

**FDPIR Food Package Review
May 3, 2007 Conference Call Notes**

		Present	Not Present
1.	Betty Jo Graveen, Lac du Flambeau FDP		
2.	Dennis Pearson, AMS (Alternate - Cathie Smith)		
3.	Karen Kell, FNS-SERO		
4.	Lorraine Davis, Navajo Nation		
5.	Lorraine Whitehair, CDC		
6.	Melanie Todd, Chickasaw Health System		
7.	Nancy Gaston, FNS-HQ		
8.	Nancy Theodore, FNS-HQ		
9.	Pat Roberts, Menominee FDP		
10.	Ray Capoeman, Quinault FDP		
11.	Ron Ulibarri, AMS-HQ		
12.	Rosalind Cleveland, FNS-HQ		
13.	Roxana Newsom, Chickasaw FDP		
14.	Sarah Kellogg-Eby, FNS-WRO		
15.	Scott Krueger, Menominee Tribal Clinic		
16.	Sharon Hadder, FSA-HQ		
17.	Sheldon Gordon, FNS-HQ		
18.	Susan Anderson, CDC		
19.	Red Gates, Standing Rock Sioux (Mary Greene-Trottier)		
20.	Steve Freeman, FSA-HQ		
21.	Tony Nertoli, Sault Ste. Marie		

The food package review work group assembled on the conference call at 1:00PM (EST) on Thursday, May 3, 2007. Sheldon Gordon took roll call at 1:05 PM.

Goals for FY 2007-2008

I. Goal 1 - Healthier Food Options: Meeting the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

A. Reduced or low-sodium canned vegetables

Discussion 1- Ros (FNS) explained to the work group the problem getting the low sodium vegetables (corn and green beans). AMS recently announced our goal of offering more low sodium vegetables at the Industry meeting in April. However, according to AMS procurement officials vendors' that participate in USDA commodity programs stated this will be a slow process. This is because vegetables are only canned seasonally, and product would have to be set aside for special production runs since low-sodium versions of these products are not widely available commercially. Manufacturers have indicated that they can phase-in some low-sodium vegetables within the next 12 months.

Sarah indicated that the sodium in spaghetti sauce is quite high at 500-600 mg/serving. There were also talks about the taste of these low sodium products and how they would be accepted. It was discussed that maybe a tasting could be done at NAFDPIR for some of these products. Lorraine also pointed out that nutrition education would be essential to getting participants to take the products once we offer it.

Task 1a: FNS (Sheldon) will continue to maintain contact with AMS on the progress of vendors making the transition to low sodium vegetables. **Due by December 28, 2006.**

After reviewing notes from AMS, we will need to determine if we are going to go full throttle on these two products. In order for us to procure this item at a reasonable cost, we will have order at least # based on previous orders of the regular product.

Also, group members discussed having some commodities offered on a seasonal basis due to low take rates, concerns with storage, and cost. Canned pumpkin and sweet potatoes were the two commodities that were suggested to be offered seasonally. Both canned commodities seem to peak only during the winter holiday season, and then are in low demand during the remaining

fiscal year. Offering, these commodities seasonally may help to offset prices for other foods and eliminate stockpiling in the warehouses.

Task 1b: ITO Program Directors are being asked to respond to the questions below to Sheldon **by COB Thursday, December 28, 2006.**

Yes ___ **No** Offer canned pumpkin and sweet potatoes as a seasonal commodity.

B. Reduce total fat in food package.

Discussion 2 – Instead of offering both the regular and reduced-fat bakery mix, we would only offer the reduced-fat bakery mix in the monthly food package. Questions concerning the take rates were discussed as well as other possible alternatives for the regular bakery mix. The consensus from the group was to help promote the healthier product nutrition education information would be needed such as in classes or use of brochures. Many felt without the nutrition education component informing them of the health benefits the product would fail. FSA confirmed that we are currently purchasing the reduced-fat bakery mix from commercial vendors but hopes that Javits-Wagner O'Day (JWOD) will be able to offer the product again soon.

Task 2: ITO Directors Program Directors to poll recipients to determine if we can remove the regular bakery mix from the package and only offer the reduced-fat bakery mix. **ITO Directors are being asked to respond to question below to Sheldon by COB Thursday, December 28, 2006.**

Yes ___ **No** Only offer reduced-fat baking mix in the package. **From the four responses I received, it seems that we are ok with offering the reduced fat bakery mix as our only option. If you have not given your response and would like to address your concern, we can discuss this now.**

Discussion 3 - Remove shortening from the current food package. A mixed reaction was expressed among the work group members regarding this change. However, at this time removing shortening from the food package has been tabled. USDA in its efforts to meet one of the recommendations in the 2005 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* may be removing the shortening offered in all commodity programs. This is being seen as a way for USDA to reduce total fat in all commodity programs and help combat the increasing obesity rates in America. Also, the issue of offering oils in the program containing no *trans* fat was raised.

Task 3a: FNS will gather information and report on the status of shortening being offered in all USDA's commodity programs. **Information due by Thursday, December 28, 2006.** **I ran reports for the past two fiscal years 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 and there has been a decline in the number of shortening ordered. There has been approximately 33% decline in orders for shortening in all FNS programs. For FDPIR, that decline was 31%, just one third less of between FY04-05 and FY 05-06 for shortening.**

Task 3b: FSA to research oils containing no *trans* fats for program. **Due to FNS by Thursday, December 21, 2006** **According to KCCO, our oils do not contain trans fat. The only oil we purchase containing trans fat is shortening. At the moment there are no shortenings on the market which contain no trans fat. We have one vendor who is trying to develop a shortening which contains no trans fat.**

C. Increase Whole Grains

Discussion 4 – Group discussed ways to increase whole grain consumption among recipients. A suggestion was made to the work group about researching 50/50 mix whole grain bakery mix. FNS will be offering whole wheat pasta (spaghetti and macaroni) to schools in the upcoming school year and then soon after will offer it to household programs. Many group members felt that nutrition education will be very important to increasing the appeal and awareness of whole grain items in the food package. Many felt recipients would not like or know how to use some of the products. Therefore, take rates for these types of products would be low. One suggestion

from the group was to ask recipients to submit recipes utilizing whole grains in their native dishes to USDA. These recipes could then be incorporated in the River of Recipes booklet. FNS is creating a listserv for FDPIR that may serve as the vehicle to help disseminate information such as this among ITO directors.

Task 4: FSA will survey with vendors to see if a whole grain (50/50 mix) bakery mix is available on the commercial market. If so, obtain product information. **Due to FNS by COB 12-28-06.**

On the 50/50 bakery mix I have found that any flour that states it is wheat flour is already a blend of wheat and white flour. The only way it is not a blend is if it states "100 % whole wheat."

Therefore, a mix would be available but I have not received the quotes from KC.

Question/Concern to FSA: I thought we were looking at a 50/50 blend of whole wheat flour and white flour since our goal is to increase whole grain consumption. By offering a regular blend of wheat /white flour this would not meet the DGA for the whole grains.

II. Goal 2 - Guide rates: Modify to accommodate the 1-person households' monthly distribution package and select smaller pack sizes for certain commodities.

A. Choose smaller pack sizes from current chart to narrow down to top 3-4 items.

Discussion 5 – Availability of some items from the chart were discussed among the group.

i. Saltine Crackers – FSA was able to determine that the requested 8 oz pack size is available on the commercial market. The cost/lb would increase from \$0.7125 to \$0.8250.

Task 5a: FNS will perform a cost analysis for offering the suggested 8 oz package of saltine crackers for the 1-person household. **Due to group by COB 1-4-07.** By offering the 8 oz packaging in the monthly distribution this adds 6 cents per month to the basic package cost.

ii. Farina/Cream of Wheat - It was determined that the 14oz pack size currently offered in the food package is the smallest available on the commercial market. A suggestion from one of the group members was to see if 1-person household could receive a package every month and forgo one of the non-whole grain breakfast cereals.

Task 5b: FNS will perform a nutritional analysis as well as a cost analysis for offering the suggested 14 oz cream of wheat/farina in a monthly package for the 1-person household. **Due to group by COB 1-4-07.** An additional cost of 16 cents per person per month. As far as the nutrients are concerned overall increase included: calories – 25 (1%); CHO- 5g (1%); 1g sodium, Ca - 1g all other nutrients such as fat, sat fat, vit A & C, Fe protein remained the same. As you can see this does not significantly change the nutritional value of the package but does allow for 1 person household to conveniently receive it every month.

iii. Oats – FSA was able to determine that a smaller pack size is available for the quick oats in an 18 oz tube (canister). The estimated cost for the product in the smaller pack size is about twice the amount we are currently purchasing it at \$0.3518/lb for the 42 oz compared to \$0.7781/lb for the 18 oz.

Also, a concern was raised about the acceptability of the quick oats. It was mentioned the recipients have asked for the regular slow cooking oats. In a response from FNS, it was stated that the quick oats currently offered in the food package came about as a result of recipients requesting the quick oats for its convenience.

Task 5c: FNS will perform a cost analysis for offering the suggested 18 oz tube (canister) of quick oats for the 1-person household. **Due to group by COB 1-4-07.** By adding changing the oats pack size we add an additional 41 cents per basic food package. Overall, the cost of these pack size changes increases the cost by 65 cents to 1 dollar per person.

iv. Macaroni and Cheese – The current 26 oz macaroni and cheese dinner offered is a special USDA commodity in that it requires a thicker pasta noodle and has a specially blended cheese sauce so that it would hold well on the serving line for schools and the recipients

would only have to use water to make the product. Currently, on the commercial market there are convenience types that only require adding water such as Kraft's Easy Macaroni and Cheese dinner that can be found in single servings (cup/pouch).

Since this past conference call on November 16, FSA received feedback from our sole macaroni and cheese vendor. The vendor indicated they would be able to provide a 7.25 oz box of macaroni and cheese in the following pack sizes: 12, 24, or 48 count.

Task 5d: FNS will confirm with FSA that this product will be the same type of convenience product (just add water) currently offered, but made with thinner wall pasta as well as obtain cost information from FSA. **Due to group by COB 1-4-07.** By April 1, KC says that all Group B commodities must be commercial. This means that the mac and cheese we are looking for would be the same as the ones found on the shelf in your local grocery store. By doing this, it will eliminate the problem of the thick walled macaroni. I am not sure how this will influence the cost as FSA did not provide that bit of information to us for the call. I will f/u with KC/FSA to determine how this will affect the programs operational cost.

- v. Cheese – To accommodate the one person household work group members discussed the pros/cons of offering both the regular cheese in a 5 lb loaf and the 2 lb loaf of reduced-fat cheese. Some members felt that we are offering more of an incentive to offer the regular cheese every month than the healthier reduced-fat version, if we decide to go with offering the 2lb reduced-fat cheese loaf every month. Currently, vendors do not produce a 2 ½ lb loaf on the commercial market.

One member felt that recipients could receive the 2 lb reduced-fat cheese loaf and on the third month receive another loaf to account for the missing 2 lbs. From an ordering, storage and distributing perspective, this can become an arduous task. ITO directors would have to keep track of what type of cheese each recipient took each month so that recipients did not go over their allotted amount of cheese.

Task 5e: FSA will survey vendors to see if any of them are willing to produce the regular and reduced fat cheese in a 2 ½ lb loaf and at what cost. **Due to FNS by COB 12-28-06.** FSA has not heard back from KCCO on the availability on the 2 1/2 lb. loaf of cheese. Yesterday, we also tried to reach to KCCO to obtain this information for this call. From our brief discussion with them it is our understanding that this is may not be an option but we are still hopeful that a vendor may decide to partake in this package size.

- B. Current changes to the guide rates for canned and frozen meat products included increasing the amount of frozen ground beef and frozen cut-up chicken that may be substituted for canned meat products. Over the next few months, FNS will monitor if any changes have occurred in take rates between the canned meats and frozen meats by recipients.
- C. Revisit canned meat/frozen meats list – With more and more tribal organizations procuring coolers for the warehouses the demand for canned meats items may decrease. It has been mentioned many times by group members that many of the recipients do not favor the canned meat commodities and would prefer more frozen meats. To help determine our next steps regarding offering alternatives to the canned meats in the program, we will use the information above in II B as our guide.

III. Goals 3 - Explore possibility of offering UHT milk in the program.

- A. Discussion 6 – The group discussed procuring 1% or 2% UHT milk to replace the evaporated milk and non-fat dry milk (NDM). It was noted some time ago that the recipients did not like the NDM when it was reconstituted. FNS will review the take rates on the evaporated milk and NDM to determine if we can remove it from package and access the cost of the UHT milk. Also, it was addressed that UHT pack size should be further researched for a larger pack size – 64 oz carton.

Prices provided by FSA were based on the price/gallon of a 32 oz (quart) carton. The pack size that would be desirable for this program would be the 64 oz carton.

Task 6a: FSA will research 64 oz carton UHT milk product availability and cost. **Due to FNS by COB 12-28-06.**

FSA's response - As far as (6a), I thought in October we had decided that UHT milk at \$3.71 a gallon was too high for the program. The buying power per year for UHT milk would be 1,821,241 gallons, while the buying power of Nonfat dry milk would be 7,843,138 gallons with the same dollar amount.

FNS concerns/questions: Although, we know the price for the 32 oz carton was more expensive we were trying to determine the availability of the larger 64 oz carton. As we mentioned, we look to see if we could off-set the cost by reducing the orders of evap milk or eliminating it in the prgm.

Task 6b: FNS to review take rates on evaporated milk and NDM by next call. **Due to FNS by COB 12-28-06.** Comparing FY04-05 to FY05-06 there was 8% decline in orders for evap milk for FDPIR. (Need to talk with Ros about this since the NDM is a bonus but according to the package is distributed every other month.)

IV. Old business -

- A. Corn Syrup – A member of the group raised the concern about corn syrup that was previously on list for the 2006-2007 food package review cycle. While corn syrup may still be a concern in the food package, the group earlier this year re-prioritized items from the 2006-2007 review cycle for the current 2007-2008 review cycle. At the end of the 2007-2008 review cycle when the group reviews our targeted goals and accomplishments, we may at that time consider adding this to the list for the following food package review cycle.
- B. Juice Concentrate – AMS indicated that it may be Summer/Fall 2007 before the product is available for a test buy. In the meantime, AMS will send a notice to industry informing them of the change in the USDA commodity program (which is to move away from juice in the 46 oz can (full strength) to 11.5 oz can juice (concentrate)). In April 2007, AMS plans to attend the Fruit & Vegetable Industry Meeting and will present the changes in the USDA commodity program. **AMS** will provide updates, if any, on the next call.
- C. Cream of Mushroom Soup & Hominy – AMS re-approached JWOD concerning their ability to produce these product. From their meeting, it was determined that JWOD was interested. If any production occurs, it may take up to a year or two. **AMS** will keep the group posted if any updates are available on the next call.
- D. Commercial Labels – FNS received replies back from four ITO directors regarding Group B commodities still arriving in commodity labels. FNS has advised FSA representatives to inform vendors that we want all Group B commodities to be in commercial labels.

Next Conference Call -

The next work group session will be at 1:00 PM Eastern time (10:00 AM Pacific Time) on either **Thursday, March 15 or 22, 2007**. An email to the group will be sent out for a group consensus of the date. Sheldon will provide the agenda and call-in information when it is available.

Meeting adjourned at PM EST.
Minutes submitted by,
Sheldon Gordon