

Peer Review Plan

Title of Review: Review of Evaluation of the Birth Month Breastfeeding Changes to the WIC Food Packages, Final Report [**Influential Scientific Information**]
X

Agency: Food and Nutrition Service, USDA [**Highly Influential Scientific Assessment**]

Agency Contact: Rich Lucas, Office of Research, Nutrition and Analysis (703-305-2017)

Subject of Review: Review of study Final Report

Purpose of Review: Subject the information to formal, independent, external peer review to ensure its objectivity.

Type of Review: [] Panel Review [X] Individual Reviewers
[] Alternative Process (Briefly Explain):

Timing of Review (Est.): Start: _____ End: _____ Completed: 3/10/2011

Number of Reviewers: [] 3 or fewer [X] 4 to 10 [] More than 10

Primary Disciplines/Types of Expertise Needed for Review: _____
(1) Research methodology and statistical analysis (2) Knowledge of the operation of the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children and (3) Knowledge of factors influencing breastfeeding initiation, duration, and intensity.

Reviewers selected by: [X] Agency [] Designated Outside Organization
Organization's Name: _____

Opportunities for Public Comment? [] Yes [X] No

If yes, briefly state how and when these opportunities will be provided:
How: _____
When: _____

Peer Reviewers Provided with Public Comments? [] Yes [X] No

Public Nominations Requested for Review Panel? [] Yes [X] No

Other: A document containing reviewer comments will be posted to the FNS website in December 2011.



The final report is expected to be a large, complex document. Seven reviewers were charged with two tasks as follows:

1. Reviewers were requested to determine if (i) the data collection as implemented was appropriate, (ii) whether the analyses as carried out reflect the original plans and (iii) whether the analyses are appropriate given the actual implementation of sampling and data collection.
2. Reviewers were charged with evaluating the clarity of hypotheses, the robustness of the methods employed to address the hypotheses, the appropriateness of the methods for the hypotheses being tested, the extent to which the conclusions follow from the analysis, and the strengths and limitations of the overall conclusions. The peer reviewers were requested, as appropriate, to suggest ways to clarify assumptions, findings, and conclusions; identify oversights, omissions, and inconsistencies; and, if needed, encourage authors to more fully acknowledge limitations and uncertainties.

All seven peer reviewers were informed that the Agency does not have funds to make changes that require additional data collection, reconsideration of the research design, or significant modifications to data collection and analysis methods. The reviewers were informed that the Agency, while it will welcome recommendations that may improve the design of other WIC breastfeeding studies, requires an evaluation of the current product that is cognizant of the funding constraints.

Each reviewer was instructed to supply the results of their review in written form. Because this study is considered influential scientific information, reviewers will be informed that the Agency is required to make available to the public the written charge to the peer reviewers, the peer reviewers' names, the peer reviewers' reports, and the agency's response to the peer reviewers' reports.