Reviewer’s report

Title: Intakes of culinary herbs and spices from a food frequency questionnaire evaluated against 28-days estimated records

Version: 1 Date: 14 February 2011

Reviewer: David Jacobs

Reviewer’s report:

Major compulsory revisions

Abstract: I don’t understand the sentence, “Portion sizes showed higher agreement among consumers than in the whole study population.” Wouldn’t nonconsumers have zero portion size?

Is “consumer” defined by FFQ, HSR, or both? How many people endorsed the spice in one, but not the other, questionnaire?

P 5, reference to peppermint: Peppermint is part of a larger mint family. Do the authors mean specifically peppermint, or do they mean mint more generally?

Using just a little more space, you could have presented the level of agreement of endorsement among the remaining spices, even though they were rarely used. These data would also be of interest, since the base for herb and spice eating is low.

Discretionary revisions

I don’t have a good sense for the FFQ used. Was it just a heading, like “Herbs and Spices”, then individual lines such as “basil, ground or fresh”, with response options? Based on the kinds of disagreements between the FFQ and HSR, do the authors have any suggestions for improving the FFQ?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

None