

# OBSERVATIONAL PROTOCOL INSTRUCTIONS for *Grocery Stores and Markets*

## Introduction

This observational survey is focused primarily on nutrition products though some information about facilities for physical activity will be collected. The initial items on the survey provide a general description of the grocery store or market. The survey is designed to assess the availability of healthful foods, the quality and price of fresh produce, and the availability of health promotion messages for vegetables and fruits.

The following is a guide for completing the observational survey. Complete all sections as completely as possible. Write clearly and legibly and transfer hand written notes to electronic form as computer resources are available. For questions where none of the item is available, enter "0" in the space provided. This will help to distinguish items with no data from those with missing data. Feel free to make notes on the last page of the survey form or in the margins as needed.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Please follow the skip patterns carefully. If no skip pattern is listed, go directly to the question immediately following.

## Instructions

**Observer(s):** Enter the names of all volunteers

**Time of day:** Enter the time of day you entered the store and the time of day you left the store.

**Store name:** Enter the name of the store at which you are conducting the observations. Below are the a sampling of names of grocery stores and markets noted in the Mount Vernon phone book that fall within the assessment area.

**Albertson's**  
310 E. College Way  
(360) 428-0282

**Robert's Red Apple Market**  
820 Cleveland St.  
(360) 336-2251

**Food Pavilion**  
1515 N. 18th St.  
(360) 424-5202

**Safeway Stores**  
315 E. College Way  
(360) 424-8160

**G & M Market**  
503 N. 4th St.  
(360) 336-2203

**Skagit Valley Food Co-Op**  
202 S. 1st St.  
(360) 336-9777

**Haggen Food & Pharmacy**  
2601 E. Division St.  
(360) 848-6999

**Mount Vernon Grocery Outlet**  
1333 Riverside Dr.  
(360) 428-4770

★★ **Store address:** Enter the complete mailing address of the store mentioned above. ★ ★

## Section I: Initial Observations

### **Q1. Store manager**

Some of the initial questions will need to be answered by a store manager or close equivalent. Present the letter signed by Peter Browning to this person, record their name and title.

### **Q2. Bicycle facilities**

Please make note of the type and number of bicycle facilities at the store. If no facilities are available, please check the box next to none.

**Bike lockers:** allows bikes and personal equipment to be locked in individual lockers or communal enclosures

**U rails:** rails that are mostly suspended, and attached to the ground at 2 point. **See picture below.**

**Bike racks or stands:** traditional bike parking racks, seated entirely on the ground. **See picture below.**

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U rails



Bike rack



### Q3. Car parking facilities

Estimate the number of car parking spaces there are at this store. Check the box next to the appropriate estimate.

### Q4. Square footage

Record the square footage of the store based on the responses of the manager.

### Q5. Total window space for ads

Estimate the percentage of window space covered by ads. This includes all ads. If no windows are present, please check the 'no windows present' box and move on to section II.

### Q6. Window space for healthful foods

Estimate the percentage of window space covered by ads that are for healthful foods. Healthful foods could be beverages such as water or 100% fruit juice or fruits and vegetables, etc.

## Section II. Product Observations

### Subsection A: Produce

Q1. Check whether or not the store offers FRESH fruits and vegetables.

Q2. Check if the fruit and vegetable section is in the front half or the back half of the store.

Q3. Please note the types of fresh fruit and vegetables available, their quality, and their price (each or per pound) in the table provided. If more than one type of fruit is available for apples, oranges, pears, melon, lettuce, or tomatoes, please note the type that is most expensive and the one that is least expensive and rate the quality and price.

- For quality, rate as 1=poor, 2=good, 3=excellent.
  - **Poor:** very dirty, mushy or wilted, a lot of damage
  - **Good:** some dirt, mostly firm and crisp, some damage
  - **Excellent:** very clean, firm and crisp, little or no damage
- For price, write the price per bunch/bag/each or price per pound. Be sure to mark the box next to the price you are noting.
- For, each type of fruit or vegetable noted, please note if there are signs indicating the produce is locally grown (e.g. "Grown in Skagit Valley") or if they are labeled "Organic".

Q4. Check if there are any health promotion items near the fruit and vegetable section. *A health promotion item is any item that encourages healthy diet practices, over and above what is on the label. Examples include any 5-A-Day signs (even produce bags), cards displaying nutritional value of food items, or cards identifying the best way to select and prepare foods for maximum nutrition value.*

Q5. Record the types of health promotion items. If you select the 'other' option, enter your response in the space provided.

Q6. Check whether or not the store sells DRIED FRUIT or VEGETABLES. This includes raisins, apricots, figs, prunes, tomatoes, etc. If the store doesn't sell dried fruit or vegetables, goto the next question II.a.7.

Q7. Check whether or not the store sells FROZEN VEGETABLES. If the store does not sell frozen vegetables, goto the next question II.a.8.

Q8. Check whether or not the store sells FROZEN FRUIT. If the store does not sell frozen fruit, goto the next question II.a.9.

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Q9. Check whether or not the store sells CANNED VEGETABLES. If the store does not sell canned vegetables, goto the next question II.a.10.

Q10. Check whether or not the store sells CANNED FRUIT. If the store does not sell canned fruit, goto the next question II.a.11.

Q11. Check whether or not the store sell tofu. If the store does not sell tofu, goto the next subsection II.b.1.

### Subsection B: Meat

Q1. Check whether or not the store sells FRESH MEATS. If the store does sell fresh meats, please proceed to question II.b.2. and check which options are available. If the store does not sell fresh meats, goto the next subsection II.c.1.

Q2. Note whether the following fresh meats are sold. *The ground beef package label must say lean or extra lean to qualify for inclusion in this section.*

- Regular ground beef
- Lean and extra lean ground beef
- Ground turkey
- Turkey sausage
- Whole chicken
- Chicken breasts – with skin
- Chicken breasts – skinless
- Fresh fish and shellfish

### Subsection C: Dairy

Q1. Check whether or not the store sells MILK PRODUCTS. If the store does sell milk products, please proceed to question II.c.2. and check which options are available and their volumes. If the store does not sell milk products, goto the next question II.c.3.

Q2. Please note the different types of milk and volumes offered at this store. *Do not consider buttermilk or acidophilus milk.* Not-fat milk is the same as skim milk. Flavored milk includes chocolate, vanilla, orange, strawberry, banana, root beer and other flavors. Soy milk and rice milk are often located in a non-refrigerated, health food section of the store in cartons.

#### Type of milk

- Skim / nonfat
- 1%
- 2%
- Whole
- Regular flavored
- Low-fat/non-fat flavored
- Soy
- Rice

Q3. Check whether or not the store sells other dairy products. Other dairy products include yogurt, cheese, butter or margarine. If the store does sell other dairy products, please proceed to question II.c.4 through II.c.6. If the store does not sell other dairy products, goto the next subsection II.d.1.

Q4. Please note the different types yogurt offered at this store. *Low-fat or fat-free products must be labeled as such on the package to be considered.* If the store does not offer yogurt, please proceed to next question II.c.5 and check the box next to none offered.

- Fat-free
- Low-fat
- Regular

Q5. Please note the different types of cheese offered at this store. *Cheeses include chunk and shredded cheeses only found in the cheese section, not the deli section. Low-fat or fat-free products must be labeled as such on the package to be considered. Do not considered grated parmesan cheese, cream cheese, or cottage cheese.* If the store does not offer cheese, please proceed to next question II.c.6 and check the box next to none offered.

- Fat-free
- Low-fat
- Regular

Q6. Please note the different types of butter or margarine offered at this store. If the store does not offer butter or margarine, please proceed to next subsection II.d.1 and check the box next to none offered.

- Light

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- Reduced
- Regular

### **Subsection D: Breads and Grains**

Q1. Check whether or not the store sells BREAD. *Bread includes pre-packaged sliced breads. Do not include hot dog or hamburger buns (or any other bread buns).* If the store does sell bread products, please proceed to question II.d.2. If the store does not sell bread, goto the next question II.d.3.

Q2. Please note the different types of bread offered at this store. *Please only consider bread that says on the package label **100% whole wheat or high in fiber for whole wheat or high fiber bread.** Darks breads would be pumpernickel and dark rye.*

Q3. Check whether or not the store sells RICE. If the store does sell rice, please proceed to question II.d.4. If the store does not sell rice, goto the next question II.d.5.

Q4. Please note the different types of rice offered at this store.

Q5. Check whether or not the store sells un-refrigerated PASTA. If the store does sell pasta, please proceed to question II.d.6. If the store does not sell pasta, goto the next subsection II.e.1.

Q6. Please note the different types of pasta offered at this store.

### **Subsection E: Beans and Peas**

Q1. Check whether or not the store sells DRIED or CANNED BEANS and PEAS. Proceed to next subsection II.f.1.

### **Subsection F: Beverages**

Q1. Check whether or not the store sells NON-ALCOHOIC BEVERAGES in an un-refrigerated area of the store. *100% juice (fruit or vegetable) must be labeled as such on the package to be considered.* If the store does sell non-alcoholic beverages, please proceed to question II.f.2. If the store does not sell non-alcoholic beverages, goto the next question II.f.3.

Q2. Please note the types of non-alcoholic beverages offered at this store.

Q3. Check whether or not the store sells non-alcoholic FROZEN JUICE (100%). *100% juice (fruit or vegetable) must be labeled as such on the package to be considered.* Proceed to next subsection III.1.

## **Section III. Customer Demographics**

Q1. The purpose of this section is to provide a general “picture” of who shops at this grocery store. Please check ONE selection in each column to indicate your perception of who the customers appear to be.

### **Notes Section**

This section is reserved for general note taking. Please make notes of questions or comments as you make your way through the store.