

Preparing for an SMI Review

Each SFA will be scheduled for an SMI review at least once every five years. Your State agency will let you know in advance when you will be reviewed. This notification may include:

- ◆ Which school(s) will be selected;
- ◆ What week will be selected for review;
- ◆ When an on-site visit will be scheduled; and
- ◆ What specific information you will need to provide.

This chapter briefly describes how to prepare for a review and what information you will need to collect in preparation for the review.

How Does the SMI Review Compare to a CRE Review?

The Coordinated Review Effort, or CRE Review, focuses on the administrative aspects of school foodservice operations. State agencies are required to conduct CRE and SMI Reviews of each school district or SFA participating in the NSLP once every five years.

CRE Reviews Have the Following Goals:

- ◆ To determine if free and reduced-price meal benefits are provided in accordance with the regulations,
- ◆ To determine if proper meal counts are being taken at the point of service, and
- ◆ To determine if complete reimbursable meals are being offered.

SMI Reviews Have These Goals:

- ◆ To ensure Program meals meet the nutrition standards, and
- ◆ To ensure that SFAs receive the technical assistance and resources needed to meet the nutrition standards.

The SMI Review May Be Conducted:

- ◆ Prior to the CRE Review.
- ◆ After the CRE Review.
- ◆ At the same time as the CRE Review.



Preparing for the Review – What You Will Need

The chart below summarizes the information that any SFA will need to have available when the SMI review is scheduled. Some State agencies may request these documents prior to the review, while others may require them during the review. Have all required information organized and readily available.

INFORMATION YOU MUST PROVIDE FOR THE SMI REVIEW

- ◆ Menus for the entire review week. (See the glossary for the definition of a review week.) If the week selected does not meet this definition, let the State agency know right away so that an alternate week may be selected.
- ◆ Standardized recipes, including local and modified USDA recipes, for all menu items served during the review week. Remember, you will need a standardized recipe whenever a food item contains more than one ingredient.
- ◆ Food production records of the school(s) selected for the review week. Your State agency may request to see production records from other schools, especially if you are on NSMP/ANSMP and analyze menus centrally, to check if your weighted averages are reflective of food preferences at all schools.
- ◆ Nutrition Facts Labels or nutrient analysis data forms submitted by manufacturers for each commercially-prepared food used during the review week.
- ◆ Child Nutrition (CN) Labels and/or Product Formulation Statements to identify the component contribution of a product toward the meal pattern—for schools on a food-based menu planning approach.
- ◆ A nutrient analysis of menus and copies of all recipes (including analysis) for the review week—for schools on a nutrient-based menu planning approach.

A more detailed checklist of documents you will need for the SMI review is included in Appendix U. Below is a brief discussion of these documents.



Menus

Complete written menus are required to ensure accuracy of the nutrient analysis. You will need a copy of the menus planned and served for each of the school(s) selected for the review. Menus should include all choices, including condiments and other items not included as a meal component, such as desserts. Provide a copy of your documentation of substitutions if you are following a nutrient-based menu planning approach. You should note the specific substitution, the date you became aware of the need for a substitution, and the date the substitution was made.

A copy of a Sample Food Substitution Form is included in Appendix L.

Standardized Recipes

You will need to provide copies of all recipes used during the review week.

- ◆ **If you are using a nutrient-based menu planning approach,** the State agency will use your recipes to ensure that they were correctly entered into the nutrient analysis software program, including selecting the correct ingredient and weight or volume.
- ◆ **If you are using a food-based menu planning approach,** the State agency will use your recipes in the nutrient analysis. For those SFAs/schools that are on a food-based menu planning approach, conduct their own analysis, and wish the SA to accept their analysis, the SA will validate the data entry of the ingredients, recipes, and menus for accuracy.

The procedures for standardizing recipes are described in Chapter 7 of USDA's *A Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals*. This resource describes in detail the importance of standardized recipes to ensure consistent results for both nutritional analysis and product quality and yield. It gives a clear description of the procedures by which local recipes can be standardized for use in your program. It also contains a copy of a standardized recipe form. Check your recipes against this form to ensure that all needed information is included in your recipes.

Another resource is *Measuring Success with Standardized Recipes, 2002*. Refer to the SMI Resource section of this manual on how to order this publication.

Food Production Records

Food production records are the documentation of what was prepared and served; they are necessary to support the claim for reimbursable meals and to identify information needed for the nutrient analysis.



Regardless of the type of menu planning option that you have chosen, all production records must include the information discussed below:

- ◆ Planned number of meals by age or grade group for students; number of adult/other meals planned
- ◆ All planned menu items, including all choices, types of milk, desserts, condiments, and substitutions
- ◆ All condiments served as part of the reimbursable meal, including gravy, butter, margarine, mayonnaise, relish, ketchup, mustard, salad dressing, etc
- ◆ Serving or portion sizes of each planned menu item or condiment for each age or grade grouping
- ◆ If menus are planned for more than one age or grade group at one school building, clearly indicate portion differences on food production records
- ◆ Planned number of portions (servings) of each menu or food item to be served; include planned a la carte sales in the planned portions
- ◆ Total amount of food actually prepared for each food item or menu item
- ◆ Amount of leftovers for each menu item
- ◆ Actual number of reimbursable meals served. Indicate this information for each age or grade group
- ◆ Actual number of non-reimbursable meals (adult meals, second meals served to students)

While the bullets above generally describe what information is needed on production records, if you are unfamiliar with any of these requirements, Chapter 7 of a *Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals* provides a complete discussion of each. The *Menu Planner* also has useful sample production record formats that will provide a complete record of this information. Separate forms are available for both the food-based and for the nutrient-based menu-planning systems. These forms are found on pages 191-199 of the *Menu Planner*. Some State agencies have developed their own production records. Follow your State agency's guidance.

Food Product Descriptions or Specifications

The SFA should have written food product descriptions or specifications for all foods used in the schools—not only as a purchasing tool but also for determining the product or ingredient for the State agency's nutrient analysis or for the State agency's review of the analysis.



EXAMPLES OF FOOD PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS:	
Milk: Milk, unflavored, 1% low-fat	Ground Beef: Ground beef, frozen No more than 20% fat Like IMPS 136

All SFAs should provide a list of food product descriptions for food products used in menus. This allows the SFA/school menu planner or State agency staff to select the correct ingredient from the software database when conducting nutrient analysis.

Nutrition Information

There must be nutrition information for **all** commercially-prepared food products on file—regardless of menu planning approach. Be sure all copies of these documents can be easily read. The reviewer or menu planner must be able to identify which nutrient information applies to which product.



To keep nutrition information organized and easily accessible, file these documents in a notebook, either alphabetically, by category of food, or by calendar dates that correspond with the menus. Another procedure is to copy the documents and attach the copies to the appropriate food production records.

If a Nutrition Facts Label is not available, you will need to obtain that information from the manufacturer. A sample Manufacturers’ Data Submission form is included as Appendix K that you can provide for manufacturers to complete, sign, and provide to you.

If you need further information, this form is discussed in detail in Chapter 7 of *A Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals*.

Nutrient Analysis Report for the Review Week

- ◆ If you are using a nutrient-based menu planning approach, you must provide a nutrient analysis report for the review week.
- ◆ If you are using a food-based menu planning approach, and you are conducting your own nutrient analysis and want the State agency to accept it, you must provide a nutrient analysis report for the review week. Otherwise, the State agency will conduct the nutrient analysis for the week of review.



KEY

*SFAs/schools using a nutrient-based menu planning approach, that are required to conduct nutrient analysis, and schools using a food-based menu planning approach (that want the State agency to accept their nutrient analysis) must follow the procedures described in your companion guidance, *Nutrient Analysis Protocols: How to Analyze Menus for USDA's School Meals Programs*.*

The SMI Review Process—What To Expect

During the Review

If you or your school foodservice programs are new, the following discussion will explain the actual SMI review process and what you can expect during that process. If you have participated previously in an SMI review and are already familiar with the SMI review procedure, this section can serve as a reminder.

The process to conduct an SMI review has been separated by food-based and nutrient standard-based planning since there are some differences in the way the review will be conducted.

Food-Based Menu Planning Approaches

The State agency will conduct a nutrient analysis for SFA's or schools using Traditional or Enhanced Food-Based Menu Planning. If the SFA uses a food-based menu planning approach, conducts its own nutrient analyses, and wishes the State agency to review their analyses, the State agency may validate the SFAs analysis and determine that nutrient analysis protocols were followed rather than conducting a new nutrient analysis.

WARNING

Breakfast and lunch analyses may not be combined for food-based menu planning approaches for the SMI review evaluation.

The State agency may ask that the documentation required for a nutrient analysis be sent to them prior to the review. Your SA will advise you on the procedure they will be using. An on-site evaluation of at least one school is usually made during the review process to determine if the recorded information and daily practices are consistent. Based on the results of the nutrient analysis, on-site evaluation, and comparison to the last SMI review in the SFA, recommendations for corrective action will be developed to bring the menus and daily practices into compliance with nutrition standards.



**SMI
Review**

Nutrient-Based Menu Planning Approaches (NSMP and ANSMP)

If your district or one of your schools uses one of the nutrient-based menu planning approaches, you are required to provide all the information listed in this chapter plus the completed nutrient analysis report. Product descriptions, documentation of product nutrient information, standardized recipes, and production records will be used to compare the information used for the menu analysis. All records and information explained in this chapter are necessary in order for the State agency to check the accuracy of all data and to provide technical assistance if the analysis contains errors or omissions.

An on-site evaluation of at least one school will usually be made to determine if the recorded information and daily practices are consistent in order to validate the nutrient analysis. Based on the results of the nutrient analysis, on-site evaluation, and comparison to the last SMI Review in the district, recommendations for corrective action will be developed to bring the menus and daily practices into compliance with nutrient standards.

Some State agencies may require that NSMP and ANSMP documentation be sent to them before the on-site evaluation is conducted.

After the SMI Review

After the review is completed, your State agency will analyze the results of your review to determine how closely your program is meeting the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and whether your schools are improving in efforts to meet the nutrition goals. They will also provide you with the results of your review.

Depending upon the results of your review, your State agency may make suggestions and/or assist you in developing a Corrective Action Plan (CAP). The suggestions and/or corrective actions will be developed with the needs of your program in mind. Your State agency will discuss all requirements regarding activities and suggestions for corrective action with you at the exit conference following the review.



It is not just preparing for an SMI review—it is staying prepared. The School Meals Initiative means developing and maintaining practices that result in healthy, appetizing, and nutritious meals to students—every school day. The entire school foodservice team needs to commit to the daily practices outlined in this manual for planning, preparing, and serving healthy school meals. School foodservice can be a part of the solution to childhood obesity—not a part of the problem.



