

DEFAULTS USED FOR CODING FOODS AND AMOUNTS IN WWEIA

Foods

In WWEIA, 24-hour recalls are conducted using the USDA Automated Multiple-Pass Method (AMPM), a computerized instrument that provides standardized questions for all types of foods. When a respondent is unable to answer all questions about a food, a food code is selected that contains the term "not specified" or "not further specified" in its description. Because the number of characters used in descriptions is limited, "not specified" is abbreviated "NS" and "not further specified" is abbreviated "NFS." For example, if a respondent reports milk but is unable to provide any additional information, the food code selected is 11100000, "Milk, NFS"; if a respondent reports ground beef but is unable to identify the percent lean of that ground beef, the food code selected is 21500100, "Ground beef or patty, cooked, NS as to percent lean."

Nutrient values and portion weight data for the NS or NFS food codes are developed using food production and supply statistics (when available), food consumption data from previous surveys, internal data on the frequency of reports during the current survey, information gathered from food industry publications and other sources, and the professional judgment of nutritionists and food specialists from FSRG and NDL. More research attention is given to those food codes that are considered to have more impact on survey data, such as food codes that are used more frequently to code intake data or that are used in the FNDDS-SR links for many other food codes.

The following are some examples of linkage development for NFS codes:

- The "Milk, NFS" code is used for approximately 2% of the survey reports of milk consumption in such situations as when respondents cannot provide the fat content of the milk they drank. "Milk, NFS" is also used as a component in the FNDDS-SR links for numerous other FNDDS foods that contain milk as part of the food mixture. The FNDDS food code for "Milk, NFS" is linked to multiple SR codes (whole milk, reduced-fat milk, lowfat milk, and nonfat milk), in proportions that reflect U.S. milk production statistics (Economic Research Services, USDA).
- "Vegetable oil, NFS" is another default food code used in the linkages for many other FNDDS food codes. The FNDDS food code for "Vegetable oil, NFS" is linked to multiple SR codes (soybean oil, canola oil, corn oil, olive oil, and peanut oil), in proportions based on retail sales data from the Institute of Shortening and Edible Oils and advice from the NDL food specialist for fats and oils.
- The link for "Bacon, NS as to type of meat, cooked" is to the SR code for pork bacon, which was by far the most frequently reported type of bacon in previous surveys.
- "Cereal, ready-to-eat, NFS" is linked to the top reported breakfast cereals, in proportions of their frequency of reports in the past WWEIA, NHANES.

The links for the top NFS codes are reviewed for each release of the FNDDS and revised as necessary to reflect the most current data.

Amounts

When a respondent in WWEIA cannot describe the portion that was eaten, a portion description containing the phrase "Quantity not specified" (QNS) is chosen (portion codes 90000 to 90011). Because it is unusual for a respondent not to describe the amount of a food consumed, QNS values are not used frequently when coding food consumption data. For that reason, the FNDDS does not contain a QNS value for every food. In the Food Weights file, missing QNS values are identified with a -9 in the portion weight field for portion code 90000.

QNS values are usually based on a common measure of the food, but they do not necessarily represent the amount reported by most respondents. Database users should not assume that QNS values will accurately represent the average amount of a food consumed.