

School Programs Commodity Update

What's New in USDA's Food Distribution Program for Schools

ARTICLES IN THIS ISSUE	
Commodity Update.....	1
NSLP Fact Sheets With Commodity Codes.....	2
We are Also Listening to Your Opinions About Commodity Ham!.....	2
Commodity Workshops at Upcoming SNA National Conference	3
Food Allergen Labeling	3
Expect Some Changes in the DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.....	3
<i>MyPyramid for Kids</i> Classroom Materials	4
Promote Student Health! Get Involved in the Local Wellness Policy	4
<i>MyPyramid</i> in Spanish.....	5
Comments	5
Acronym List	5

We are quickly coming to the end of another school year! This will be the last *School Programs Commodity Update* for this school year. We have been continuing to make some changes and improvements in the commodity programs this year, and have tried to keep you informed of them. Please let us know if there are any commodity-related issues that you would like us to address in the upcoming school year. If you have any comments, please e-mail us at: fdd-psb@fns.usda.gov. Have a good summer!

COMMODITY UPDATE

End of this school year: Due to market conditions and delays in the purchases for some poultry items, we offered later delivery periods for both direct delivery products and those for diversion to processors. In addition, we offered canned pears and frozen potatoes later in the school year since some fruit and vegetables could not be purchased. This helped many to use entitlement dollars that would have otherwise been carried over into the next school year.

Outlook for School Year 2006/07: We should be able to supply ample quantities of fresh, canned, and frozen apples, canned peaches, and canned pineapple. Supplies of citrus products may be reduced because of disease, damage, and hurricanes. Turkey supplies are expected to be tight with elevated prices. Beef, pork, and chicken prices are expected to be somewhat lower next year.

Possible future changes: We are reviewing our commodities to determine what changes could be made to support the 2005 U. S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans. We are exploring reducing sodium in our canned vegetables and increasing whole grain offerings, such as whole grain spaghetti, macaroni, and quick-cook brown rice. Another area of consideration is reducing trans fats.

NSLP FACT SHEETS WITH COMMODITY CODES...Promises Made, Promises Kept!

A few months ago, we solicited comments from State Distributing Agencies and schools on what USDA could do to make our NSLP commodity fact sheets more useful to them and to school food service managers. It was no contest. The respondents overwhelmingly wanted us to place the FNS commodity code on each fact sheet developed to assist them in matching the commodity fact sheets with the commodities ordered from USDA.

In response to this request and commitments given by FNS management, we developed a Special Commodity Fact Sheet Report that includes the 4-digit commodity code on each of the more than 250 fact sheets developed for schools and institutions.

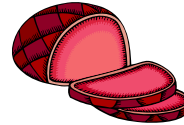
The special report, along with the table of contents sorted by commodity code, commodity title, and food group, may be accessed via: www.commodityfoods.usda.gov. Click on "In the News," and then on "[Special NSLP Commodity Fact Report with Commodity Codes and Related Table of Contents](#)." This web page also includes a few tips on how to use the Adobe Reader's search feature to quickly locate any fact sheet by its 4-digit commodity code or key word.

We developed this special report for States and schools to use until the current online commodity fact sheet database can be:
(a) upgraded with more cutting edge features and
(b) updated to reflect any new requirements resulting from the implementation of the USDA MyPyramid Food Guidance System. Until then, we will continue to publish the Special NSLP Commodity Fact Sheet Report on the Food Distribution website for your convenience.

Thanks for your feedback and, as promised, we

listened. Or as we like to say, "Promises made, Promises kept!"

WE ARE ALSO LISTENING TO YOUR OPINIONS ABOUT COMMODITY HAM!



Sliced and diced ham may be coming! In responses tallied from over 730 surveys for the Ham, Frozen, Water-added (A693) we received from you last summer, it is evident that food service staff want more convenience. As a result, we are hoping to offer two new ham products, both sliced and diced ham, in SY 2007. Availability of the sliced and diced products could make it easier to menu USDA ham in your lunch and breakfast sandwiches, on salad bars, as a pizza topping, in soups, and for other creative uses.

We are also exploring the purchase of smaller, 5-pound packages, pending receipt of price and availability information. If we do offer the smaller packaging, we will most likely discontinue one of the two current products (10-pound frozen or chilled). Also note that we may conduct a test buy before making a final decision to purchase the two new ham products.

A hearty "Thank You" to everyone who responded to our Ham survey! Your input makes a difference to the commodity program and also makes our jobs easier.

COMMODITY WORKSHOPS AT THE UPCOMING SNA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

If you are planning to attend the School Nutrition Association's Annual National Conference in Los Angeles this July, plan to check out some workshops about commodities!

For the first time, this year SNA will offer a Commodity Track of workshops. You will have your choice of the following workshops:

Basic:

- *Basic Commodity Processing*
- *ECOS: A New Platform for Commodity Ordering, Complaint Management, and More*
- *Donated Food Program Basics*
- *Streamlining the Ever-changing Commodity Processing Program*
- *DoD and Farm to Table Programs Provide Fresh Produce for School Meals*
- *A New Twist for Procuring Processed Commodities*
- *Communications Between States and Schools*

Intermediate/Advanced:

- *ECOS for Processors and Distributors*
- *Beyond Basic Processing*
- *Sharpen Your Commodity Ordering Skills*
- *The Life Cycle of a Commodity Delivery Order*
- *Meat and Poultry Processing: Unique Characteristics*
- *Procurement & Commodities*
- *The True Cost of Commodities*
- *Web-based Commodity Connections*

For more information on these workshops, you can check out the School Nutrition Association website at:

http://docs.schoolnutrition.org/meetingsandevents/anc2006/program_mon.asp#Commodities.

FOOD ALLERGEN LABELING WHAT'S NEW?

On January 1, 2006, the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act of 2004 (FALCPA) became effective. For a fact sheet summarizing the details and how it applies to commodity foods, click on:

www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/facts/FoodAllergensFactSheet.pdf. It may also be accessed via the one-stop, single-point-of-contact **Commodity**

Foods Network website by going to:

www.commodityfoods.usda.gov/facts.htm and clicking on the FD Fact Sheets link, which is the third bullet listed under heading entitled, *Food and Program Facts*.

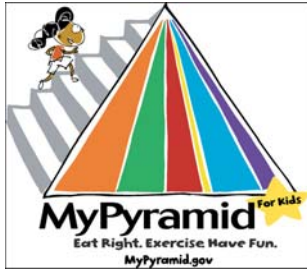
EXPECT SOME CHANGES IN THE DOD FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PROGRAM

Beginning this October, the Department of Defense (DoD) will change the way they procure products for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. They will be awarding long term contracts to a full line produce provider, in a defined geographic area.

How will this affect school districts? All schools will need to use the new DoD electronic ordering site called TAP-IT.

User IDs and passwords will be issued to all schools that are not currently using TAP-IT. This is a very user-friendly system which allows 24/7 access to placing your orders from any PC with an internet connection. In addition, schools will need to go on-line to submit a receipt after delivery has been made and accepted. This will facilitate vendor invoicing and payment, and customer billing.

Schools will continue to receive the same high quality product and customer service. Continuous updates on this issue will be placed on our website. For more information, go to: www.commodityfoods.usda.gov and click on the new DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program's home page.



MYPYRAMID FOR KIDS **CLASSROOM MATERIALS**

USDA's Team Nutrition has developed elementary school level materials to teach students about the MyPyramid food guidance. *MyPyramid for Kids* puts the guidance into kid-friendly language and uses graphics appropriate to the audience. The lessons provide teachers with easy to follow instructional material, student worksheets that teach the basics of MyPyramid in fun ways, and an interactive computer game to help students apply what they have learned. There are three levels – Level 1-grades 1 and 2; Level 2-grades 3 and 4; and Level 3-grades 5 and 6. Schools and child care facilities that participate in the child nutrition programs can preview the materials and order copies online at:

<http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/kids-pyramid.html>. Team Nutrition will be developing material for high schools and will revise other existing materials to reflect MyPyramid. Check the Team Nutrition website regularly to see what is new. All materials are placed on the website as soon as they are available. The address is:

<http://teamnutrition.usda.gov>.

PROMOTE STUDENT HEALTH! GET INVOLVED IN THE LOCAL WELLNESS POLICY

Recognizing the role schools can play in combating problems associated with students' health, Congress included in the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, a requirement that each local educational agency (LEA) or school district participating in the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program establish a local wellness policy by the beginning of SY 2006-2007. These local wellness policies will need to address the nutrition standards for foods sold on campus, nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities to promote student wellness.

The Local Wellness Policy leaves all the specifics to local authorities, allowing school districts to decide how stringent to make their policies, how to set goals and guidelines, and how to hold schools accountable. Model policies exist, but each school district will choose its own policy language, with emphasis on whatever it perceives to be most important. Because of this flexibility, your participation in developing your district's local wellness policy is very important. You need to keep in mind that nutrition guidelines established in your district's wellness policy may have impact on what foods you will order for the next school year.

According to the law, the policy development process must include, among others, parents, students, and the public. This provides a great opportunity for you to have your opinions heard in the policy-making process. Take the opportunity to get involved in children's health.

For more information, visit the USDA’s Local Wellness Policy web pages, linked from USDA’s Team Nutrition website at <http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Healthy/wellnesspolicy.html>. On these web pages you will find:

- *Policy requirements;*
- *The local process: how to create and implement a local wellness policy;*
- *Examples of model policy language, resources, implementation tools, funding sources, and other guidance;*
- *Links to additional resources;*
- *Funding opportunities; and*
- *Some Frequently Asked Questions*

MYPYRAMID IN SPANISH



On December 7, 2005, USDA released *MiPirámide: Pasos Hacia Una Mejor Salud*, the Spanish-language version of MyPyramid.gov, an on-line guide designed to help Americans live healthier lives. This new tool for Latino communities will make it easier for Spanish-speaking Americans to find nutrition information vital to good health and personalize that information to their own lifestyle.

Like MyPyramid.gov, it incorporates recommendations from the 2005 edition of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. You can access *MiPirámide* directly at www.mypyramid.gov/sp-index.html or from the MyPyramid.gov home page.

COMMENTS

Please let us know if there are any commodity-related issues that you would like us to address in future editions of the School Programs Commodity Update. If you have any questions or comments on our products or services, including ways to improve our commodity fact sheets, please e-mail them directly to our Program Support Branch at: fdd-psb@fns.usda.gov. You can also write to the Food Distribution Division, Food and Nutrition Service, USDA, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 508, Alexandria, VA 22302. //

ACRONYM LIST

DoD	Department of Defense
ECOS	The Electronic Commodity Ordering System
FDD	Food Distribution Division
FNS	Food and Nutrition Service
NSLP	National School Lunch Program
SNA	School Nutrition Association
SY	School Year
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

Prepared by: USDA, FNS, FDD’s Program Support Branch, in conjunction with the Operations Branch and the Food Safety Unit.