

More is More? The Impact of Doubling Incentive on Food Reporting

Ting Yan, Tom Krenzke, Janice Machado, Westat
Elina Page, ERS

April 21, 2023

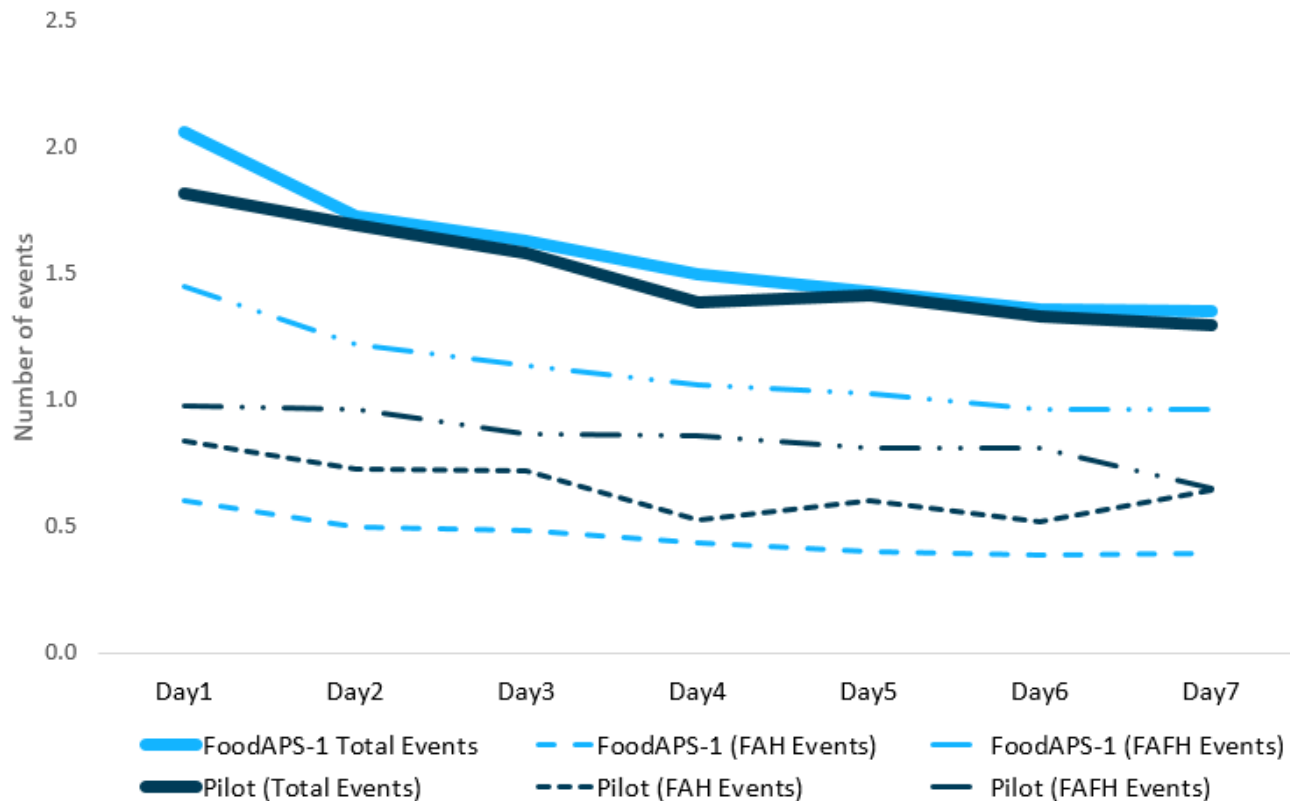
Disclaimer

- › The findings and conclusions in this presentation are those of the authors and should not be construed to represent any official USDA or U.S. Government determination or policy.

Challenges of Collecting Food Data

- › Food data are important for policymakers and researchers
 - Food acquisition and expenditure, consumption and nutrition, food environments, food assistance etc
- › Collection of food data is challenging
 - People may not remember what they got and for how much
 - People do not know the nutrition value
 - People may not pay attention to the size/amount of food obtained or eaten
- › Diary provided to people so that they can record foods obtained as they get them
 - Trend of underreporting during the reporting period

FoodAPS-1 and FoodAPS-ADCM: Trend of Underreporting



For Pilot, n=430 HHs, Weighted
For FoodAPS1, n=4,826 HHs, weighted

Incentive Experiment

- › Can we offer more money to stall the trend of underreporting?
- › Incentive experiment implemented in FoodAPS Field Test

› Control

- \$5 per person per day
- A total of **\$35** per person throughout a 7-day food week

› Experimental

- \$5 per person per day for first three days completed, \$10 per person per day for the rest of four days completed
- A total of **\$55** per person throughout a 7-day food week

Incentive Experiment (2)

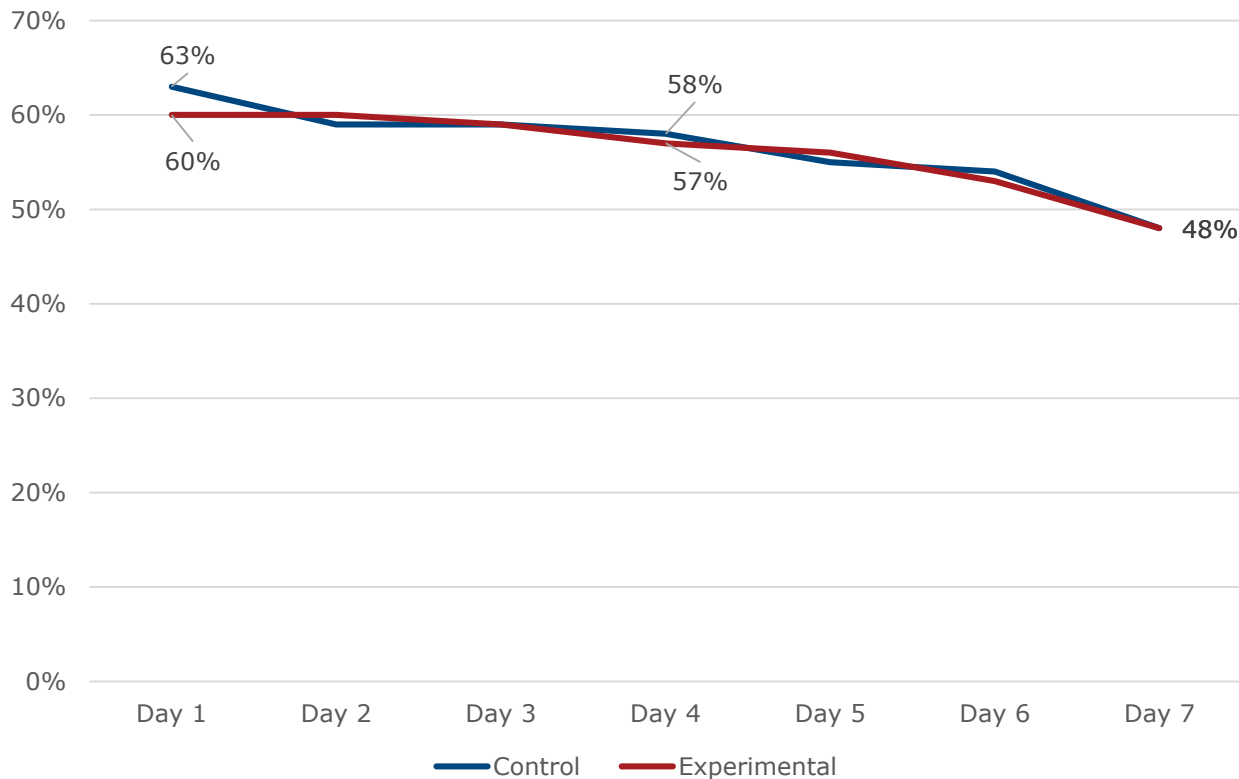
- › Can we offer more money to stall the trend of underreporting?
- › An incentive experiment was included in the FoodAPS Field Test
 - Control condition
 - Experimental condition
- › Research questions:
 - Did doubling incentive affect respondents' participation?
 - Did doubling incentive affect respondents' report of food events and items?
 - Did doubling incentive affect large households and small households differentially?

FoodAPS Field Test

- › Conducted from May to November, 2022
- › 476 households recruited in-person in 12 PSUs
 - Control: 235 households, 652 participants
 - Experimental: 241 households, 671 participants
- › Participants asked to report foods or drink acquired for a duration of 7 days via
 - an app diary (FoodLogger)
 - a web-based diary

Results

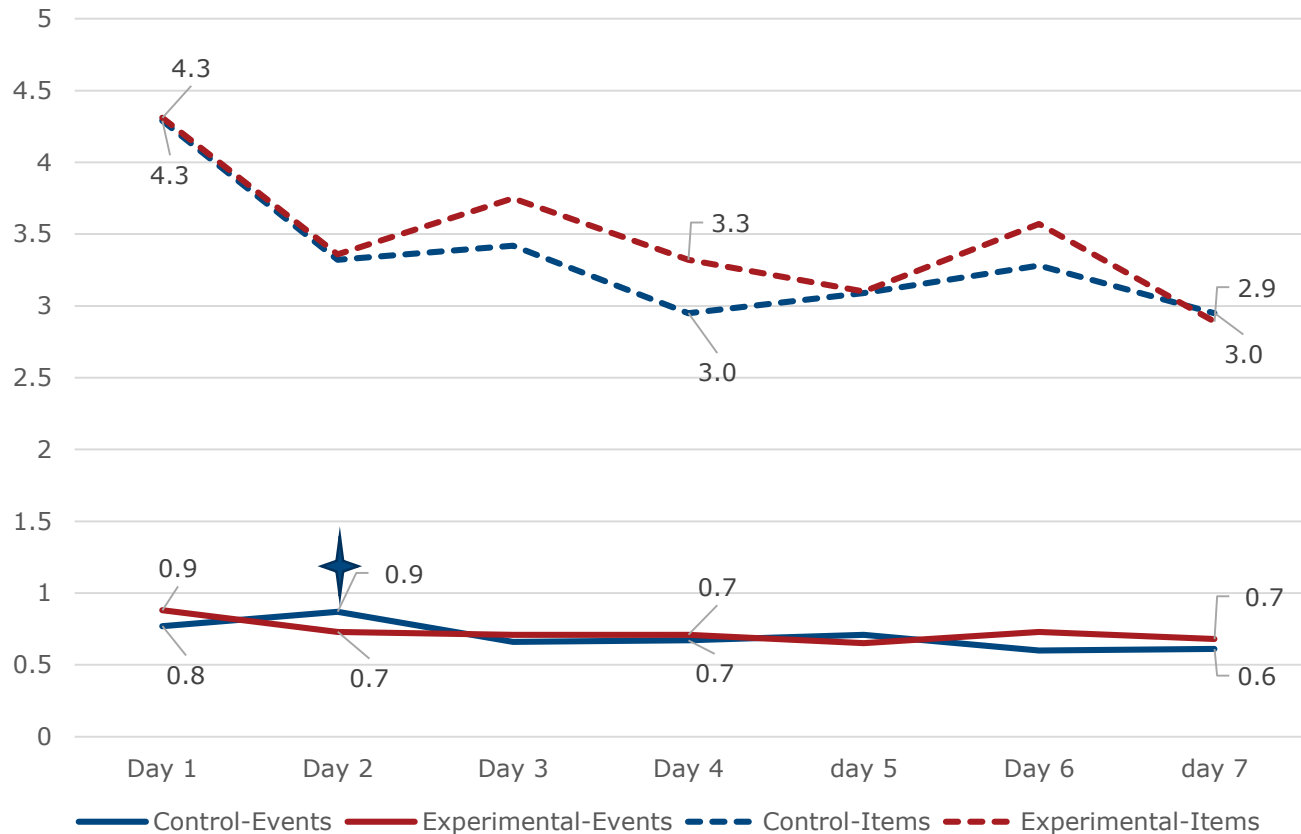
Participant Food Log Completion by Incentive condition



-Daily Food Log completion rates did not differ by incentive condition

-Doubling incentive did not stall the downward trend

Food Events and Items Reported by Incentive condition

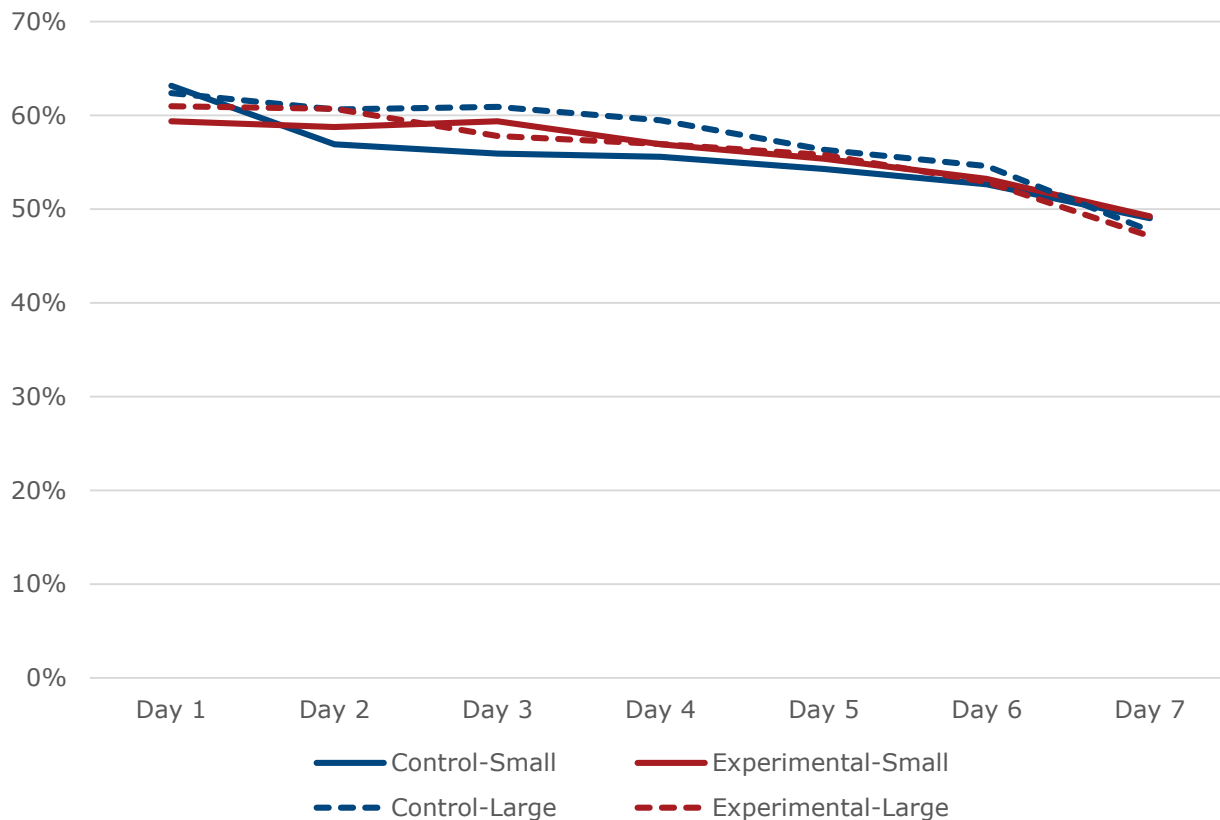


-Doubling incentive did not stall the downward trend of food items

-Participants in the experimental condition reported slightly more items than those in the control

-Participants in the control condition reported sig. more events on Day 2 than those in the experimental condition

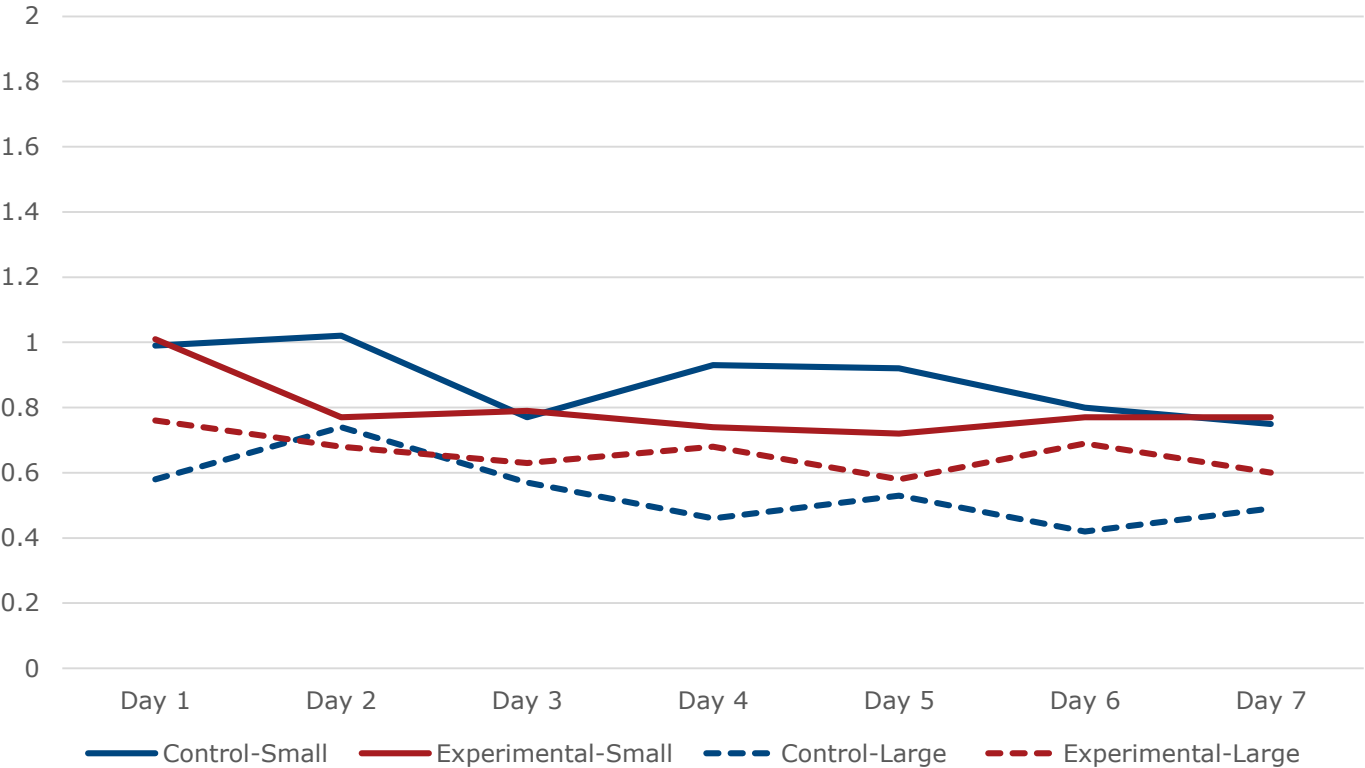
Participant Food Log Completion by Household Size, and Incentive condition



-Daily Food Log completion rates did not differ by household size, and incentive condition

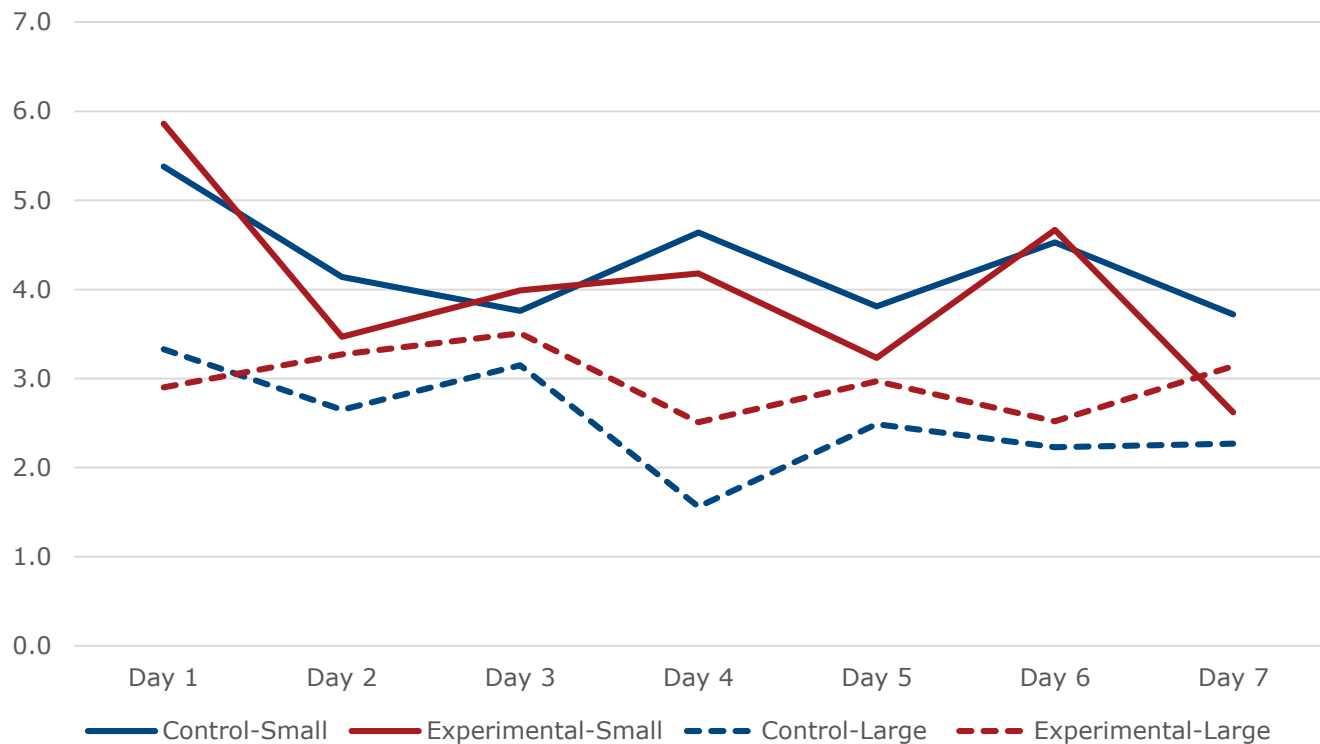
-Doubling incentive did not stall the downward trend, even for household with 4 or more participants

Food Events Reported by Household Size, and Incentive condition



-Impact of incentive not different by household size

Food Items Reported by Household Size, and Incentive condition



-Impact of incentive not different by household size

-Participants in the experimental condition reported more items than those in control condition

Conclusions

- › Doubling daily incentive upon completing three days' Food Log had no impact on
 - Participant Food Log completion
 - Number of food events and items reported
 - Reporting behaviors of participants from households with 4 or more people
- › Why didn't it work?
 - We speculated that people may not know how incentive worked
 - The increase of \$20 per person was not big enough to change behavior

Thoughts for future research

- › We called back 19 participants to assess their understanding of incentive
 - Most people did not know or had partial understanding of how incentive worked
 - 6 (out of 9) participants in experimental condition and 3 (out of 10) participants in control condition did not bother to check in their app how much they had accumulated
 - 3 participants in experimental condition and 1 participant in control condition said that they did not do the Food Log for money
- › Future research:
 - Conveying better to people on incentive
 - Invoking social exchange

Thoughts for future research (2)

- › Interviewers probably differed in what they said, how much they said, and how they said when explaining incentive to people
- › Interviewer effect (as measured via within-interviewer correlation)*
 - Ranges between 15% to 18% for participant daily completion behavior
 - Ranges between 0.2% to 15% for food event reporting
 - Ranges between 0% to 17% for food item reporting
- › Future research
 - Identify interviewers who were most successful in getting people to complete Food Log and to report food events and items
 - Training of interviewers to improve and standardize their performance

Thank You

tingyan@Westat.com