

Guidelines for evaluating substantially equivalent methods:

All evaluation designs for substantially equivalent proposals must be approved in advance by the Health Officer. The evaluation must be based on scientifically valid customer surveys that meet the requirement of this regulation. The evaluation plan must:

- Include a methodologically-sound evaluation plan that uses scientifically valid survey methods,
- Be conducted by an independent professional organization,
- Be conducted by trained professionals, and
- Survey a minimum sample of 250 randomly selected customers.

The results must demonstrate that the proposed method results in at least 75% (with a 95% confidence level of 70-80%) of customers seeing the nutrition information before placing their orders.

The nutrition labeling regulation requires: “surveys used to support a proposed substantially equivalent method must be conducted independently by professionals using scientifically valid survey methods, including the use of random sampling methods to conduct customer assessments.”

Evaluation Design: Customer Exit Survey

- **Sample:** A random sample of at least 250 customers must be surveyed in order to generate the required confidence interval, taking into account and design effect due to clustered data collection. If a chain restaurant has five or few locations in King County, all restaurant locations in King County will be included in the evaluation. When a chain has six or more restaurants in King County, a random sample of at least five restaurants may be used. Substantially equal numbers of customers should be included from each participating restaurant.
- **Data collection:** As a participant exits the restaurant, surveyors will administer a brief face-to-face exit survey using a standard survey instrument (sample is in Appendix 1).
- **Customer inclusion and exclusion criteria:**
 1. Age: Adults age 18 or older
 2. Language: Survey conducted in a minimum of two languages - include English and Spanish-speaking customers
- **Required survey data elements:**
 1. Awareness of calorie, fat, sodium or carbohydrate information at restaurant
 2. Source of information observed
 3. Use of calorie information for purchase decision
 4. Demographics (age, ethnicity, race, zip code of residence, nearest intersection of residence)
- **Additional data elements required:**
 1. Total number of customers exiting restaurant during each survey period
 2. Total number of customers approached
 3. Total number of customers who declined survey
 4. Total number of customers surveyed per survey period

- Data Quality: Data will be collected by an experienced individual or organization with the required training and skills to conduct a scientifically valid survey. The individual or organization conducting the survey may not be associated with the restaurant or any other organization with a financial or other business interest in the restaurant. Surveys collected must be independent of the chain food establishment knowing dates, times and store locations prior to the actual collection. Interviewers will notify PHSKC of the times and places so that PHSKC may observe data collection.
- Data Entry and Storage: Survey data collected on paper will be entered into an Excel or Access data base. Paper surveys will be retained and provided to PHSKC upon request. A minimum of 20% of the surveys must be double-entered and reviewed to assure accuracy of data entry. Data collected electronically will be converted to an Excel or Access data base and made available to PHSKC upon request.