

## **Focus Group Questions**

### **Pre-Arrival**

*Moderator:*

Hello everyone. Thanks for coming today! Take a seat anywhere you'd like and come check in with me (Katrina).

[Name of assistant] will be able to help you with anything you may need. Please write your name on the large triangle placard in front of you or on the nametag sticker.

[Begin when everyone has arrived, is situated, and is seated.]

### **Opening**

*Moderator:*

Hello everyone! Thank you for coming in today for this focus group. I will be your moderator. I am the one who has been in contact with you regarding this study. I am an Extension Associate at NC State University. [Brief Introduction]. [Name] will be assisting me today.

Firstly, this focus group can take up to two hours; is anyone unable to stay for the whole time? If this is not a convenient time for you, you may reschedule with us now. [Await focus group participants.]

We will begin with a review of the consent forms that you have in front of you. Please look over the consent form as I read over the document; if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask. We will collect the consent forms and hand out a second copy for you to keep. [Review consent forms.]

Thank you. Please remember, you may withdraw from this study at any time. As mentioned, we will be audio recording this session, today. [Pass the audio recorder around so everyone can have a chance to look at it.]

I'll be asking questions, and [name] will be taking notes on the side. At the end of the focus group, s/he will review what has been said to make sure that we've understood everything that you've said. There are no right or wrong answers. We just want this to be a discussion. If we ask something, we're not trying to lead you in a certain direction. We just want to hear any ideas or thoughts you have. We are conducting this research to be able to find out more about what food safety risks people see when they shop at

grocery stores. Our hope is to take the responses from our discussion today to create more effective food safety messages.

At any time during this focus group, feel free to get up and grab snacks or freshen up. The restrooms are [location of restrooms].

Let's get started.

[Participants will be asked the following questions\*:

\*Note: Questions may be slightly modified depending on participant response.]

## Shopping Habits

- I. As a way of introducing yourselves, could you please state your name, how often you shop at the grocery store (include any/all stores), and the one thing or type of item you buy most often?
- II. Which store do you shop at most often (i.e., company or brand) and what's your main reason for shopping there?
- III. What other factors do you consider when choosing a store?
  - A. *Convenience/location? Company? Price/sales? Quality? Cleanliness?*

## Meal Preparation

- IV. How often do you prepare meals for yourself? For others?
  - A. *Times per day? Days per week? Weeks per month or year?*
- V. If you prepare meals for others, who else do you prepare meals for?
  - A. *Seniors/elderly, babies/infants, pregnant/breastfeeding women, those who are sick?*

## Grocery Store Photos

Now I want to ask you about some photos that were taken in a grocery store. Not all photos were taken in the same grocery store. Please imagine that each photo is something you are seeing during your shopping trip. Again, remember that in this focus group, there are no right or wrong answers. We just want to hear your thoughts.

[For each picture, ask the following series of questions. Use probing phrases as needed: *Is there anything else you see there that we might have missed? Can you tell me more about...? Are there any further comments?*]

- VI. Tell me about what you see in this photo.
- VII. Would you consider this situation safe or unsafe in terms of food safety? Why or why not?
  - A. *What things make it safe/unsafe?*
- VIII. [If food products shown in photo, ask:] Would you consider the food shown in this photo to be safe or unsafe in terms of food safety? Why or why not?
  - A. *What things make it safe/unsafe?*
- IX. If you were shopping on this particular day, would you purchase the food shown here? Why or why not?
- X. Would you purchase anything in this store department (i.e., the seafood department, the deli, etc.)? Why or why not?
- XI. Would you purchase anything in this particular store? Why or why not?
- XII. Would you do anything in response to seeing this? Why or why not?
- XIII. Would seeing this at a particular store affect your impression of the store or company? Why or why not?

## Other Questions

XIV. If you could come up with a definition for food safety, what would it be?

## Wrap-Up / Summary

XV. In light of everything that we've discussed regarding food safety in the grocery store, is there anything that you want to add or comment on that we may have missed?

### *Moderator:*

Please feel free to ask us any questions at any time regarding this. Right now, [name] will quickly summarize everything that we've discussed here today to make sure we got everything right.

*Assistant* - [Provide summary]

Thank you so much for your time and participation in this. We really appreciate all that you've done to help us out! We are happy to provide you with further information regarding anything we've discussed today; please let us know.

*Assistant* - [Pass out Demographics Forms]

Please fill out the demographic form before you leave and hand it to us in exchange for your gift card.

*Assistant* - [Provide gift card in exchange for completed Demographics Form]