. There was some discussion that, well, we shouldn't hire people right from that particular site because maybe the people wouldn't want to answer, but if you feel differently, we can certainly –

I think that's part of the reason why the Census statistics have improved is that they have hired their own people to go out in the communities, and they are comfortable with them.

Okay. We can discuss that further because that, I know, has been an advantage in other studies. I did a study at the same time as the Census. We called it at NORC, the Census Media Study, because you remember how the Census did a lot of outreach for certain groups of people, including Native Americans,

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and we did this in several sites across the country and in Alaska. And, our interviewers would go say, did you see this and did it influence you participating in the Census. So, I was quite involved in the Census with Tribal layouts.

I would also suggest maybe work with the Tribal colleges.

Yes, we – because, you are right, they are –

They might have some students that are –

It's a learning process for them, too, to learn about a different phase of – to learn about data collection.

Okay, any questions?

I guess, since we're on that subject, (inaudible) did budget some monies in regards to this. We did have survey teams come in, or they are existing, yet, and there are people you can get ahold of to do the stats. I guess they are going to want to know how much is an interviewer going to get an hour, or –

We haven't passed the first of the year yet, so it will probably go up, but it is about \$14 and some cents an hour, and that includes your time traveling from interview to interview, or to the food distribution site. And, they get the government rate for mileage, which I think right now is \$0.52 or something. And then, they are paid for training, and they are paid, not only travel and doing the interview, but they are paid for administrative time that they put in each week, like going over their interviews, mailing their interviews, doing their timesheets, reporting and discussing with their field managers. So, it's a good skill to have. We have had some people worked on and off for years because we always don't have studies, so they realize that this is a temporary job, but more temporary jobs come along.

Do you want to move on to the site visits?

I think so. There's no other questions, yes.

Yes, Walter is going to talk a little bit more about how the site visits will be conducted.

Well, I want to go back to, I think it was a question that Ken made, it's like, so you are going to look through all these administrative records, and you are going to do these interviews, but are you actually going to come out and see what we have to offer? And the answer is, yes, and we've been talking about that for a while. I think a general theme in this study is we sort of plan it to death. We are not just going to come out and say, here we are ready to do it. There will be a lot of collaboration and picking out times that are mutually agreeable as part of that whole planning process. Each of the site visits is going to be two to three days, depending on how big the site is. There are 17 sites. There will generally be a two-person team. And, I think this is a point – I don't think we've stressed this very much, but we are really appreciative of the burden that this puts on the program. We know that these programs don't have a lot of downtime. The directors, manager, and staff are really busy and doing a lot of stuff that they are required to do; and then, we come waltzing in and taking a couple of days of their actual time while we are there talking to them and looking at the facilities and so forth. So, it is done with a lot of planning, and we try to minimize the burden. We try to minimize the burden on the respondents, that are hard enough to recruit that we've talked about, and how to do that. We try to minimize the burden on the program so we are not disruptive.

Another thing that I think we – I don't want to say initiated, but did more in the prior study that we did on FDPIR is that we took a lot of pictures, and we put the pictures in an appendix of the report so that – you know, really, a picture is worth 1,000 words, so we get pictures of the warehouse. We can even show pictures of the distribution. I'm forgetting the term of – you know, where the truck goes out?

Tailgating.

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Yes, so the tailgating. Some facilities, I think Nancy mentioned, there's another model, some places have kind of done a supermarket approach, rather than the more traditional delivery.

Anyway, so we try to get a lot of pictures that will complement the text and the numbers and stuff like that, and that's an important component of the site visits. There's other things that will be – you know, I go back to the readers. We expect a wide range of readers, and that's one reason why we put the stuff in the appendix. Somebody may not be interested in that level of detail, but it will be there.

Another thing that we do that's a little bit tangential to this, but in the introduction – we try to look at a historical approach a little bit, too, and talk about the beginning of the program and the antecedents to the program and some stuff about the social, economic, and historical circumstances in which the study is occurring, so that helps people. And, all too often, that kind of fundamental background information is omitted from studies, so somebody looks around and says – well, how come Indians have this special program? Why did that come about, you know, they can have food stamps. So, we try to address some of that kind of stuff, and the site visit helps that.

I think the next one is just looking at – we really want to have a fairly broad thing, so we will be talking to the Tribal Chairman, or Council members, or their designated – it's their option. We know that they're real busy, but doing this work for a long time, as a rule what we've found is, notwithstanding the burden, that people are really welcoming. People are really – and, especially in a program like this, they are happy to show. They are happy to have the opportunity to say – look, this is what we do, and here are some of the improvements that we've been making and addressing. And, here are some of the problems – we want to look at some of the problems that the program's encountering. I remember when we did the one before, there was changing in the distribution from the USDA level, you know, it's like the companies that actually transport to the warehouses and stuff like that, and some of that was new and there were some – everything in life, just about, has some problems, so we want to talk a little bit about what are some of the problems encountered. What are some of the promising approaches that are being developed and all of that stuff comes from, so we get some input from Tribal leaders. We go through everybody in the FDPIR program. When we have the chance, we – nutrition has been brought up earlier, and so we want to have a broad – we see – the research team, at least, sees – it's hard to anticipate this stuff before the final report. But, it is a nutritional program, and therefore, it is in the context of WIC, for example, and what is IHS – and it seems to me, in the healthcare area, there's an ever-increasing appreciation of the fundamental importance of nutrition to health and other aspects of life. So, we want to try to capture some of that, and that's part of that whole planning.

And, I mentioned WIC, and even TANF to some degree, because TANF is a program who has a similar kind of clientele of eligibility criteria, so we want to see, how does TANF work with WIC and how does TANF work with – and, I think another memory I had that we even did last time, and I don't think we are planning on this so much, but we went to some sites and we saw that Head Start coordinated with, so they had switched to using, instead of French fries, they were using sweet potato French fries, and the kids loved it. So, there is this overall increasing appreciation of the importance of nutrition, and we want to capture that in the site visits, too. But, all of that – to a large degree, one of the challenges we have had in this whole meeting is everything has to be – you know, sites are very different, so even within your region, there's variation across tribes, so there's a lot of tailoring to what we do to the needs and circumstances of the tribe.

Do I do this next one?

Okay, so other site visit activities. We go to the warehouses, and we want to find out why people participate, and to the degree if they're switching back and forth, why that happens, when does that happen, and we are going to have the discussion groups where we bring people together. And, that's going to be at the two largest sites, and there are seven to ten adults in each of the groups. And, we recruit those people in collaboration with the FDPIR program. Sometimes, we have been warned when we go into sites and they say, you know, these people are shy. They don't know you. They are not going to be – you may have to do some work to get them engaged. And actually, what we've found is once the

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ice is broken, people are really terrific. In any group, there are two or three people who do 50% of the talking and another couple of people who only do 5%, but we know that, and that's across groups. Sometimes, we have had so much fun in the groups, and there's this raucous laughter. When we run those participant groups, we asked that the FDPIR staff not be there. This is a thing where it's their chance to talk about – and they stimulate each other. Somebody says – well, I really like this. And somebody else says – well, I got a real problem with that. Then, somebody else will say, but didn't you know that you can do X, whatever X is, and that will solve that problem, so that's a fun part of what we do.

But, in the warehouses, we are interested in – did I say something wrong? Was that the gong? Story of my life.

Because of, just what you were talking about, is it is not true, every place that – I can't prejudge where we are going now, but when we were here before, there were lots of fruits and vegetables and a lot – now, I'm not so sure about the organic side, but I share something with you, I'm an organic – I've got a little plot in the community garden, and I'm an organic gardener, too. Anyway, that will be something that we'll be looking at in the interviews with that is what's the nature and what are the problems encountered in getting fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the various growing seasons and so forth like that. It's not a compliance review. It's not monitoring. We just want to understand how the program works.

I'm confused because we changed the slides as I was getting on the airplane.

I guess we are back to getting some input, again, and where we're going next.

Thank you, all, for the briefing, I appreciate that and the dialogue. I'm curious, now, to hear what strategies you might offer, either now or later, as far as encouraging people to participate. I did hear a couple of things throughout the session. And just, any other ideas or concerns that maybe weren't captured, whether it's now, we'd like to hear, or in the future, we certainly would continue to take those.

I guess a question I have is elderly nutrition programs – it was brought up in front of Council the other day that there's – and I don't know (inaudible), but there's not taste, and they didn't like to eat it. Maybe it goes back to our Director, and maybe you could talk to them – some of your recipes. I don't know if they do get food from your distribution place, but again, elderly nutrition should be included in the discussions.

Definitely, we'll do that.

Any other thoughts, questions, concerns?

A couple comments, I guess, we still – we have lost a lot of our elderly people in recent years and some of them – I don't know how many times I've told them that this is not a full-month food package. There's still that belief out there, so I'm hoping some way in the survey you can address that. It's a supplemental food package, but their strong belief, and you'll hear them say it, that it doesn't last me all month. And, you'll hear the older households, elderly households say, my mother or my daughter or my niece is on food stamps, and they got them Monday; and Friday, they were done, so they come and borrow food from me. And, they never bring anything back. So, you know, that misconception is still there, and we try to tell them, well how come they don't increase it. So, I'm hoping you'll get some of those responses from those – we do have to repeat it a lot. Council is not very happy with the guidelines, the income guidelines. When they see a USDA, they (inaudible) all the USDA programs – well, how come there's a difference. How come the elderly is different and FDPIR seems to have the lowest, and that is a major concern of mine and in some of the differences between the programs, and the Council asks that. When we get new Council elected, we almost have to repeat – give them an orientation on it. And, for my tribe, there is going to be a major election taking place in 2013, so there may be some changeover and there may not.

I'd like to comment to his remark regarding the nutrition for the elderly. It doesn't have that taste that they are probably looking for is because of the fact that who's preparing it. A lot of times there's people who

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just don't know how to prepare food properly in regards to making it taste good, and that's the big problem. I know that it happens on my reservation, as well, but it's because of the people who prepare the food. They are not cooks. They don't know how. They know how to put it in hot water or sometimes in a frying pan, or something like that, but they really don't know how to use different food products to make it taste better.

I would like to respond to that because we have heard that a lot. That's one reason why people use SNAP rather than FDPIR is because they don't really know how to cook. A thought that I have is that my mom taught me to cook when I was, starting at about five, so it seems like – it is really hard to cross-fertilize across programs, but Head Start is really wonderful program. We have evaluated that in Indian country. And, maybe they should start early and some of the schools should – one of the things I feel, there's so many solutions in Indian country, and sometimes we get used to – because we have our own silos. As a rule – I got in trouble for saying this the other day, but I believe it is right. In the federal government, the Education Department doesn't talk to the Labor Department, and neither of them talk to HHS and none of them talk to USDA. There are all of these silos, and because our budgeting in Indian country is on similar ways, I see the same thing in my tribe and other tribes, is that Head Start's not talking to FDPIR, right? There's nothing that keeps us from doing that. Because, I mean, you are talking about a fundamental problem. Nutrition is tied together with all of these things, and there are a lot of reasons why our young people don't know how to cook. Who cares about fault, we ought to just think about solutions.

Anyway, I got off on a tangent. I just wanted to reinforce something that Barbara already said because I think other people are like me, I have to hear things three times. The first time you hear what they are going to tell you, then they tell you, and then they tell you what they told you. And, after that, half the people have the message. Barbara said a really important thing because it was in response to something Red said. He said he was disappointed there weren't more Tribal leaders here. It's not too late. It's really not too late. And, USDA has done a real great job, from my position, of letting people know. Maybe through you organization you go out and say, "Listen Tribal leaders, you've got two more shots at this," and that it's the next two weeks.

Thank you, I intend on doing that. I'm a little disappointed in my leader.

It's not too late.

Yes.

One thing that when we are talking about the taste and the food, and that reminded me, we are also, specifically, looking at the nutrition education activities and the nutrition education grants that USDA gave out. So, we are looking to see who received them, which we can find out from FNS, but what the different tribes are doing with those. So, a lot of the site visits can really help with disseminating some of those best practices. We saw some great things, even the last time we were out, where some places were doing cooking demonstrations, sort of a takeoff on all those cooking shows on TV. Some had actually done videos and put them on their websites of different cooking demonstrations using FDPIR foods and recipes. Actually, we – it was really fun in some of the focus groups, where someone said, "Well, I really don't know what to do with powdered milk. I can't stand it." And somebody else said, "No, here's what I do and it's really good, and here's what I make with it." So, people were actually sharing recipes at some the discussion rooms. So, there's a lot of ways to, maybe, raise that awareness and get that information out there.

That's a good point. Ruth, did you have a question or a comment?

During natural disasters, we had a mean snowstorm a few years ago, and people had their SNAP benefits increased because of that storm. Nothing ever happens with (inaudible).

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I've got a great cookbook from the FDPIR site I visited and there's some great stuff in there. And, they had little measuring spoons and measuring cups. So, no excuse there, they have to – they can cook that stuff.

It's all a question of using seasoning.

Salt, of course, we want to stay away from salt.

Not too much salt.

Or, tomatoes.

Just about my final remark, I want to say another thing about the burden. Which is, when this final report comes out, when it finally comes out, it should have information that's useful to lots of stakeholders, so the programs that participated in it, you know, that were actually the sites. While, we are not going to – we make this big deal about confidentiality, so we are not going to say, you know, Standing Rock does this much better than Mississippi Choctaw, or something like that. It won't have that, but it will have information about the programs. And, I presume that there's going to be sections on there about model programs and promising approaches, and all of that stuff should be of use. Everything that I see – USDA is always putting everything up on the website. I think the final report will be up on the website, too, so you don't have to print it out. You can just make the site, and it should be of value to you, and that is what we are hoping.

As I mentioned earlier, we have copies of the draft survey as well as the data collection. It is also on our website. And, I just wanted to check with Nancy, if folks wanted to provide feedback on those documents, do you have a rough timeframe to accept feedback?

(Inaudible) I'm going to go back and look at our schedule because we are – any time, certainly, through the period of these – through January, there's one more telephone, so any time between now and January is probably fine. Sooner, of course, is always better because it is easier for us to, then, integrate into what we are going to be submitting to OMB. But, we will be, certainly, taking comments through January, as we are still working on other revisions. We just got more comments back from FNS, so we are still working on revising the package. Ideally, it would be the end of December, but we'll be working through January, I'm sure.

Is it possible to have you put a mailing list together to remind us?

That's a good idea.

That's a great idea.

Just an email. We all need reminders.

Especially, it is during the holidays, too.

Yes, that's true.

Barbara said we've got a list going anyway, so –

Yes, so we can talk about that. It's a great idea. One thing that I thought of that, hopefully, would be helpful for everyone is I could put a checklist together that I could email out to everybody with different action items or follow up that we include. We have a slide, here, on some of the next steps, but I can certainly send out an email with some tentative dates and send out reminders. That's helpful.

A couple other things, just for some next steps. I mentioned there are a couple other consultation sessions. All the tribes are invited that are participating in the study are invited to all of the sessions. The

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next one is December 6 in Oklahoma City, and then we'll have one in San Francisco on the 13 of December. Then, there's a January 10, which is a conference call, probably also a webinar, as well. I know a lot of folks here have been on that type of format. And, it will be the same presentation, but it will also give us an opportunity to connect again and share any more additional comments that you may have regarding any of the materials. I'll also send out a reminder on that date, as well.

Some immediate next steps, you heard Suzanne talk a lot about the outreach that is going to occur. Probably most immediately, will be following after January, I would imagine, would be that telephone call.

It takes a while, so we will start –

January, February timeframe. A phone call from Suzanne, or somebody from the research team, to help start that coordination. There will be a letter sent out, as well, along with the packet of materials that Suzanne mentioned.

Probably one of the most important next steps is starting that process to gain approval, which was also discussed by the research team. And, there is that letter that we included just as a template. We hope it's helpful. It is just a resource. It is not something that you need to use. It might generate some other ideas in terms of what a letter, if you did want to provide one. If you have any other approval processes, then, we would follow those. But, that is a very important piece that would need to occur prior to any on-site visits and data collection piece as well.

And, the timeframe for that is pretty much, I would imagine, January through August, but a lot – a little earlier. So again, I think doing a follow-up checklist email might be helpful for all of us, and I can include all of these different items.

There's the NAFDPIR National Conference in Denver, and I believe is – is it in June, this year?

Yes, so that will also give us an opportunity to touch base and provide an update as to where we are. Looking forward to that, it's in Denver, so I know we will all be there.

That's nice.

Any other items? I know I also mentioned sending out copies of the draft survey and the data collection piece. Again, it is on the website, but it is just as easy for me to also include it in the follow-up email. But, any other items that would be helpful to you that you would need, besides reminders?

I need two reminders.

You need two reminders. You got it.

Just one other thing, when I said the timing for your comments, that's to help us to include them in the OMB package that we submit. But, once it is officially submitted to the Office of Management and Budget, which would be December or January, it then goes out for public comment. There's a posting period that is required. So, while we'd like it sooner because we could integrate it sooner, there's still another opportunity, not only for you, but for anybody in the community to look at that on the website and make a comment officially for the record, which the FNS has to respond to. So, it's not the end, yet, of a chance to provide input.

Good point.

Yes, that's helpful, very helpful to know because I know it is a lot of material to go through, very helpful.

Also, I know in Oklahoma that the President, Roxanna Newsom, will be at that consultation, so you can always get to her I'm sure, as well, to have her speak. I thought I'd mention that, and I may be there, too, actually.

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Any other comments, right now, or questions?

Since we finished early, and there should be food out there, so please stay, talk amongst yourselves, ask us questions. Please eat.

I have one more comment. I want to thank you for inviting Rosebud here, today. I want to also thank you for all the jokes concerning commodities in your program you've provided through the years. Also, we got a commodity blues song, which is brought up sometimes on our radio stations. And, if I could send you a DVD of that copy as soon as I get the artist's name, I think you guys should play that –

That's hysterical.

In one of your sessions. We've also got a comedy team, Willams and Ree, that usually tells a lot of your jokes – or, I mean, about the commodity program and stuff. One last thing, I think this comes from all the tribes is thank you for the bricks of cheese.

Well, I just want to thank you all for participating today. I want to thank the research team for being here, and thank the FNS team for being here. And, I look forward to the continued dialogue. So, thank you all, very much.

Thank you.