Reviewer's report

Title: Using Direct Observations on Multiple Occasions to Measure Household Food Availability among Low-Income Mexicano Residents in Texas Colonias

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Reviewer: Michelle Kegler

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This paper is much-improved with a clearer purpose and revised tables and analyses that correspond to the main point of the paper. I still have a few suggestions for revision, however.

Minor Essential Revisions

Table 2 does not need to list the word “frequency” in the left column, since % (N) is clearly labeled.

The remaining tables (3-12) are difficult to understand at a glance. I suggest that for the first such table (#3), the text be more detailed and refer to specific numbers in the table. Clearer labeling may also help: all 5 visits, 4 of 5 visits, 3 of 5 visits, etc. Additionally, the tables include both percentages and numbers, but the columns are not clearly labeled. The titles mention percentage, but the row header says number. Both should be clearly labeled in the tables.

Although the tables are improved, I still think there is too much detail presented. The main point gets lost. The purpose of the paper is not to describe what food is available in these homes, but rather that it changes over time. That point could be made with 3-4 tables instead of 12. The same is true for the pictures—only one set is needed.

The tables also include a lot of rows with all zeros. I suggest those be removed; the text could mention the items that were not available at any time in any of the homes (if that serves a purpose).

Lastly, the authors should make the point that the appropriate time frame for household food inventories depends on their purpose. It may be that a single inventory is adequate for correlating with 24 hour dietary recalls, but not for correlating with percent calories from fat derived from a screening question that covers typical eating behavior. Some of these subtleties should be addressed.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable
**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.