013 Implementing “Evaluation for Transformation” as a Conceptual Framework to Measure the Impact of the USDA Farm to School Grant Program

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Objective: This presentation describes implementing “Evaluation for Transformation” as a conceptual framework for measuring the impact of the USDA Farm to School Grant Program.

Target Audience: Target audience includes project coordinators from entities eligible for a USDA Farm to School Grant including schools, agricultural producers or producer groups, state and local agencies, nonprofit entities and Indian tribal organizations.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: Evaluation of the USDA Farm to School Grant Program draws on the National Farm to School Network’s evaluation framework, “Evaluation for Transformation.” This framework proposes standardized indicators and measures in four areas farm to school programs are thought to impact: community economic development, public health, education and the environment.

Description: On an annual basis, USDA awards up to \$5 million in Farm to School Grants to support schools improving access to local foods in school meals. In 2015, grantees (n=55) completed standardized baseline and final reports which collected information about a select group of common measures in each of the four impact areas.

Evaluation: Preliminary results show that these grant projects are positively impacting each of the four impact areas. Grantees are reporting the majority of these positive impacts in the areas of community economic development, public health and education with fewer positive impacts in the area of improved environmental quality.

Conclusions and Implications: This is one of the first examples of a group implementing “Evaluation for Transformation” as a framework for evaluating the impact of farm to school programs. Implications include developing a national evidence base for farm to school programs and creating a common approach for evaluating and reporting on these activities and programs.

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014 Diet Quality and Characteristics Differ Among Food Secure and Food Insecure Emergency Food Pantry Users

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Objective: Food insecurity, or uncertain access to healthy foods, is associated with various negative health outcomes, and affects roughly 70% of the emergency food pantry (EFP)-user population. This study evaluated differences in characteristics of food secure and food insecure EFP clients, as well as the relationship between food security status and diet quality.

Design, Setting, and Participants: EFP Clients (N=599) from a multistate sample of 24 Midwestern, rural EFPs participated at a single time point from September-November 2014.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: Participants completed the 18-item U.S. Household Food Security Module, and one to three automated self-administered 24-hour dietary recalls (ASA24s) that were used to calculate Healthy Eating Index-2010 (HEI) total and component scores. Chi-square analysis determined differences in characteristics between food security groups. Multiple linear regression models adjusted for confounders were used to determine associations between food security status and HEI scores.

Results: Significant differences between food security groups in age, household size, participation in food assistance programs, and use of EFPs existed. A positive association between household food security status and total dairy intake ($\beta = 0.75$, $p = 0.05$) was determined. However, no other significant associations were found.

Conclusions and Implications: Food security status may be positively associated with dairy intake in the EFP-user population, but overall lack of association between food security status and diet quality suggests that mere use of EFPs may be an indicator of poor diet quality among clients. Additional research is needed to investigate how EFP use over time may be related to changes in food security and diet quality.

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015 Calorie Labels on the Restaurant Menu: Weight-Control Behaviors and Ordering Decisions of Young Adults

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Objective: This study examines associations between the use of calorie information on restaurant menus and weight-control behaviors in a population-based sample of young adults.

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