



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Food and
Nutrition
Service

3101 Park
Center Drive

Alexandria, VA
22302-1500

DATE: July 1, 2008

MEMO CODE: TA 05-2008

TO: Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program Participants

FROM: CYNTHIA LONG
Director
Child Nutrition Division

SUBJECT: Changes to Quality Control Monitoring for CN Labeling Program Manufacturers

This is to inform you of upcoming mandatory changes to quality control monitoring for Child Nutrition (CN) labeled products. These changes are designed to ensure integrity and equitable oversight of products in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) CN Labeling Program. The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will assume the responsibility of monitoring the production of meat, poultry, and non-meat products. AMS oversight for meat, poultry, and non-meat products will be mandatory to continue participating in the CN Labeling Program. AMS monitoring services will only cover Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) requirements for quality control. Meat and poultry establishments under Federal inspection must still meet regulatory requirements of the USDA, Food Safety and Inspection Service.

This plant oversight program will be similar to the fee for service system that has always been in place for CN labeled products inspected by the U.S. Department of Commerce's (USDC) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Products produced under USDC's NMFS will continue to be inspected and charged by USDC. This plant oversight system will bring the CN Labeling Program into compliance with the FNS requirement that all CN labeled products are to be Federally inspected by USDA or USDC in accordance with an approved quality control program or standards established by the appropriate Federal inspection service (7 CFR 210 Appendix C 4.(b)).

Beginning in fall 2008, AMS will provide guidance to meat, poultry, and non-meat CN label manufacturers to modify existing QC programs to ensure that they meet the minimum requirements identified in the *Industry Guidelines for Preparation of Quality Control Programs for Meat, Poultry, Seafood, and Non-meat CN Labeled Products*. The QC guidance and assistance provided by AMS during this time will not be charged.

Beginning in spring 2009, all QC programs will be required to be in compliance with FNS requirements. In addition, AMS will begin in-plant inspections to monitor the production of CN labeled products according to AMS approved QC programs. AMS will charge plants for QC program review and inspection at this time.

The QC guidelines are currently being updated by AMS, USDC and FNS. Once the guidelines are complete, they will be distributed to all CN labeling manufacturers in order for the quality assurance managers to begin reviewing and/or modifying their current QC programs accordingly to meet CN Labeling Program requirements. As updates for the CN Labeling Program are

Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program Participants
Page 2

available, they will be posted at the CN Labeling Program website under the heading **CN Labeling Program Updates** at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/CNlabeling/default.htm>. If you have questions regarding this process, please contact AMS at 202-720-6042 or FNS at 703-305-2609.

Sincerely,

Original Signed

CYNTHIA LONG
Director
Child Nutrition Division