

(CERTIFIED TAPE TRANSCRIPT)

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MACRO INTERNATIONAL, INC.

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:
: FOCUS GROUP ON :
: METHYL MERCURY :
: (FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION) :
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: - - - - - :

THURSDAY
OCTOBER 12, 2000
8:00 P.M.

Moderator: Lynn Halverson

Calverton, Maryland

1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 MS. HALVERSON: (in progress) -- to my
3 left. You can give us your first name and how
4 many people there are in your household.

5 A PARTICIPANT: My name's Gary.
6 There's a total of four, with two daughters at
7 school, which gets us down to school.

8 MS. HALVERSON: Ah, okay. How old are
9 your daughters?

10 A PARTICIPANT: 22 and 19.

11 A PARTICIPANT: Linda, family of five.
12 I have three boys. They are four, six and nine.

13 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Thanks.

14 A PARTICIPANT: Sorry.

15 A PARTICIPANT: I'm not.

16 MS. HALVERSON: (Laughter)

17 A PARTICIPANT: My name is Tania. It's
18 just my husband and I. All the children are out
19 of the nest.

20 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. How did you do
21 that? Oh, that's for another focus group.

22 A PARTICIPANT: My name is Henrietta.

1 A family of four. Two adult children. One just
2 got married this past Saturday, so she's gone
3 now. So, one adult male.

4 MS. HALVERSON: Great.

5 A PARTICIPANT: My son is still there.

6 MS. HALVERSON: How old is he?

7 A PARTICIPANT: Afraid to tell you.

8 38.

9 MS. HALVERSON: That's what I keep
10 worrying about.

11 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah, my name is Evral
12 (ph). I'm a family of three, and my wife and our
13 daughter -- five year old daughter.

14 MS. HALVERSON: Ah, great. Okay.
15 Thank you.

16 A PARTICIPANT: My name is Luis.
17 Contradictory to how it looks over here, my name
18 is Luis. It's a total of three people. That's
19 including myself in the household.

20 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Thank you.

21 A PARTICIPANT: My name is Jay. But
22 this says John here.

1 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. There's a total
2 of four people in the apartment, all college.

3 MS. HALVERSON: Okay, great.

4 A PARTICIPANT: My name is Wanda. And
5 there's my husband and myself. And we consider
6 our two cats and our rabbit our kids.

7 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Great. Well,
8 I'd like to start out by finding out, when you
9 think about stuff out there in the environment,
10 like contaminants that can get into the air we
11 breathe, or the water we drink or the foods we
12 eat, what kinds of things do you think about?

13 (No response heard.)

14 MS. HALVERSON: Or don't you? Evral?

15 A PARTICIPANT: I think about water.
16 Water you drink.

17 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

18 A PARTICIPANT: Especially if you want
19 to (inaudible) supermarket, something like that.

20 MS. HALVERSON: What would you find in
21 the water you drink?

22 A PARTICIPANT: Not finding. I am

1 (indiscernible) -- they tell you all kind of crap
2 about safe filtered water.

3 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

4 A PARTICIPANT: And that's what I'm
5 really concerned with that. The way it's been
6 processed. Something like that.

7 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. So what kinds of
8 contaminants might there be in the air or the
9 water or the food you drink (sic)?

10 A PARTICIPANT: Pesticides.

11 MS. HALVERSON: Food you eat. Sorry.
12 Pesticides? Okay. Anything else?

13 (Simultaneous discussion)

14 A PARTICIPANT: These are all
15 commercial products that one would buy in a
16 store?

17 MS. HALVERSON: Not necessarily. But
18 let's say you're buying meat or fish or fruits
19 and vegetables. Something like that.

20 A PARTICIPANT: Well, I think somebody
21 already said, pesticides. What you say about mad
22 cow disease and contaminated meat. And certain

1 parts of the United States, the water reserve
2 contaminated from local ecological problems.

3 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Anyone else?

4 A PARTICIPANT: In some places, the
5 water I think, might have sewage in it.

6 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah, that's true.

7 A PARTICIPANT: Right, right.

8 A PARTICIPANT: That's true.

9 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Tania, did
10 you --

11 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah. I was going to
12 think about the fish. Fish that we eat, and
13 where it's caught, and the contaminated -- the
14 diphtheria (ph) and the --

15 (Simultaneous discussion)

16 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

17 A PARTICIPANT: I was concerned about
18 that. And where are we getting our fish in this
19 area? Where is it coming from?

20 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. So, I've heard
21 pfisteria (ph), pesticides, the sewage, that kind
22 of bacteria or something like that, that you

1 might get. How about something like lead or
2 mercury? Where would you find that?

3 (Simultaneous discussion)

4 MS. HALVERSON: Sorry. I'm not hearing
5 you, Everall.

6 A PARTICIPANT: The lead sometimes they
7 say, doesn't it come in paints? Like the old
8 paints?

9 MS. HALVERSON: Pencils?

10 A PARTICIPANT: The (inaudible) painted
11 like 50 years ago or before the --

12 MS. HALVERSON: (Interposing) Lead
13 pencils? Okay.

14 A PARTICIPANT: Lead in the water.

15 MS. HALVERSON: Lead in the water?

16 A PARTICIPANT: Because of the pipes.
17 Because of the pipes that lead from the city into
18 your house. Now, you may have new carpet pipes
19 (sic) put in, but you have pipes that belong to
20 the city and connect. So it's still coming
21 through that.

22 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

1 A PARTICIPANT: It can also come from
2 paint cans.

3 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

4 MS. HALVERSON: All right.

5 A PARTICIPANT: That kind of thing.

6 A PARTICIPANT: And also, it comes --
7 also, if it's painted, you know, they say you
8 shouldn't ingest it. But no, it's in the dust
9 that comes off the -- you know, in the
10 (inaudible) that is airborne. So, you're
11 inhaling it.

12 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. How about
13 pesticides? Where would you be likely to get
14 that? From air, water, food?

15 A PARTICIPANT: Fruits and vegetables.

16 MS. HALVERSON: Fruits and vegetables?
17 Okay.

18 A PARTICIPANT: All three.

19 MS. HALVERSON: All three, you said,
20 Luis?

21 A PARTICIPANT: I would think so.

22 A PARTICIPANT: That's right.

1 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

2 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

3 A PARTICIPANT: Probably more in our
4 area. Maybe the fruit. Versus cause I don't see
5 any fruit, you know, farms around our area that
6 have drifting pesticides (sic). But definitely
7 through the fruit, if not in the air.

8 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

9 A PARTICIPANT: According to where we
10 live.

11 MS. HALVERSON: How about mercury?
12 Where would that come from?

13 A PARTICIPANT: I would assume maybe
14 water. Do we have some type of a -- I know in
15 different parts of the Americas, like from where
16 I come from, we have that problem in the water,
17 because of mining.

18 MS. HALVERSON: Ah, okay.

19 A PARTICIPANT: I'm not sure in North
20 America where that would be.

21 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

22 A PARTICIPANT: But I would assume

1 water.

2 MS. HALVERSON: All right. Any other?

3 A PARTICIPANT: We get that in fish.

4 MS. HALVERSON: How is that, Gary?

5 A PARTICIPANT: I don't know. But
6 they -- somehow, the fish ingest it, and it --
7 from what I remember reading about it, it kind of
8 accumulates in the fish.

9 A PARTICIPANT: I would think industry
10 dumping.

11 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

12 A PARTICIPANT: Right.

13 A PARTICIPANT: Right.

14 A PARTICIPANT: They throw a lot of
15 things in the food now that are really dangerous
16 for you. I once got Hollywood bread, and when my
17 sister -- she's really into this -- was looking
18 at it. We found out that the reason it was diet
19 bread was because it was made with sawdust.

20 A PARTICIPANT: Oh yeah?

21 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah. Our (inaudible)
22 was sawdust.

1 A PARTICIPANT: Wow.

2 A PARTICIPANT: That's interesting.

3 MS. HALVERSON: What are the risks that
4 are associated with these kinds of contaminants?

5 A PARTICIPANT: Cancer.

6 MS. HALVERSON: Cancer? With all of
7 them, or --

8 A PARTICIPANT: I think with
9 pesticides.

10 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

11 A PARTICIPANT: I know they found
12 aluminum in people with Alzheimer's.

13 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

14 A PARTICIPANT: And also with
15 (inaudible).

16 MS. HALVERSON: Also with what?

17 A PARTICIPANT: Also with mercury. I
18 think that can distribute to Alzheimer's (sic).

19 MS. HALVERSON: To mercury?

20 A PARTICIPANT: I think I got --

21 MS. HALVERSON: Contributes to
22 Alzheimer's?

1 A PARTICIPANT: I think I read that
2 somewhere.

3 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Everall?

4 A PARTICIPANT: You know what bothers
5 me most?

6 MS. HALVERSON: What?

7 A PARTICIPANT: Sometimes I wonder what
8 it is, see. Because every day, you end up with
9 something new. Every day, one worries such
10 (inaudible) so many different things that causes
11 cancer, that sometimes it scares me to death.
12 You know? So, it's really difficult
13 (inaudible) -- especially with the things we eat
14 and drink. I'm scared to death.

15 A PARTICIPANT: The food can also
16 affect heart disease.

17 MS. HALVERSON: What can?

18 A PARTICIPANT: The food we eat.

19 MS. HALVERSON: The food?

20 A PARTICIPANT: Like the contaminants
21 can affect heart disease.

22 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Are you doing

1 anything in particular now, to protect yourself
2 from these kinds of environmental contaminants?

3 A PARTICIPANT: No. I use -- for
4 water, I use a filter at home. And I also don't
5 buy -- it's a brand of bottled water called
6 Crystal Clear. I heard they were using some type
7 of cyanide as part of clearing it -- cleaning it
8 or something. So, you know, with kids I don't
9 want that. So, that's about it. I buy the
10 bottled water. I mean, the --

11 MS. HALVERSON: Use a filter.

12 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah, thank you.

13 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Jay, how about
14 you?

15 A PARTICIPANT: I use a Brita filter,
16 mainly for taste though. I'm used to drinking
17 well water.

18 A PARTICIPANT: We don't use anything.

19 MS. HALVERSON: All right.

20 A PARTICIPANT: I don't -- I remember
21 in (inaudible), my dentist, who told us that a
22 lot of the kids today are getting more cavities

1 than we used to.

2 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

3 A PARTICIPANT: Because of the bottled
4 water.

5 MS. HALVERSON: Really?

6 A PARTICIPANT: It's not fluoridated.

7 A PARTICIPANT: It isn't?

8 MS. HALVERSON: Hmm.

9 A PARTICIPANT: Well, normally I boil
10 my water for at least about five minutes before
11 drinking it.

12 MS. HALVERSON: Boil it?

13 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

14 MS. HALVERSON: Hmmm.

15 A PARTICIPANT: I usually does that
16 (sic).

17 A PARTICIPANT: I can --

18 MS. HALVERSON: What -- yeah?

19 A PARTICIPANT: I've been using the
20 Fit, which is made for you know, washing your
21 fruits and vegetables to get off -- it's supposed
22 to get rid of more pesticides.

1 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

2 A PARTICIPANT: That leaves a taste on
3 it, too. I bought it, and I sprayed it on
4 grapes. Because my sister says grapes have
5 more -- there's a book, and it says what you
6 shouldn't eat.

7 A PARTICIPANT: What's the name of it?

8 A PARTICIPANT: Fit.

9 A PARTICIPANT: F-i-t.

10 A PARTICIPANT: Fit. F-i-t. It's a
11 book, and it says the things that you definitely
12 shouldn't eat is red. And grapes is one, because
13 it says it has more pesticides on it than
14 anything else.

15 MS. HALVERSON: What kinds of
16 precautions do you think that the industry and
17 government should be taking to reduce the risk of
18 consumer exposure to these kinds of contaminants?
19 Anything they should be doing?

20 A PARTICIPANT: I guess I would assume
21 to make this information simple and easy to find.
22 One: Not to have to go to the library or watch

1 "20/20" to find out where to (inaudible) --
2 Somehow, without taking away from the sale of the
3 food itself, make it easy for somebody to find
4 out this information that's right out there,
5 before you buy products.

6 I'm not sure if they would want to do
7 that, because they might not sell anything,
8 but --

9 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

10 A PARTICIPANT: I think the products
11 should be labeled more. You know? Sometimes you
12 don't even know what's in it. What's in
13 anything, unless -- it should be on the can or
14 labeled so that you can understand exactly what
15 it is.

16 MS. HALVERSON: Uh huh. Okay. Let's
17 talk specifically about fish and seafood, and
18 that kind of thing. How many of you do eat fish
19 or seafood as a regular part of your diet?

20 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

21 A PARTICIPANT: I do.

22 MS. HALVERSON: I see everybody except

1 Wanda. Okay. All right. What kinds of seafood
2 do you eat, generally?

3 A PARTICIPANT: Everything.

4 MS. HALVERSON: Everything?

5 A PARTICIPANT: That's right. Crabs,
6 shellfish.

7 A PARTICIPANT: Shellfish, crabs, fish.

8 MS. HALVERSON: Everall?

9 A PARTICIPANT: I eat more fish and
10 shrimps (sic). That's about it.

11 MS. HALVERSON: Fish and shrimp? Okay.
12 Henrietta?

13 A PARTICIPANT: We eat mainly trout.
14 That's the only kind of fish we really like, and
15 crabs. And that's it.

16 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Tania?

17 A PARTICIPANT: Okay. We usually eat
18 salmon, tuna, crabs and scallops. And I don't
19 eat oysters unless they're fried. I mean, I
20 don't eat them raw. I don't eat any raw fish.

21 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

22 A PARTICIPANT: It has to be cooked.

1 So, just about anything, except catfish. I don't
2 like that.

3 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Linda?

4 A PARTICIPANT: Salmon, cod, tuna.
5 Those are the ones we eat regularly.

6 MS. HALVERSON: And Gary, how about
7 you?

8 A PARTICIPANT: We eat everything.
9 Shellfish, oysters (inaudible) that I -- mussels.
10 Trout and crabs.

11 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. All right. What
12 are the advantages of eating fish?

13 A PARTICIPANT: I've heard that it's
14 brain food.

15 A PARTICIPANT: I was just gonna say.

16 A PARTICIPANT: It's no -- from what I
17 know --

18 A PARTICIPANT: Low cholesterol.

19 A PARTICIPANT: -- yeah, low
20 cholesterol, low fat. I understand that the fat
21 of fish is not as bad as like animal fat. So I
22 hear. I haven't investigated it.

1 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

2 A PARTICIPANT: Fish is higher in omega
3 three fatty acids, which is something that gets
4 destroyed in a lot of our foods.

5 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

6 A PARTICIPANT: Well, I don't look at
7 the fat count or the caloric count. I just eat
8 it because I like the way it tastes.

9 MS. HALVERSON: About how often do you
10 eat fish?

11 A PARTICIPANT: Every week, for me.

12 A PARTICIPANT: Once a week.

13 A PARTICIPANT: At least once a week.

14 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah, me too.

15 (Simultaneous discussion)

16 MS. HALVERSON: At least once a week?

17 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

18 A PARTICIPANT: Two or three times a
19 week. Wow. And Wanda, never.

20 A PARTICIPANT: I eat tuna fish.

21 MS. HALVERSON: Oh, okay.

22 A PARTICIPANT: I eat tuna fish.

1 MS. HALVERSON: Out of a can? That
2 kind?

3 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

4 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. And about how
5 often do you eat that?

6 A PARTICIPANT: Two or three times a
7 week.

8 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. All right. What
9 are the disadvantages of eating fish?

10 A PARTICIPANT: You could die from food
11 poisoning. No, I mean, I enjoy cooked fish as
12 well as raw fish. Like Japanese cuisine?

13 MS. HALVERSON: Uh huh.

14 A PARTICIPANT: Everything they cook --
15 you know, they whip up raw, I eat it.

16 A PARTICIPANT: Sushi?

17 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah, sushi. So, I
18 worry about getting like cholera or pfisteria,
19 like we talked about.

20 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Anyone else?

21 A PARTICIPANT: It's difficult to keep,
22 isn't it? You can only keep it for a certain

1 amount of time?

2 A PARTICIPANT: What, fish?

3 A PARTICIPANT: Or can you freeze it?

4 A PARTICIPANT: Freeze it.

5 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah, put it in the
6 freezer.

7 A PARTICIPANT: You can freeze it. Uh
8 huh.

9 MS. HALVERSON: When you think about
10 fish, Gary had mentioned mercury earlier. What
11 is the concern with mercury?

12 A PARTICIPANT: I remember reading a
13 few years ago that (inaudible) had found some
14 fish that had some mercury. A mercury scare in
15 fish. I haven't read about it recently.

16 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. And how would
17 you be exposed to mercury, then?

18 A PARTICIPANT: Well, it's in the fish.

19 MS. HALVERSON: So by eating it?

20 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

21 MS. HALVERSON: You would be exposed to
22 it?

1 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah. How else?

2 MS. HALVERSON: Smelling it? I don't
3 know. How does it compare to pesticides, for
4 example? Do you think mercury is more of a
5 concern to someone, or pesticides on your fruits
6 and vegetables or --

7 A PARTICIPANT: Definitely. I think
8 mercury is a very volatile substance. Very toxic
9 substance, whether it's smelled and absorbed into
10 your skin. Deadly thing.

11 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. And have you
12 heard this, what Gary had said about mercury
13 being in fish and all?

14 A PARTICIPANT: Right. I never knew
15 about it here in North America, because I know
16 in Central America where they have mining, they
17 use mercury to mine gold. And the mercury grows
18 in the water to fish. Being in there -- rather
19 than send out to the consumer, or they absorb it
20 in their bodies. We eat it. We get the
21 mercury. Like a third party, we get it through
22 the fish.

1 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

2 A PARTICIPANT: That's all I have
3 heard.

4 MS. HALVERSON: And what have you
5 heard are the side effects of the mercury then?
6 I mean, what would be the bad thing that
7 would --

8 A PARTICIPANT: (Interposing) Always
9 I heard is brain damage and/or death (sic). But
10 I would question at what point -- what age you
11 are. I think young children are more --

12 A PARTICIPANT: They're liable to get
13 it?

14 A PARTICIPANT: Right. You would --
15 able to get like brain damage. I think it's
16 even at an early age. I'm not sure about
17 adults. I'm not sure what kind of symptoms or
18 problems they would get.

19 A PARTICIPANT: Mercury is actually
20 cumulative. It stays in your body. I mean,
21 unlike a pesticide where you can get sick, and
22 you know, if you don't have it enough, you're

1 fine the next day. But I think mercury stays in
2 your body and it accumulates.

3 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

4 A PARTICIPANT: And I feel it affects
5 another organ besides the brain. I forget what
6 it is. I think it's the liver, or it could be
7 the kidney.

8 (Simultaneous discussion)

9 MS. HALVERSON: Now, Jay had just said
10 earlier that he thought fish was brain food.
11 And then here Luis is saying, "Hey, but mercury
12 can cause brain damage."

13 A PARTICIPANT: Right.

14 MS. HALVERSON: So, how do you balance
15 those things out in your fish?

16 A PARTICIPANT: You pray over it.
17 That's all you can do.

18 A PARTICIPANT: You don't worry about
19 it.

20 MS. HALVERSON: You don't worry about
21 it?

22 A PARTICIPANT: Don't worry about it.

1 MS. HALVERSON: Why not?

2 A PARTICIPANT: I kind of assume that
3 fish is not -- whatever you buy is not
4 contaminated.

5 A PARTICIPANT: I don't have that --
6 that it's not contaminated. Because I don't
7 think that everything is contaminant free. It's
8 like pesticides. You're going to have to wash
9 your vegetables and everything.

10 And I mean, I believe you have to take
11 a certain responsibility to keep things clean
12 and fresh for your family. And also, you kind
13 of look at the meat -- I mean, the fish, to see
14 that it's fresh. You know. You know what to
15 look for in a fish. And as I said again, you
16 pray over it. That's all you can do.

17 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. I would like to
18 pass out some information. And these are just
19 some examples of a sentence or two, kind of
20 explaining mercury. Whoops. You need the whole
21 pile. Sorry. You have examples -- sorry.
22 You're being too helpful. (inaudible) that.

1 No, you just gave me -- hold on. Three, four,
2 five. Okay. I think you each have a pile there.
3 Thanks. No, you need this whole thing. One,
4 two, three, four, five. Okay? Okay.

5 If you look at example number one, it
6 says: Warning: Mercury in fish may harm the
7 babies of pregnant and nursing mothers and young
8 children. When you read that, what does that
9 say to you?

10 A PARTICIPANT: Avoid mercury.

11 MS. HALVERSON: For who?

12 A PARTICIPANT: For young children.

13 A PARTICIPANT: Pregnant mothers.

14 A PARTICIPANT: And pregnant mothers.

15 MS. HALVERSON: For young children and
16 pregnant mothers?

17 A PARTICIPANT: Yes.

18 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

19 A PARTICIPANT: To me, I wouldn't buy
20 it.

21 MS. HALVERSON: Why is that?

22 A PARTICIPANT: Well --

1 MS. HALVERSON: Tania's pregnant. No.

2 A PARTICIPANT: No, that -- because
3 you know, if you had this in your house, you
4 know, we all have children. Or you never know
5 who's going to come over. They're going to go
6 in your refrigerator. And they have this.
7 Well, I have young children and grandchildren.
8 So, they're going to come over and eat it. I
9 would never bring that in my house, because I
10 would never know who would ingest it.

11 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. So you're
12 saying you would never bring fish, period, into
13 your house?

14 A PARTICIPANT: No, no, no.

15 MS. HALVERSON: Oh.

16 A PARTICIPANT: Whatever says -- is
17 this a certain type of fish, or --

18 A PARTICIPANT: (Interposing) Yeah,
19 that's it.

20 A PARTICIPANT: If this statement is
21 true. Do you understand what I'm saying? If
22 this statement is true, then I would never bring

1 it into my house, whatever this --

2 MS. HALVERSON: Actually, I'm going to
3 pass out some more information a little bit
4 later that tells you exactly which fish and that
5 kind of thing. So --

6 (Simultaneous discussion)

7 MS. HALVERSON: It's not necessarily
8 all fish.

9 A PARTICIPANT: Right.

10 A PARTICIPANT: Okay. That's good to
11 see. Okay.

12 A PARTICIPANT: But is it -- how many
13 people -- it says don't smoke, it causes cancer.
14 And how many people smoke? Because they don't
15 pay attention to it.

16 MS. HALVERSON: No, it's not on here.
17 She's saying the whole statement about smoking
18 causes cancer. But how many people keep on
19 smoking? If you had a -- someone in your family
20 who was pregnant, how do you think they would
21 react to this kind of a warning?

22 A PARTICIPANT: I think they would be

1 reluctant to eat fish.

2 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah. I don't think
3 they would eat it.

4 MS. HALVERSON: Any kind, or just the
5 ones that were --

6 A PARTICIPANT: (Interposing) That
7 would be -- just might be cautious for the time
8 that they're pregnant or after the children grow
9 up.

10 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Does this do a
11 good job for you of describing the hazard for
12 mercury?

13 A PARTICIPANT: It's not very
14 specific.

15 A PARTICIPANT: No. It's not specific
16 enough for me.

17 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Let's look at
18 example number two. It says small amounts of
19 mercury can harm a brain starting to form or
20 grow. That's why unborn and nursing babies, and
21 young children are at risk. Too much mercury
22 can affect behavior and learning. Mercury can

1 harm older children and adults, but it takes
2 larger amounts. It may cause numbness in hands
3 or feet or changes in vision. Yeah, Jay?

4 A PARTICIPANT: It's still -- I mean,
5 from the first one, you can gather that
6 mercury's bad. This is just being more specific
7 about how bad it is and what it can do.

8 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

9 A PARTICIPANT: But you still don't
10 know where you're getting it from.

11 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Anyone else?

12 A PARTICIPANT: I agree.

13 A PARTICIPANT: I agree, too.

14 (Simultaneous discussion)

15 MS. HALVERSON: Sorry?

16 A PARTICIPANT: That's why they
17 switched alcohol and (inaudible).

18 MS. HALVERSON: Ahh, okay. All right.
19 Do you find anything about this to be confusing?
20 The way they've written this?

21 A PARTICIPANT: I don't know about the
22 (inaudible) --

1 A PARTICIPANT: (Interposing) I don't
2 care for the last line. It may cause numbness
3 in hands and feet and changes in vision. I
4 mean, a lot of other things can cause that too,
5 and I'm not really sure why that's thrown in
6 there.

7 MS. HALVERSON: So reading this, who
8 does it say to you is affected by mercury?

9 A PARTICIPANT: Everybody.

10 A PARTICIPANT: Everyone.

11 A PARTICIPANT: Everybody.

12 A PARTICIPANT: Oh yeah.

13 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. And do you
14 think that's the message they're trying to get
15 across?

16 A PARTICIPANT: I think so.

17 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. All right.
18 Let's look at example number three. Let's look
19 at example three. It says: A recent report
20 from the National Academy of Sciences looked at
21 the evidence that mercury can cause learning
22 problems in children exposed to high levels of

1 mercury in the mother's diet during pregnancy.

2 Since fish are the main source of
3 dietary exposure to mercury, the EPA and FDA are
4 providing guidelines about the kinds and amounts
5 of fish that pregnant and nursing mothers, and
6 women of childbearing age can safely eat without
7 exposing their children to any significant risk
8 of harm. What's the main message of this
9 statement?

10 A PARTICIPANT: Now the government
11 says don't eat it.

12 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

13 A PARTICIPANT: But it still hasn't
14 gotten to the point where --

15 A PARTICIPANT: (Interposing) Well, I
16 have a question. How are they going to test
17 this?

18 MS. HALVERSON: How are they going to
19 test what?

20 A PARTICIPANT: How are they going to
21 test? It says the FDA are providing guidelines
22 about the kinds of -- so how -- don't they have

1 to take samples of people who have eaten this
2 who are going to be the subjects?

3 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

4 A PARTICIPANT: How are they going to
5 find it out?

6 MS. HALVERSON: All right. Good
7 question. Any other questions it raises for
8 you?

9 A PARTICIPANT: No.

10 MS. HALVERSON: Linda, anything?

11 A PARTICIPANT: Uh uh.

12 MS. HALVERSON: Is there any important
13 information that's missing from this
14 introduction?

15 A PARTICIPANT: Which fish?

16 A PARTICIPANT: Right.

17 MS. HALVERSON: Which fish?

18 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

19 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

20 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah, which fish?

21 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Let's look at
22 example four. Seafood is an important and

1 growing part of the American diet. Seafood
2 provides significant nutritional benefits to
3 consumers. Some seafood, particularly large
4 ocean fish and fresh water fish caught in
5 contaminated waters, may contain levels of
6 mercury that pose a risk to babies of pregnant
7 and nursing mothers.

8 The FDA and the EPA advise women who
9 are pregnant or who may become pregnant within
10 six months, or are nursing mothers, to follow
11 the safe eating guidelines outlined below. This
12 advice should not be taken as a need to abstain
13 from consuming seafood, except as indicated.
14 What does that example say to you?

15 A PARTICIPANT: It says basically all
16 fish. Salt water and fresh water. And that's
17 pretty much all fish.

18 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

19 A PARTICIPANT: But it's more limited
20 in who it's addressing. Only pregnant women or
21 women becoming pregnant.

22 A PARTICIPANT: Does the --

1 A PARTICIPANT: (Interposing) Or
2 nursing mothers.

3 A PARTICIPANT: Sorry. Does the --
4 may become pregnant within six months. Does
5 that -- is that supposed to say that it leaves
6 your system within six months?

7 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. That's a good
8 question, too. Any other questions it raises
9 for you?

10 A PARTICIPANT: So, if you get
11 pregnant within the next week after you've eaten
12 this fish, some (indiscernible) do.

13 A PARTICIPANT: That's right.

14 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

15 A PARTICIPANT: It kind of says some
16 seafood. Another one says may contain levels of
17 mercury. I mean, you can get that kind of
18 warning on just about everything. So, this -- I
19 don't know. This wouldn't bother me.

20 A PARTICIPANT: Well, they can't say
21 all, because there goes the seafood industry.

22 A PARTICIPANT: Right.

1 MS. HALVERSON: That's an interesting
2 question. Do you think that they're -- that
3 they're implying that it is all?

4 A PARTICIPANT: They can't say that,
5 though.

6 MS. HALVERSON: But do you think that
7 is what they're implying or not?

8 (No response heard.)

9 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. So as far as
10 you're concerned, there are some fish that do
11 have and some that don't?

12 A PARTICIPANT: Uh huh.

13 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

14 A PARTICIPANT: Then it says, caught
15 in contaminated waters. Where are the
16 contaminated waters?

17 A PARTICIPANT: Right here, but not
18 right here.

19 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Let's look at
20 example number five. Fish is an important
21 source of high quality protein, vitamins and
22 minerals. Certain fish species, however, are

1 known to contain higher levels of mercury than
2 others do. Pregnant women and women of
3 childbearing age are advised to eat a variety of
4 seafood, and to avoid eating those species that
5 may contain higher levels of mercury. These
6 species are listed below.

7 A PARTICIPANT: Oh yeah?

8 MS. HALVERSON: They will be listed
9 below, Everall. I promise.

10 A PARTICIPANT: You just can't be
11 sure. They might -- I mean, how do they know
12 that (inaudible) is that bad?

13 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. I'm not sure I
14 understood your question.

15 A PARTICIPANT: If I was a pregnant
16 woman, I think I would stay with small fish.

17 MS. HALVERSON: And why would that be?

18 A PARTICIPANT: Because I would be
19 scared that they might not be so sure of
20 themselves about the fish that can (inaudible)
21 mercury.

22 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

1 A PARTICIPANT: Well, doesn't this say
2 that basically all fish? I mean, that's what
3 I'm getting. It says certain fish species are
4 known to contain higher levels than others. So,
5 unless the other levels are zero, it means that
6 all fish contain the mercury.

7 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

8 A PARTICIPANT: That's just what I'm
9 reading into it.

10 MS. HALVERSON: All right. Any other
11 interpretations of what they're trying to say
12 here?

13 (No response heard.)

14 MS. HALVERSON: Do you find anything
15 about this particular one to be confusing?

16 A PARTICIPANT: It's stronger than the
17 others.

18 A PARTICIPANT: Uh huh.

19 MS. HALVERSON: It's stronger than the
20 others?

21 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

22 MS. HALVERSON: In what way?

1 A PARTICIPANT: Well, it's a different
2 statement, and it advises to avoid eating
3 certain types of fish. And the others were
4 guidelines and things like that.

5 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

6 A PARTICIPANT: So, I guess --

7 MS. HALVERSON: Any other reactions to
8 this particular statement?

9 A PARTICIPANT: No.

10 A PARTICIPANT: No.

11 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

12 A PARTICIPANT: I just want to ask.

13 MS. HALVERSON: Yeah.

14 A PARTICIPANT: I have a friend that's
15 pregnant. Is this true about mercury in fish?

16 MS. HALVERSON: As I understand it, it
17 is. And that's what they're trying to figure
18 out, how to get that information out to people.
19 So, what I'm going to do is pass out another set
20 of information. And you know, we had these
21 species are listed below, and as indicated.
22 This is the as indicated. So, it's four

1 separate kinds of information. And we'll look
2 at these one at a time.

3 (Discussion held off the record.)

4 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. This first one
5 is -- again, these are all examples of specific
6 advice that might be provided to consumers,
7 particularly pregnant women and women who might
8 become pregnant about what they can do to reduce
9 the risk of exposure to mercury.

10 So, I'd like to look at them one at a
11 time and discuss each of them after we've read
12 them. The first one, of course, says: FDA
13 warns consumers who are pregnant, thinking of
14 becoming pregnant in the next six months,
15 nursing a baby - choose the fish you eat
16 carefully.

17 Four types of fish contain high levels
18 of methyl mercury residues that can harm
19 developing fetuses and nursing babies. The
20 methyl mercury can accumulate in your body, so
21 it is important to limit the amount you eat.
22 And then it says, be aware of these four fish:

1 Mackerel, shark, swordfish, tuna. Either fresh
2 or frozen or canned.

3 And by eliminating them, for the
4 mackerel, shark and swordfish, it says do not
5 eat. Tuna, fresh or frozen, three times a
6 month. Canned: Four three ounce servings a
7 week. All other types of fish are safe to eat,
8 such as shellfish, halibut or processed fish,
9 such as fish sticks.

10 What would you describe as the main
11 message of this particular consumer advice?

12 A PARTICIPANT: Warning pregnant women
13 to stay away from these fish.

14 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

15 A PARTICIPANT: Not really addressing
16 anybody else except pregnant women.

17 A PARTICIPANT: It's pretty concise.
18 It's laid out on the table.

19 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

20 A PARTICIPANT: Easy to read.

21 MS. HALVERSON: Maria?

22 A PARTICIPANT: It's a warning to

1 them, and they're hoping that the consumers will
2 follow the warning.

3 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. And by
4 consumers, you mean who?

5 A PARTICIPANT: The people that buy
6 the food.

7 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

8 A PARTICIPANT: Purchase the food.

9 MS. HALVERSON: All right. What is
10 the most important point that you take from this
11 particular consumer advice? The most important
12 thing on this page to you.

13 A PARTICIPANT: (indiscernible) fish.
14 (Simultaneous discussion)

15 A PARTICIPANT: (inaudible) fish that
16 says do not eat.

17 MS. HALVERSON: The statements about
18 do not eat?

19 A PARTICIPANT: Uh huh.

20 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. All right.
21 Let's say you saw this, and you have a friend
22 who's pregnant. Wanda. What kind of advice

1 would you give to this friend, based on the
2 information that you have?

3 A PARTICIPANT: Warn them not to eat
4 fish.

5 MS. HALVERSON: Not to eat any fish?

6 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

7 MS. HALVERSON: Why is that?

8 A PARTICIPANT: Because I guess I'm
9 just thinking that if they stated these have
10 less. But I just went on dialysis, and I'm
11 finding out that -- you know, I'm wondering
12 now -- you probably scared me, because maybe I
13 shouldn't even be eating tuna fish. But I've
14 really got -- I've got to watch now what I put
15 in the body.

16 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

17 A PARTICIPANT: And this is sort of
18 like really scaring me, because I believe it.

19 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. So, you eat
20 tuna fish. And it says for pregnant or nursing
21 mothers, that they can have four servings a
22 week.

1 A PARTICIPANT: Uh huh.

2 MS. HALVERSON: And you're not a
3 pregnant or nursing mother, but you're still
4 thinking maybe you shouldn't?

5 A PARTICIPANT: No, because I'm
6 thinking about the dialysis. That I have to be
7 really careful what I eat.

8 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

9 A PARTICIPANT: What can hurt you
10 know, the kidneys and more. And I guess that's
11 just scaring me. That if it's bad for a nursing
12 mother, you know, maybe it's bad for someone
13 risky.

14 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

15 (Simultaneous discussion)

16 A PARTICIPANT: Well, to me, when it
17 says mercury can accumulate in your body, to me
18 that stands out. I don't care if you're nursing
19 or you're pregnant or whatever. It's still in
20 your body. And everyone's body cannot tolerate
21 the same thing as (inaudible) -- she may be able
22 to tolerate more mercury than I can, and it

1 won't affect her. But then you know, another
2 person, maybe that would be affected a little
3 bit. And I don't know (inaudible) affect the
4 person.

5 A PARTICIPANT: I was reading an
6 article a couple of weeks ago, especially the
7 Adventist religion?

8 MS. HALVERSON: Uh huh.

9 A PARTICIPANT: They do not eat fish
10 without scale (sic). All the fish they eat are
11 scaled. They're not scaled, they're not --

12 MS. HALVERSON: (Interposing) Scaled?
13 Yeah? Uh huh.

14 A PARTICIPANT: So right away, I want
15 to know -- I was trying to find out why it is
16 they don't eat fish without scale (sic). Well,
17 I mean, that help me. Maybe give me a
18 guideline. Like (inaudible) -- I know my father
19 loves scaled swordfish. (inaudible) scale on
20 all these fish.

21 A PARTICIPANT: Oh, they don't? Ahhh.

22 A PARTICIPANT: Tuna fish don't have

1 scale, and they just -- so, I tend (inaudible).

2 A PARTICIPANT: That's interesting.

3 MS. HALVERSON: How would the rest of
4 you respond if you see this? Again, it says:
5 FDA warns consumers who are pregnant, thinking
6 of becoming pregnant in the next six months,
7 nursing a baby. Luis, you don't look pregnant
8 to me.

9 A PARTICIPANT: I don't think so.

10 MS. HALVERSON: How do you respond to
11 this information?

12 A PARTICIPANT: Well, you said -- I
13 thought you said methyl mercury could accumulate
14 in everybody. And it seems that they're warning
15 only pregnant women. Everybody who eats fish
16 should be warned, and at what doses. Like
17 eating these four particular fish, besides the
18 tuna one, they show how much you have there.

19 But for like an adult male, what does
20 that pose to us? We're not pregnant women, so
21 this chart doesn't apply to me, really. What
22 would apply to me? What would get my attention

1 and make me aware of it and watch what I eat, as
2 far as fish goes.

3 A PARTICIPANT: Jay?

4 A PARTICIPANT: I agree. I'd go out
5 and eat swordfish the next day.

6 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Anyone else
7 over here?

8 A PARTICIPANT: It wouldn't affect me.

9 MS. HALVERSON: It wouldn't affect you
10 at all?

11 (No response heard.)

12 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. And why would
13 that be, Gary?

14 A PARTICIPANT: He don't eat fish.

15 A PARTICIPANT: Even though the
16 symptoms -- I'm starting to look pregnant. I
17 don't think so. It's not directed towards me.

18 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Let's look to
19 the next one. It says: What kind of fish
20 should I eat? This is a little bit longer.
21 Women who are or may become pregnant within six
22 months, and nursing mothers, should consume

1 types of fish known to have low levels of
2 mercury. See table one. And should avoid fish
3 known to have high levels of mercury. See table
4 two.

5 The fish in table one can generally be
6 eaten a total of two to three times per week,
7 without concern for adverse affects from
8 mercury, with each meal size being six ounces of
9 cooked fish, or eight ounces of uncooked fish.
10 Breaded fish sticks, fish sandwiches and
11 imitation crab meat are generally made from
12 these fish, and so usually have low levels of
13 mercury.

14 And then here, they list all these in
15 table one, which are low levels of mercury. And
16 what fish should I avoid? The fish in table two
17 are known to have high levels of mercury and
18 should be avoided by women who are or who may
19 become pregnant within the next six months, and
20 nursing mothers.

21 And then table two are king mackerel,
22 sharks, swordfish and tile fish. What about

1 tuna? For canned tuna, which is the most
2 frequently consumed purchased fish, a total of
3 two to three, three ounce cans may be consumed
4 per week. What about fish not on the list? For
5 all other fish and seafood not mentioned,
6 consumption should be limited to one meal per
7 week, six ounces cooked, eight ounces uncooked,
8 by women who are or may become pregnant within
9 six months, and nursing mothers.

10 This applies to fish bought in a store
11 or restaurant and to all fish -- fresh water
12 fish caught by you or your family in local
13 waters. Okay. What would you describe as the
14 main message of this consumer advice?

15 A PARTICIPANT: He's giving you
16 quantities of the fish that are preferable to
17 eat, that are supposedly low mercury, and that's
18 what I'm thinking mainly about it.

19 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

20 (Simultaneous discussion)

21 A PARTICIPANT: Sorry, go ahead.

22 A PARTICIPANT: It's (inaudible) more

1 specific. Because I know in the first sheet, it
2 said mackerel. So, that means for the whole
3 mackerel column. But here, it says mackerel
4 Atlantic is all right, but the king mackerel you
5 should avoid.

6 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

7 A PARTICIPANT: So, it's --
8 (inaudible) more specific about which fish.

9 A PARTICIPANT: It's also a broader
10 warning. The first one said, other types of
11 fish are safe to eat, and this one doesn't say
12 that. This one says -- puts a limit on it, for
13 whatever it is.

14 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

15 A PARTICIPANT: I'm wondering if fresh
16 water fish are at a higher risk, which would
17 mean that they -- you know, Chesapeake Bay being
18 one of the biggest estuaries of the world, and
19 we get a lot of fish partly from the Chesapeake
20 Bay, they have on the list of fish to eat that
21 are low in mercury, and they say white fish,
22 which is on the good list. And they have this

1 Atlantic mackerel, versus at the bottom, they
2 have king mackerel, which would make me assume
3 it's a fresh water fish versus the Atlantic
4 mackerel.

5 But in contradiction, where they have
6 tile fish, they have ocean white fish. So, I'm
7 kind of confused about that. I'm just trying to
8 ease my mind to figure out which ones are
9 possibly fresh water fish concerning me, because
10 you know, I'm a Maryland resident, and we really
11 don't (inaudible) --

12 MS. HALVERSON: (Interposing) Do you
13 have any preference for something in a
14 relatively small chart, versus a more detailed
15 chart? Which approach works better for you?

16 A PARTICIPANT: This one.

17 MS. HALVERSON: The first one, Gary?
18 Why is that?

19 A PARTICIPANT: Well, king mackerel is
20 not a fresh water fish.

21 (Simultaneous discussion)

22 MS. HALVERSON: You don't think most

1 would read the second one. Okay. What is that,
2 Everall?

3 A PARTICIPANT: No, I was just saying
4 that king mackerel, I don't think is fresh water
5 fish.

6 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

7 A PARTICIPANT: This one is easier to
8 read, because it's spread out. And this looks
9 sort of like it's --

10 (Simultaneous discussion)

11 A PARTICIPANT: This one?

12 A PARTICIPANT: No, this is easier to
13 read.

14 A PARTICIPANT: Oh, the other one than
15 the first one?

16 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

17 MS. HALVERSON: This was easier to
18 read, but I prefer to read the small print, and
19 I would like to get all the -- have all of the
20 information. I would read this.

21 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

22 A PARTICIPANT: I would guess the more

1 simple it is, the easier it is going to be to
2 read. If they just put a list of the ones to
3 stay away from, that would be versus every type
4 fish in -- they should just make a list on the
5 second page, the one that we're on right now.
6 They should just make that list according to all
7 the fish that you know, people consume in the
8 world.

9 I think that when it just gets down
10 to -- the specifics is better (sic). Because
11 you know, they could just list everything that's
12 okay to eat versus the ones to really stay away
13 from. I think the first one's better, because
14 they're giving you four examples of which ones
15 to stay away from, versus having to look up
16 which ones to like (sic), you know, and finding
17 out which one of them.

18 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Jay?

19 A PARTICIPANT: I guess it just
20 depends on what the goal is. Whether you want
21 to have it, you know, quick and easy, or you
22 want to say, you know, the difference -- what

1 types of mackerel or --

2 MS. HALVERSON: (Interposing) What do
3 you think the goal is? What are they trying to
4 do with this kind of information?

5 A PARTICIPANT: I think they're trying
6 to warn people.

7 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. And how can
8 they best do that? With a shorter avoid these,
9 or a longer more detailed explanation.

10 A PARTICIPANT: I think the more
11 detailed. I think they can take (inaudible)
12 details.

13 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

14 MS. HALVERSON: You like the more
15 detailed, Everall?

16 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

17 MS. HALVERSON: Why is that?

18 A PARTICIPANT: I'd just like to get
19 some more information. And I was just gonna
20 say, I know they should warn him -- give a clear
21 indication which fish is safer.

22 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

1 A PARTICIPANT: I think that if you're
2 gonna have this, say, in the fish section of the
3 store, people are going to be shopping. You
4 know, and yada yada yada. They're gonna want to
5 look at this, say, okay, I should avoid that.
6 Not avoid (inaudible) -- you know, I have to go
7 here. I have to do this there (sic). And
8 they're not gonna want to stop and read this
9 whole thing. So, if you want to really inform
10 people and just kind of put it up there real
11 short and sweet.

12 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Anyone else?

13 A PARTICIPANT: Well, it should
14 (inaudible) -- it depends on where you put it.

15 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

16 A PARTICIPANT: If it's in a food
17 magazine or some kind of --

18 A PARTICIPANT: Pregnancy magazine.

19 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah, that's good.

20 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

21 A PARTICIPANT: Or some kind of female
22 magazine.

1 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

2 A PARTICIPANT: Or something like
3 this -- you know, or it might be better. But
4 just like John said, in a store, everybody's got
5 their patience for about three seconds. And
6 something like this would be better.

7 A PARTICIPANT: I think they could,
8 though, just add a little bit like where -- on
9 the first one, where it says mackerel, why don't
10 they just be more specific and say "king
11 mackerel." Why don't they have the tile fish on
12 there? That wouldn't add you know, that much to
13 put one more.

14 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

15 A PARTICIPANT: You know, it would
16 make this one a little bit more specific.

17 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

18 A PARTICIPANT: Couldn't they put this
19 in the you know, obstetrician's office?

20 A PARTICIPANT: Uh huh.

21 MS. HALVERSON: You know, and point it
22 out. Because it's very important for mothers to

1 read this. You know, expecting mothers. They
2 need to know everything. Not just a little
3 chart, but in the supermarket yes. But if
4 they're going for information, prenatal care is
5 very important, so they need that. They need to
6 have everything.

7 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Let's look at
8 the third example. This says fish safe eating
9 guidelines. Fresh water farm raised catfish or
10 trout. There is no mercury concern for these
11 species. Ocean fish. Swordfish, shark, king
12 mackerel and tile fish. No meals for women who
13 are pregnant, women who may become pregnant
14 within six months, and nursing mothers.

15 American favorites: Canned tuna.
16 Three ounce serving. Up to four three ounce
17 servings per week for women who are pregnant,
18 women who may become pregnant in the next six
19 months, and nursing mothers. No limits for all
20 others as part of a balanced diet.

21 There are no limits for anyone as a
22 part of a balanced diet for the following top

1 species which make up the majority of the
2 seafood market: Canned salmon, shrimp, salmon,
3 pollack, catfish, cod, clams, flounder, scallops
4 and fish sticks. No one should eat lobster
5 tamale.

6 A PARTICIPANT: Wow.

7 (Simultaneous discussion)

8 A PARTICIPANT: What is that?

9 A PARTICIPANT: What is that? Right.

10 MS. HALVERSON: What is lobster
11 tamale?

12 A PARTICIPANT: Uh huh.

13 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

14 A PARTICIPANT: That's kind of out of
15 place in there.

16 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. How would you
17 describe the main message of this consumer
18 advice?

19 (Inaudible comments)

20 A PARTICIPANT: I think they're
21 telling -- I mean, they're basically like we
22 just heard, they're saying which ones are -- you

1 could eat without limit. And I don't have to
2 worry about running a risk of being contaminated
3 by mercury. But unless you really like these
4 ones only (sic), I think people who have other
5 fish preferences -- it wouldn't apply to them,
6 unless they really liked these fish only.

7 It doesn't list -- it's an interesting
8 piece of information to make you find out what
9 doesn't have mercury, but I'm pretty sure people
10 are going to have to change their whole fish
11 diet, because these ones (sic) don't have
12 mercury.

13 I think they're going to still be
14 interested in buying those other type fish that
15 run a risk, and they're not getting any
16 information about what risk they're running.
17 Well, like the last one did, this one doesn't.

18 MS. HALVERSON: What's the most
19 important information on this sheet?

20 A PARTICIPANT: It tells you what fish
21 has no mercury, which is good for me. And
22 although it's not in a column as such, you

1 really have to read it. And I don't think
2 anybody is going to go through that process just
3 to read down. But if there were some columns,
4 what to eat, you know, what not to eat -- but
5 the information is good now. But it's just the
6 way it's presented.

7 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Now Wanda, I'm
8 going to apply your tuna fish standard here.
9 When you read this, how does it make you feel
10 about eating canned tuna fish?

11 A PARTICIPANT: I think I'm still
12 scared to eat it.

13 MS. HALVERSON: You're still scared to
14 eat it?

15 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

16 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. What about
17 anyone else? How does the advice about tuna
18 affect you personally here?

19 A PARTICIPANT: It says no limits, so
20 I don't worry about it.

21 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah, it doesn't
22 bother me.

1 A PARTICIPANT: Eat all you want.

2 A PARTICIPANT: You figure four
3 servings for pregnant women, I mean, I wouldn't
4 eat anymore than that anyway.

5 A PARTICIPANT: That's a lot.

6 A PARTICIPANT: If it's safe for them,
7 then you know, okay.

8 A PARTICIPANT: That's a lot of tuna
9 fish.

10 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

11 A PARTICIPANT: Something doesn't like
12 that (inaudible) with how they have in bold
13 print: fresh water farm raised catfish or
14 trout. Then underneath it, they have a bold
15 print, ocean fish. From the very beginning of
16 the title, fish safe eating, it's -- it doesn't
17 say under the ocean fish -- it doesn't say these
18 are the ones that run the risk. I just noticed
19 that it has kind of (inaudible) --

20 (Simultaneous discussion)

21 A PARTICIPANT: Oh yeah, that's right.

22 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

1 A PARTICIPANT: They don't say these
2 run the risk. They just mention ocean fish. I
3 would think maybe all these fish, swordfish,
4 shark, king mackerel, are okay to eat, too, as
5 far as the ocean fish go. They don't list what
6 risks they run. I would think that those are
7 safe fish to eat.

8 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. So it isn't
9 real clear, the way it's laid out.

10 A PARTICIPANT: Right.

11 MS. HALVERSON: That there are --
12 okay.

13 A PARTICIPANT: This one actually
14 seems like a warning.

15 MS. HALVERSON: Uh huh. The first
16 one?

17 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

18 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

19 A PARTICIPANT: And this seems
20 (inaudible) story.

21 MS. HALVERSON: And this seems like
22 what?

1 A PARTICIPANT: A little story.

2 MS. HALVERSON: A little story. Okay.

3 Fish safe eating guidelines. All right?

4 A PARTICIPANT: It wouldn't come
5 across to me as a warning like this does.

6 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. So, the chart
7 format? Is that --

8 A PARTICIPANT: Well yeah, it stands
9 out.

10 A PARTICIPANT: It catches your
11 attention.

12 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Any other
13 comments on this one?

14 A PARTICIPANT: Well, our family is a
15 trout family, so this just --

16 (Tape change.)

17 A PARTICIPANT: (in progress) -- it's
18 safe to eat trout.

19 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Now, it says
20 fresh water farm raised catfish or trout. How
21 about trout that isn't farm raised? Where would
22 that fall?

1 (Simultaneous discussion)

2 A PARTICIPANT: I would have a
3 question there.

4 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. So, Henrietta,
5 how would you interpret that? Let's say your
6 husband goes out trout fishing.

7 A PARTICIPANT: Well, I would sort of
8 be skeptical as to whether or not the trout that
9 he catches is safe to eat.

10 MS. HALVERSON: Why is that?

11 A PARTICIPANT: Since it does say
12 fresh water farm raised.

13 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Any other
14 responses to this particular page?

15 (No response heard.)

16 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Let's move on
17 to the last one. This one has on one side, a
18 fish. And the safe eating guidelines. And
19 we'll just read through a couple of them. Fresh
20 water fish, brook trout and land locked salmon,
21 limit one meal per month for pregnant and
22 nursing women, women who may get pregnant and

1 children under eight.

2 A PARTICIPANT: Excuse me?

3 MS. HALVERSON: One meal per week for
4 all others. All the other fish species, limit
5 no meals for pregnant and nursing women, women
6 who may get pregnant and children under eight.
7 Two meals per month for all others. And so on.
8 Okay, what would you say is the major message of
9 this consumer advice?

10 A PARTICIPANT: Gives you some
11 guidelines of how often and how much you can eat
12 and for whom.

13 MS. HALVERSON: Tania.

14 A PARTICIPANT: (Laughter)

15 MS. HALVERSON: You're looking at
16 this, and --

17 A PARTICIPANT: I'm looking at it,
18 because it says like for swordfish and shark,
19 although I don't eat that, no meals for pregnant
20 women and two meals per month for all others.
21 And for children under eight. And I'm thinking
22 you know, my bank gets a lot of fish (sic). And

1 I'm thinking. Especially for the salmon.

2 Now, I don't know what land locked
3 salmon means, so -- and brook trout. I guess
4 that's where you catch it in a brook or
5 something. But I don't know what land locked
6 salmon is. And it says, and children under
7 eight, one meal per month. That's what my
8 concern is.

9 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

10 A PARTICIPANT: I'm thinking you know,
11 about the little ones.

12 A PARTICIPANT: I think this format --
13 and maybe this like saved it for one for the
14 last ones --

15 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

16 A PARTICIPANT: This format seems to
17 be easy on the eyes, appealing. But I would --
18 if I see this, I would just guess this is
19 something that a dietician told me or something,
20 and is suggesting. I don't see anything that
21 says: official report by FDA.

22 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

1 A PARTICIPANT: Suggesting that this
2 is a good guideline to follow because of a
3 methyl mercury contamination. That's what I'd
4 be hoping to see. If I just saw this the way it
5 is, I'd just guess it's like some kind of fish
6 dietician.

7 A PARTICIPANT: That's true, yeah.

8 A PARTICIPANT: Suggesting you know,
9 amounts of fish, and so on. And I'm still
10 like -- be wondering why they're saying no one
11 should eat lobster tamale. You don't even
12 (inaudible) show. I don't know what that's all
13 about.

14 A PARTICIPANT: This one doesn't say
15 anything about the mercury.

16 A PARTICIPANT: Right.

17 A PARTICIPANT: It doesn't say why.

18 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah, it says nothing
19 about mercury.

20 A PARTICIPANT: Exactly.

21 A PARTICIPANT: That should be
22 limited.

1 A PARTICIPANT: I would think is a
2 nutritional thing.

3 MS. HALVERSON: You would take it as a
4 nutritional thing?

5 A PARTICIPANT: As nutrition, yeah.

6 A PARTICIPANT: Right.

7 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

8 A PARTICIPANT: But other than that,
9 it tells you what -- you know, what your limits
10 are. But it doesn't say why. And that's what
11 you need to know. Because I would throw this in
12 the trash.

13 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

14 A PARTICIPANT: I was sort of
15 surprised to see that it says white tuna has
16 more mercury than regular.

17 (Simultaneous discussion)

18 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

19 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah, that's the only
20 part that says that.

21 A PARTICIPANT: My question too is,
22 can you combine these? Like how many meals,

1 total? You know, if I eat something one meal
2 per week, okay, I have that. Now, can I eat
3 this other fish two meals a month in addition to
4 the other one a week, or you know, what's the --
5 total amount?

6 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. When you look
7 at this chart, how do you think people would
8 understand and use this advice?

9 A PARTICIPANT: This chart by itself
10 with no explanation, you mean?

11 MS. HALVERSON: Let's say they had a
12 little explanation about the mercury.

13 A PARTICIPANT: It would be easier for
14 them to go shopping with this, maybe. This
15 chart. When they're actually in the grocery
16 store, you know. It would be easier.

17 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. How about
18 looking -- the first chart that we had. The one
19 about be aware of these four fish. Limit what
20 you eat. And look at that in comparison to
21 this, assuming it had the same information.

22 A PARTICIPANT: Look at the first one.

1 A PARTICIPANT: This is a good
2 warning. I mean, you know, because FDA warns,
3 you know, everyone would look at that. I mean,
4 we would really look at that.

5 A PARTICIPANT: I think the first
6 chart just makes it simpler. Like Linda said,
7 you don't have to worry about well, you know,
8 one from this group. How many meals am I gonna
9 have from this group? And if you're really
10 concerned, just don't eat it. Just do what it
11 says. You don't have to figure anything out.

12 A PARTICIPANT: I can't imagine people
13 walking around with a calendar, and it says,
14 have a trout three weeks ago. It's okay to have
15 another one tonight.

16 (Simultaneous discussion)

17 A PARTICIPANT: Some people would.

18 A PARTICIPANT: No, I don't mean --
19 forget pregnant. I mean --

20 A PARTICIPANT: Oh well, I would.

21 A PARTICIPANT: I'm not pregnant.

22 A PARTICIPANT: It would be in my

1 mind. You know, if you're serving a family or
2 something. Women are like that. You know, they
3 don't (inaudible) that way. Maybe men wouldn't
4 think that way.

5 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. We've looked at
6 a fair amount of information about mercury and
7 fish and various kinds of warnings, and various
8 ways of providing information. Given the
9 information that you've looked at, how do you
10 think that the average person out there would
11 factor this information into deciding what kind
12 of fish to eat, and whether or not to eat fish?

13 A PARTICIPANT: I think it might be in
14 the back of their mind now, just depending on
15 you know, whether they are pregnant or going to
16 be. Or just, you know, a male just buying
17 dinner. But I think no matter who the person
18 is, it's going to be in the back of their mind.
19 They're going to think about it.

20 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

21 A PARTICIPANT: I don't think it
22 really -- even me being this focus group and now

1 became aware of it, which I really didn't know
2 that was a risk to it, me in Maryland thinking
3 about messing with mercury. I don't really
4 think in general, people, even if they were
5 given this information, would give it much, you
6 know, attention, unless they started really
7 making it aware, like on the news.

8 Like when everybody hears about the
9 mad cow disease or contaminated beef, then
10 everybody kind of freaks out and stays off the
11 beef. And you go to the market, and you see
12 there's a lot more beef, because everybody's
13 scared of the beef. They don't want to mess
14 with it.

15 I don't think anybody would really pay
16 that much mind, unless it was made a real issue.
17 And if it was made an issue, I would really
18 wonder if corporations would try to keep it on a
19 hush, worrying about you know --

20 A PARTICIPANT: Uh huh.

21 A PARTICIPANT: -- the fish market.

22 A PARTICIPANT: Right.

1 A PARTICIPANT: If people are going to
2 be that concerned, it's going to like take away
3 from sales. I (inaudible) would have the
4 opportunity to -- have a chance to freak out,
5 because I'm not sure if the corporation would
6 really want people to know the risks.

7 MS. HALVERSON: Do you think people
8 would tend to avoid all fish, or just the ones
9 that are listed as do not eat? Or the ones that
10 are rated as having high mercury levels versus
11 the low ones? How do you think --

12 A PARTICIPANT: Are you talking about
13 pregnant or just in general?

14 A PARTICIPANT: In general.

15 MS. HALVERSON: Let's talk about the
16 general public first, and then we'll talk about
17 pregnant women.

18 A PARTICIPANT: Well it worries me,
19 because they say the mercury stays in your body.

20 A PARTICIPANT: Uh huh.

21 A PARTICIPANT: So, I'd wonder from
22 this day, like me eating fish, by the time I'm

1 like 50, how much mercury would I have in my
2 body. It's kind of funny. That makes not want
3 to even mess around with fish, but I know by
4 tomorrow, you know, I'll go to Red Lobster and
5 totally forget about what I learned here. It
6 doesn't really make an impact on me. I really
7 don't -- I'm not scared enough.

8 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

9 A PARTICIPANT: I think the first
10 chart simplifies it enough that most people
11 wouldn't mind cutting out mackerel, shark and
12 swordfish, unless they just really love those
13 things and eat them a lot. You know?

14 A PARTICIPANT: Swordfish is good.

15 A PARTICIPANT: Most people would --
16 you know, like I could say, well fine. I just
17 won't eat those. I don't eat 'em anyway, you
18 know. But to get real specific, I don't think
19 people would take a lot of time with it.

20 MS. HALVERSON: How about this whole
21 issue of canned tuna? You know, they're saying
22 for pregnant women, limit to four servings a

1 week. And Wanda's saying, "Hey, I am not
2 pregnant, but I am on dialysis. I'm concerned
3 about that." How would others respond, do you
4 think?

5 A PARTICIPANT: I think people who
6 would have physical problems with their bodies,
7 not knowing what they might be, I would say, I
8 think they'd stay away from 'em. They don't
9 need to add to it. You know? And you don't
10 know. As you said, you don't know what the
11 (indiscernible) on you. Your tolerance for
12 mercury may be more or less than someone else's.

13 MS. HALVERSON: I'd like to just run
14 around the table and see, based upon the
15 information you've seen, what changes, if any,
16 there would be in your behavior, as far as fish
17 you would eat or not eat. Or stuff you'd tell
18 people. Gary?

19 A PARTICIPANT: Assuming non pregnant
20 (inaudible) people?

21 MS. HALVERSON: Yep.

22 A PARTICIPANT: The way I feel,

1 there's warnings about just about everything you
2 could eat. Too much red meat, too much chicken,
3 too much fish or something. So, I understand
4 the problem here, but I don't think it would
5 affect my diet one drop.

6 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. And let's say
7 you had someone who was pregnant in your family.
8 Would that affect the way you would talk to them
9 about this, or --

10 A PARTICIPANT: I would just tell 'em
11 about it.

12 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

13 A PARTICIPANT: You know. And that
14 there's a mercury warning on certain types of
15 fish. And then we can go on.

16 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Linda?

17 A PARTICIPANT: I would certainly
18 consider the information, given that I have
19 children under eight. But I don't think it
20 would really change anything, because we don't
21 eat the ones that are -- you know, particular
22 problems. So, I would mention it to you know,

1 pregnant friends or something.

2 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Tania?

3 A PARTICIPANT: I agree with Linda.
4 My only concern -- I don't -- we don't eat the
5 things that are on the do not eat list, also.
6 But I would be concerned about you know, my
7 grandchildren, and I would want their parents to
8 know what we -- you know, what was on the list,
9 and to monitor what they give them. And to be
10 aware of it -- the mercury poisons out there in
11 the fish.

12 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Henrietta?

13 A PARTICIPANT: I would be more alert,
14 and I would pass the word along to -- I've got a
15 lot of friends and relatives. Letting them know
16 what I learned here tonight.

17 MS. HALVERSON: Everall?

18 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah, I'm very happy
19 I've been here tonight, because I wasn't aware
20 of this in my (inaudible) business. And my
21 family, they love fish a lot. So, I will be
22 able to (indiscernible) all more and give them a

1 clear guide -- guidance or (indiscernible).

2 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. And what kind
3 of guidance would that be?

4 A PARTICIPANT: The fish that's -- to
5 stay away from.

6 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Would you have
7 everyone stay away from mackerel, shark,
8 swordfish? Or just pregnant women?

9 A PARTICIPANT: I'll try and get
10 everyone to stay away from it.

11 MS. HALVERSON: And why is that?

12 A PARTICIPANT: Because I'm not sure,
13 you know, if this is true or not. You know?

14 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Luis?

15 A PARTICIPANT: I'm going to sound
16 like a broken record. I don't really eat,
17 really, I mean, besides for the tuna fish --
18 occasionally canned tuna fish, I eat everything
19 about everything else, except for swordfish, you
20 know, because they're kind of expensive, and
21 these are a little bit more exotic, like shark.
22 I don't know what type of shark. I like some

1 shark, and I don't like other type sharks.

2 Basically, I don't think this would
3 apply to me, really, because I eat more
4 shellfish than these four fish mentioned here.
5 But if it is -- like by word of mouth, me being
6 here, I'll pass it to people who I think it
7 might be of interest to. But I really think the
8 main concern is that the US government sponsor
9 you know, through the FDA maybe, to make us
10 aware.

11 Put it on -- information on sources
12 like "Nightline" or "20/20." Things that
13 Americans watch to be informed. That's their
14 responsibility. Because word of mouth is not
15 going to do anything for pregnant women. It is
16 a risky business.

17 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Jay?

18 A PARTICIPANT: I guess if I knew any
19 pregnant women, I'd tell them the -- kind of the
20 three or four general, you know, what to avoid.
21 And myself, as (inaudible) said -- you know, for
22 swordfish, no more than two meals a month. I

1 don't eat it that often, so --

2 MS. HALVERSON: So it wouldn't change
3 yours that much?

4 A PARTICIPANT: No.

5 MS. HALVERSON: Wanda?

6 A PARTICIPANT: I'm going to go ahead
7 and tell my boss. You can't (inaudible) fish.
8 No. I probably will eat tuna once a week or
9 something like that. But I'm kind of going to
10 cut down on it, just because, like I said the
11 kidney -- affects the (inaudible) them. I'm
12 just (inaudible) about me.

13 MS. HALVERSON: In one of these sheets
14 there, they had something that says that you can
15 eat so many servings in moderation. With
16 respect to fish consumption, what does that
17 mean? In moderation.

18 A PARTICIPANT: They don't say.

19 MS. HALVERSON: How would you define
20 it?

21 A PARTICIPANT: That's hard to say. I
22 mean, I don't really know what eating fish in

1 moderation is. I think it's like you just --

2 A PARTICIPANT: (Interposing) I think
3 it's relative, isn't it? I mean, you know
4 relative to --

5 A PARTICIPANT: Your personal diet?

6 A PARTICIPANT: To your personal diet,
7 or whatever. I couldn't say, eat this in
8 moderation. How would I know when to eat it?

9 A PARTICIPANT: Right, right.

10 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

11 A PARTICIPANT: You can tell that on
12 TV.

13 MS. HALVERSON: In the final analysis,
14 do you think it's important for consumers to eat
15 fish, or not? I mean, how do you balance this
16 whole thing about --

17 A PARTICIPANT: (Interposing) You
18 don't have to eat fish.

19 MS. HALVERSON: Pardon?

20 A PARTICIPANT: You don't have to eat
21 fish.

22 MS. HALVERSON: You don't have to eat

1 fish? Okay.

2 A PARTICIPANT: You're asking, is it
3 important?

4 MS. HALVERSON: Yes.

5 A PARTICIPANT: In what way?

6 MS. HALVERSON: Well, you know, here
7 we have the -- you were telling me in the
8 beginning about all the benefits of fish.

9 A PARTICIPANT: Oh.

10 MS. HALVERSON: So, omega three, fatty
11 acids.

12 A PARTICIPANT: We can get that from
13 vitamins or eggs.

14 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. So how do you
15 balance the risks and the benefits of something
16 like this, where the risks are you know, certain
17 exposure to mercury, perhaps, in certain fish,
18 and perhaps problems for pregnant women. But
19 also, all these benefits of fish. How do you
20 balance that kind of thing?

21 A PARTICIPANT: Well, it's just like
22 anything. You know? If you eat anything -- you

1 eat or drink too much of, it's going to harm
2 you. But you know, you can eat, like I said, in
3 moderation, whatever that is.

4 A PARTICIPANT: Moderation, yeah.

5 A PARTICIPANT: But just you know,
6 take it easy.

7 MS. HALVERSON: Okay.

8 A PARTICIPANT: You just have to weigh
9 the advantages against the disadvantages.

10 MS. HALVERSON: All right. What I'd
11 like to ask you to do is, help me by sending
12 these around in two different piles. We have
13 these examples. We can send those around first,
14 and just pile them up like this. And then,
15 these four warning things. We can pile those
16 up. And I'll be back in just a couple of
17 minutes. Okay?

18 A PARTICIPANT: You don't ask about
19 the simplest guidelines. Just (inaudible)
20 mercury thing on a (inaudible).

21 MS. HALVERSON: Oh, on the fish label,
22 if there's any mercury in it?

1 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah. It seems to me
2 that --

3 MS. HALVERSON: Have some kind of a
4 guideline?

5 A PARTICIPANT: For fish.

6 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. How would you
7 define -- how would you delineate between high
8 risk and low risk?

9 A PARTICIPANT: I wouldn't. You've
10 got four fish in there. Just pile them all
11 (inaudible).

12 MS. HALVERSON: On those particular
13 fish. Okay. All right. I'll be right back.

14 (Inaudible group discussion follows.)

15 A PARTICIPANT: I think with the money
16 that they're using to make these focus groups
17 for these specific methyl mercury contamination?
18 I think the amount of money that they're putting
19 into studying it and finding out whether we need
20 to know, they should be using that money to find
21 a way to prevent the methyl containing
22 (inaudible) --

1 A PARTICIPANT: (Interposing) I think
2 they should clean up the --

3 A PARTICIPANT: Exactly.

4 A PARTICIPANT: -- the waste.

5 A PARTICIPANT: That money should be
6 used to find different methods to not use
7 mercury in whatever they're using that's ending
8 up in the fish. That's what I think.

9 (Inaudible simultaneous group
10 discussion.)

11 A PARTICIPANT: How do you know what
12 is the fresh water fish? That's what
13 (inaudible) --

14 A PARTICIPANT: Like boiler fish
15 (sic).

16 A PARTICIPANT: Sword.

17 A PARTICIPANT: One that's not in the
18 ocean, basically.

19 A PARTICIPANT: Oh, okay.

20 A PARTICIPANT: This is not salt
21 water.

22 A PARTICIPANT: River water.

1 A PARTICIPANT: Lake water.

2 (Simultaneous discussion)

3 A PARTICIPANT: The consumer doesn't
4 know.

5 A PARTICIPANT: Exactly.

6 A PARTICIPANT: I think the land
7 locked was the farm raised.

8 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah, farm raised.

9 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

10 A PARTICIPANT: Oh, that's what that
11 means?

12 A PARTICIPANT: And just you know,
13 (inaudible) the river. Fresh fish.

14 A PARTICIPANT: Oh, okay.

15 A PARTICIPANT: I was surprised that
16 fish, tilipia (ph) or whatever it's called -- I
17 thought that was farm raised only.

18 A PARTICIPANT: Which one was that?

19 A PARTICIPANT: The lobster thing?

20 A PARTICIPANT: No, no, no. It starts
21 with a T.

22 A PARTICIPANT: Tile?

1 A PARTICIPANT: Tilipia.

2 T-I-L-I-P-I-A. It's kind of a new fish in the
3 market.

4 A PARTICIPANT: I don't know that one.

5 A PARTICIPANT: That's pretty
6 (inaudible) --

7 (Simultaneous discussion)

8 A PARTICIPANT: It's a new fish,
9 right? I thought that was farm raised.

10 A PARTICIPANT: It's interesting.
11 It's an interesting program today, huh?

12 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

13 (Simultaneous discussion)

14 A PARTICIPANT: Oh, you've had it?

15 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah, it's good.

16 A PARTICIPANT: Oh.

17 A PARTICIPANT: They're serving it in
18 restaurants now. And so --

19 A PARTICIPANT: Oh really?

20 A PARTICIPANT: I'm surprised we
21 didn't have tuna fish sandwiches while we're
22 waiting outside.

1 A PARTICIPANT: Right. And I love
2 tuna fish.

3 MS. HALVERSON: Oh, you guys did a
4 great job here.

5 A PARTICIPANT: And it's white tuna
6 fish.

7 A PARTICIPANT: It's white.

8 MS. HALVERSON: Let's see. Can I have
9 these? That's two, and I won't need that.

10 A PARTICIPANT: Oh, you had to go
11 check.

12 MS. HALVERSON: I have a couple of
13 questions, and I guess the first one is, in some
14 of these guidelines, they had -- remember this
15 table here? They had -- these are fish that are
16 generally low in mercury. And then at the
17 bottom here, they said, "All other types of fish
18 are safe to eat, such as shellfish, halibut or
19 processed fish, such as fish sticks."

20 So, they had ones that were high
21 mercury here, saying do not eat. And then low
22 in mercury here. How would you react to these

1 low in mercury ones?

2 A PARTICIPANT: They're preferable.

3 MS. HALVERSON: More preferable?

4 A PARTICIPANT: Right.

5 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. So would you be
6 more likely to eat those?

7 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

8 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

9 A PARTICIPANT: Even though they
10 say -- right. Even though they say it has no
11 mercury contaminant, it's still going to add up
12 in your body. But those are more preferable, if
13 you're still going to try to be halfway in and
14 out. Be worried, but not really worried. Now,
15 I guess you'd do your best then to pick from, if
16 you're semi-worried about it.

17 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. Anyone else?

18 A PARTICIPANT: You're saying a little
19 bit of mercury as opposed to -- I would take
20 that to mean low in mercury, and other fish have
21 no mercury. And you're saying low mercury, and
22 other fishes have higher mercury. Right?

1 A PARTICIPANT: I'm sorry. Could you
2 run that by me one time?

3 A PARTICIPANT: That's what you said.
4 You said that those things have low mercury?

5 A PARTICIPANT: Right.

6 A PARTICIPANT: So you're thinking all
7 other fishes have higher levels of mercury. I
8 would take that to mean the opposite. They have
9 low mercury in the other fishes and not.

10 A PARTICIPANT: Right, right.

11 A PARTICIPANT: Oh.

12 A PARTICIPANT: Oh, okay.

13 A PARTICIPANT: Really?

14 (Simultaneous discussion)

15 A PARTICIPANT: Exactly. Those were
16 just having -- still having mercury.

17 MS. HALVERSON: How would you take
18 that? The rest of you?

19 A PARTICIPANT: I would take it as low
20 mercury, the others are having high mercury.

21 MS. HALVERSON: Ah, okay.

22 A PARTICIPANT: Yeah, that's what I

1 thought.

2 A PARTICIPANT: That's how I would
3 take it.

4 A PARTICIPANT: I have the same
5 interpretation as what Gary --

6 MS. HALVERSON: Gary? Uh huh. Okay.
7 So, you would interpret it as the others having
8 none?

9 A PARTICIPANT: Yes.

10 MS. HALVERSON: Okay. All right.
11 Well, I want to thank you all very much. You
12 were really helpful. And I hope you enjoyed it.

13 A PARTICIPANT: It was very good.

14 MS. HALVERSON: I really enjoyed
15 having you here. So, if you want to step
16 outside, Myisha (ph) has something for you.

17 A PARTICIPANT: All right.

18 (Simultaneous discussion)

19 (Whereupon, the tape recording ended.)

20

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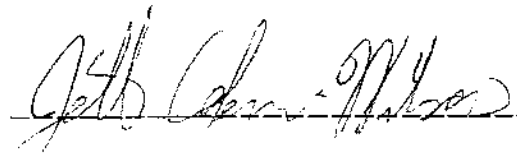
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