

**FDPIR Food Package Review
April 27, 2006 Conference Call Notes**

	Attended/On Call	Not Present or on Call
1.	Betty Jo Graveen, Lac du Flambeau FDP	Dennis Pearson, AMS
2.	Janice Fitzgerald, FNS-HQ	Karen Kell, FNS-SERO
3.	Lorraine Davis, Navajo Nation	Melanie Todd, Chickasaw Health System
4.	Margie Livingston, FNS-HQ	Scott Krueger, Menominee Tribal Clinic
5.	Nancy Gaston, FNS-HQ	Tony Nertoli, Sault Ste. Marie
6.	Nancy Theodore, FNS-HQ	
7.	Pat Roberts, Menominee FDP	
8.	Ray Capoeman, Quinault FDP	
9.	Red Gates, Standing Rock Sioux	
10.	Rosalind Cleveland, FNS-HQ	
11.	Roxana Newsom, Chickasaw FDP	
12.	Sarah Kellogg-Eby, FNS-WRO	
13.	Sharon Hadder, FSA-HQ	
14.	Sheldon Gordon, FNS-HQ	
15.	Shirley Roberts, FNS-HQ	
16.	Steve Freeman, FSA-HQ	
17.	Susan Anderson, CDC	

The food package review work group session was held in conjunction with the annual National Association of Food Distribution Programs on Indian Reservations (NAFDPIR) at 10:30AM (PST) on Thursday, April 27, 2006. Sheldon Gordon from FNS facilitated the meeting. Due to the Business Session at the NAFDPIR annual meeting running over time, the conference call was delayed a half-hour.

- I. Announcements – Sheldon Gordon, FNS-HQ/Rosalind Cleveland, FNS-HQ
Rosalind Cleveland, Branch Chief of the Program Support Branch, introduced herself and welcomed members to the group. Sheldon also welcomed members and reiterated the purpose/goal of the group. An amendment was made to the agenda to try and close out the 2002-04 food package review.
- II. Minutes were read from the June 22, 2005 call. Paraphrasing some of the outstanding focus items on the list. Minutes were accepted as is – no revisions.
- III. USDA’s Procurement Methods was given by Shirley Roberts of FNS-HQ. This topic led into further discussion by the group and took up a major portion of the call. However, it was clear there were many questions regarding the process and why USDA has trouble obtaining certain food items from vendors. This topic served as the precursor leading into the status report of three unresolved items from the 2002-2004 review cycle (canned hominy, low sodium/low fat cream of mushroom soup, and aseptic juice). As a result of this discussion, it was decided that a fact sheet would be helpful laying out how USDA does business. Sheldon

indicated that he would send an email to the work group ITO members to solicit questions from their respective organizations to best address questions raised by recipients.

IV. Status of the Food Package Review (Sheldon Gordon)

- A. Hominy – This product has been unattainable by USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) in the canned form. AMS has tried every possible venue to get this item however has run into several issues where vendors were either not able to bid or did not want to bid for the contract. Susan Anderson (CDC) mentioned the dry form of hominy as an alternative. It was suggested that research on the dry hominy packaged in a bag, as an alternative to canned hominy be explored. After further discussion from the group, it was agreed upon that Sharon Hadder (FSA) will follow up on this product for availability, cost, etc. for the next call. If at that time, we have the necessary information, a decision will be made to pursue the product or close it out from the review cycle.

- B. Low-fat/Low-sodium Cream of Mushroom – This product has also had some challenges as AMS has struggled to find a vendor that would be able to produce this product. Currently, Campbell’s makes this product but does not wish to do business with the government. After discussion, it was agreed upon that an alternative either the low-fat or the low-sodium soup would be further researched. It was requested that an analysis to compare the nutritive value of the three forms of the soup be conducted. Sheldon agreed to run the analysis in time for the next meeting. The nutritional analysis along with product data (availability, cost, etc.) will be used on the next call to make a decision on this item for the 2002-2004 review cycle.

- C. Juice Concentrate in Aseptic Packaging – Just like the last two products, finding two vendors that would be able to make this product has been unsuccessful. The second vendor which just recently submitted its survey was extremely different in every regards from the first vendor (from price to production of the product). AMS is analyzing the surveys from both the vendors for a thorough assessment. The major inhibitor for the requested product is the package size. The 11.5 oz size is not commonly done in industry and would cause a vendor to shut down and retool its machinery to make the product. (This is not profitable for many vendors and they may have to buy expensive equipment (\$500K) just to make the product in that size. Since USDA cannot guarantee any one vendor the bid, vendors are not willing to invest that amount of money in equipment that would be unique to USDA commodities and will not be sold in the commercial market.)

Going to another size like 8 or 12 oz package would mean a change in the total amount of juice distributed in the program. This will call for the current food package to be reanalyzed to determine whether the nutrient composition is providing excessive calories, sugars or vice versa.

In the meantime, it was suggested that the group look into aluminum cans by AMS. The concentrate would be the same 11.5 oz requested in the aseptic packaging. Questions concerning the packaging (leaking, can strength) were raised by work group members. It was stated that AMS has already been notified of this problem due to complaints from another USDA household program. We will also look into whether there are any ramifications with fortifying the product in this type of packaging. On the next

conference call, pending product data (cost, availability, etc.) the group will make a final decision on this product for the program.

Due to time constraints, the call had to be wrapped up quickly. Assignments were given to the appropriate parties to obtain information on those three products: hominy - Sharon Hadder (FSA), cream of mushroom - Sheldon Gordon (FNS); and Dennis Pearson (AMS). As agreed by consensus of the group, the 2002-2004 review cycle was not closed out; items from the 2004-2006 cycle have been tabled until the next call.

Next Conference Call -

The next work group session will be at 10:00 AM Pacific Time (1:00 PM Eastern time) on either Thursday, June 22 or 29, 2006. An email to the group will be sent out for a group consensus of the date. Sheldon will provide the call-in information when it is available.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30AM PST.

Minutes submitted by,
Sheldon Gordon