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Research Designs for Assessing the USDA'S Food Assistance and Nutrition Programs' Outcomes—Part I: Evaluation of Ongoing National Programs

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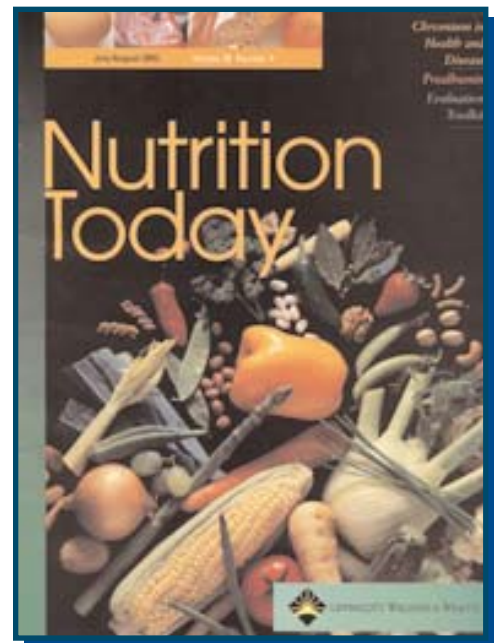
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THIS FIRST OF A TWO-part article summarizes a review of research designs for assessing the effect of USDA's food assistance and nutrition programs on nutrition and health. The random assignment experiment is the “gold standard” design for such an evaluation. Where random assignment is impossible, quasi-experimental designs are used to infer what would have happened to program participants if the program had not existed. This article discusses the random assignment and four quasi-experimental designs for evaluating ongoing food assistance and nutrition programs.

Part II discusses the random assignment and three quasi-experimental designs for evaluating demonstration projects.