INTRODUCTION
Food manufacturers, foodservice operators, and restaurant owners are being urged to decrease the sodium levels in their products as part of a public health effort to lower sodium consumption and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke in the U.S. population. The USDA Nutrient Data Laboratory (NDL), in collaboration with the USDA Food Surveys Research Group (FSRG), USDHHS Centers for Disease Control and Food and Drug Administration, is monitoring changes in sodium and other key nutrients that may occur as a result of this effort. The process, accompanying challenges, and actions taken to resolve these challenges are described.

MONITORING STEPS AND DECISIONS
1. Selecting foods to monitor
   - Criteria: commercially packaged and restaurant foods with added sodium; sodium content; consumption data; potential for reduction.
   - Sentinel foods: subset of 125 food items, primary indicators to assess sodium changes in food supply.
   - Other food items comprised of both commercially packaged and restaurant foods which support What We Eat in America (WWEIA), NHANES.
2. Selecting nutrients to monitor:
   - In addition to sodium, monitor potassium; total and saturated fat; total sugar; total dietary fiber.
   - Determine brands to sample, designed to achieve 65-75% of the total market share.
   - Employ National Food and Nutrient Analysis Program procedures (Haytowitz et al. 2006).
3. Analyzing nutrients in foods
   - Analyze sentinel foods every 4-8 years, depending on priority level developed by NDL and budget.
   - Determine brands to sample, designed to achieve 75-80% of total market share.
   - Review annually for sentinel foods, biennially for other food items.
   - Review sodium content of brands associated with 75-80% of the total market share.
   - Metal and saturated fat; total sugar; total dietary fiber to capture other potential nutrient changes resulting from reformulations.
4. Reviewing Nutrition Facts Panel (NFP)
   - Review annually for sentinel foods, biennially for other foods.
   - Review sodium content of brands associated with 75-80% of the total market share.
   - Review nutrient data linkage information: company websites.
   - Cutoff to change value in SR: 5-10% difference in sodium between previous SR value and current NFP value.
5. Disseminating data: Report findings to public via NDL web site. Update values in USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference (SR) and Food and Nutrient Database for Dietary Studies (FNDDS).

CONCLUSIONS
- Monitoring nutrient in the dynamic and expansive U.S. food supply is challenging.
- Nutrient Data Lab food specialists have overcome a number of challenges encountered during the sodium monitoring process, enabling them to provide timely, reliable nutrient information.
- The data are being shared with collaborators and the public.