



June 10, 2005

**United States
Department**

Agriculture

Food and
Nutrition
Service

3101 Park
Center Drive
Alexandria, VA
22302-1500

Enclosed is a copy of the Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS's) *Guidance for School Food Authorities Developing a School Food Safety Program Based on the Process Approach to HACCP Principles*.

FNS developed this guidance to help school food authorities (SFAs) comply with the food safety program requirement established by section 111 of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265). To comply with the law, SFAs may either implement this guidance or establish and implement their own food safety management system that includes prerequisite programs for operations and sanitation (Standard Operating Procedures) and all of the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles before the end of School Year 2005-2006. Schools that do not use the guidance must consult with their State agency to ensure their food safety program meets all requirements.

We encourage you to start working on your food safety program as soon as possible.

We plan to formally implement this guidance via the rulemaking process; however, any food safety management system that includes Standard Operating Procedures and all of the HACCP principles will continue to be permitted.

The guidance provides step-by-step instructions for developing a food safety program based on HACCP principles, and includes a sample plan and prototypes of useful recordkeeping forms. It will help you develop practical and effective food safety programs that meet the needs and capabilities of different types of foodservice operations. The guidance was written with input from State and local officials; food safety regulators; and collaborators from the food safety community.

FNS is doing everything it can to help you succeed in implementing your food safety program. We are working with the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) to make HACCP training and educational materials available to State agencies and SFAs. We are also working with NFSMI and the Food Safety Inspection Service to

ensure that their telephone hotlines are able to answer general questions about HACCP. After SFAs have had operational experience with the HACCP requirement, we will assess the need for additional training and materials, and for updating the HACCP guidance.

If you have questions about the enclosed guidance or the food safety provision, please contact your State agency. For general information about HACCP, you may call the hotline at the Food Safety Inspection Service (1-888-MPHotline or 1-888-674-6854) or the NFSMI Help Desk (1-800-321-3054).

Thank you for dedication to the health and safety of the Nation's school children.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Stanley C. Garnett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

STANLEY C. GARNETT
Director
Child Nutrition Division

Enclosure