

Using Survey Monkey at UF/IFAS

Survey Monkey is a quick and easy tool to create online surveys. Although anyone can create a free (basic) account, UF/IFAS has an annual professional account that has several advantages:

- [SSL encryption](#) to secure the data being transmitted (required for HIPAA compliance)
- Unlimited number of responses allowed
- Unlimited number of questions per survey
- Unlimited custom survey designs and more customizable overall (e.g., logos, thank you page, pop-up invitations, etc.)
- Ability to use [skip logic](#) and [randomize answer choices](#)
- Ability to download results to a spreadsheet
- Allows for better analysis (e.g., crosstabs, multiple reports, charts, graphs)

But, the professional account also has several *disadvantages*:

- Everyone shares the same account username and password, and therefore, can view, modify or delete any survey (including results and respondent information) in the UF/IFAS account.
- Depending on the type of data collector used (Web Link or Email Invitation) and settings selected, anyone with access to the UF/IFAS account may be able to identify survey respondents through their email and IP address. If a survey question is created to specifically collect name, address, or other personal information, that is also accessible to anyone with the UF/IFAS account username and password.

If these disadvantages are disqualifying for your survey, you can purchase your own Survey Monkey account for a \$300 annual fee. Other custom programming survey options may also be available through PDEC and IFAS IT.

Note that not every survey is suitable for online data collection. A recent study by UF/IFAS professor Glenn Israel documented significant differences in respondent demographics among those who completed an identical survey online versus on paper. As a group, the online respondents were younger, more affluent, more educated, and less racially and ethnically diverse.

By requesting access to the UF/IFAS Survey Monkey account, you are agreeing to the following conditions:

- If you are promising anonymity to your survey respondents, you must set “Collector Settings” (under the collect responses tab when editing survey) to not store the respondent’s IP address in the results AND use the Web Link option with a unique identifier. Survey Monkey Help Center has a lot of information about privacy, anonymity, etc. Easiest way to find information is to type keywords into the Search Answers box.
- Evaluate the sensitivity of the data you are collecting and determine if the access by other UF/IFAS account holders will pose problems for you or your grantor/funding source.
- Assess the level of computer usage among your target population and determine if you will need to include other options for completing the survey (i.e., phone or traditional mail).
- All surveys must allow respondents to unsubscribe from the current and follow-up surveys. Survey Monkey has an Opt-Out link in all email messages sent through its server. You may not hide or in any way tamper with this link. Remember to update your email lists maintained independently and remove these individuals from the list if it will be used for future surveys. If you choose to send emails yourself (and not through the Survey Monkey server), you must include some disclaimer that allows for respondents to take their name off the email list, such as sending a reply email back to you.
- You will not send surveys to unsolicited emails or purchased email lists.
- If you choose to have Survey Monkey send the email, please remember to change the Reply To: email field. By default it is set to the main account holder “dcromer@ufl.edu” (Dan Cromer of IFAS IT).
- Download the data files and survey when completed (or more often if long-term or complicated project).
- Delete the survey when you have collected all of your data.
- If you want to publish the results of your survey, you must first get approval from the university’s [IRB-02 office](#).
- If you are unfamiliar with creating and implementing surveys, review these two helpful documents on the Survey Monkey Help page-- [best practices for survey design](#) and [improving response rates](#).
- Abide by Survey Monkey’s Terms of Use (located at the bottom of their website).
- Follow UF’s [IRB policies and procedures for conducting online surveys](#) even if you do not plan to publish the results of your survey.

[Click here](#) to register for access to the UF/IFAS Survey Monkey account.