



**White House
Conference
on Food,
Nutrition
and Health**

SUMMARY REPORT

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS ON FOOD, NUTRITION, AND HEALTH

The President addressed the White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, and Health in December 1969. At that time, he pledged that the leaders of the Conference would be called together one year later to review what progress the government had made in implementing the Conference recommendations. The President then directed the Nutrition Subcommittee of the Urban Affairs Council to review and evaluate the Conference recommendations, and to the extent possible, assist government agencies in implementing them.

The Nutrition Subcommittee (now operating under the direction of the Domestic Council) has completed a review of the actions which the government has taken during the last year to achieve the goals of the Conference and has prepared the following summary.

Poverty

One of the basic causes of malnutrition and hunger in the United States is poverty. Millions of Americans, of all ages, and in all parts of the Nation, simply do not have enough money to buy what they need in order to live healthy, productive lives.

The Administration has advanced significant and comprehensive proposals to deal with the basic problem of poverty. The strategy is simple and direct: increase the buying power of poor Americans so that they can buy more food and other essentials. These Administration proposals include:

- *The Family Assistance Plan.* The Family Assistance Plan is a basic reform of the Nation's welfare system. It would provide cash assistance to all poor families with children, and for the first time would provide Federal aid for millions of Americans where the father works full time. Over twenty-four million Americans would be eligible for benefits under the Family Assistance Plan.
- *The Food Stamp Program.* The Administration has proposed and implemented far-reaching legislative and administrative reforms in the Food Stamp Program to increase the food purchasing power of poor families. These are described more fully below.
- *Social Security.* The Administration has proposed that Social Security payments, which now reach over twenty-six million Americans, be raised automatically with the cost of living. This reform would greatly lessen the painful delays which beneficiaries suffer as they wait to have their payments raised to keep pace with rising prices. The President signed a bill which increased Social Security benefits 15 percent effective January 1, 1970, and supports and an additional increase of 5 percent for the year ahead — as a first step in restoring lost purchasing power for Social Security beneficiaries.
- *Tax Reform.* The 1969 Tax Reform Act provides a low-income allowance which materially increases the real incomes of many poor Americans. Over six million people with incomes below the poverty level are now freed from paying Federal income taxes. An additional eight million people, with incomes slightly higher than the poverty level, now have reduced tax burdens.

THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Federal Accomplishment

The Nutrition Subcommittee review of Federal actions taken to implement the Conference recommendations consists of a comprehensive report, condensed and summarized below. Highlights of Federal action and progress are grouped under four headings:

- Expansion of the Food Stamp Program
- Improved Child Nutrition Programs
- Improvements in other nutritional programs
- Consumer protection and information activities

A. Expansion of the Food Stamp Program

The Administration, through administrative action and proposed legislative amendments, has dramatically expanded and liberalized the Food Stamp Program. This is part of the effort to meet the President's call of May 6, 1969, to "put an end to hunger in America."

- Participation in the Food Stamp Program has jumped from 3.6 million to 9.3 million persons in the ten months from December 1969 to November 1970.
- Program costs have risen from \$248 million in 1969 to \$576 in 1970 and are budgeted to rise to \$1,250 in 1971. This is a more than *five-fold* increase in three years.
- Nearly all of the three thousand counties in the Nation are now served by Food Stamp or Commodity Distribution Programs. Over 12 million low-income persons are participating in these programs.
- Benefits have been liberalized. For example, the monthly Food Stamp bonus for a family of four with a \$2,000 annual income was more than doubled by raising their stamp allotment to \$106 and reducing their purchase requirement.

The Administration's commitment to improving the Food Stamp Program is clear. In mid-1969, the Administration proposed legislative reforms in the program and requested increased funding. In December 1969, the Secretary of Agriculture revised and liberalized the Food Stamp purchase schedules through administrative action. At the same time, the Departments of Agriculture and Health, Education, and Welfare have been developing simpler standards and more efficient procedures for certifying Food Stamp benefits for needy families.

The Administration plans to transfer the Food Stamp Program to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and to administer the program in close harmony with the proposed Family Assistance Plan. Under this approach, Family Assistance recipients could authorize the government automatically to withhold their Food Stamp payment from their cash benefit. The recipients would then receive their food stamps at the same time as their cash benefits. Ultimately, the Administration seeks to convert the Food Stamp Program into an all-cash program tied closely to other income maintenance programs.

B. Improved Child Nutrition Programs

The Administration has endorsed legislative and administrative actions to meet the President's commitment to provide free or reduced-price lunches for *every* needy child in America.

- On May 14, 1970, the President approved Public Law 91-248, a law which amends the National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act. The legislation embodies many of the recommendations of the White House Conference, and provides authority to:
 - Encourage States to extend the lunch program to *every* school within their borders.
 - Establish *national* standards of minimum income eligibility for the free and reduced-price lunches. (This level was set at \$3,720 per year for a family of four by the Department of Agriculture.)
 - Transfer funds among various child nutrition programs in order to tailor benefits according to State and local requirements to reach needy children.
 - Improve nutrition education programs in schools and school lunchrooms.
- Total funds requested for Child Nutrition Programs were increased in July 1970 to more than one billion dollars for fiscal year 1971. This is a sharp increase from the \$657 million spent in the previous year. Of the total amount budgeted for the Child Nutrition Programs in 1971, \$356 million – or one-third – is slated for special assistance for needy children. This is an *eight-fold* increase over the amount spent for this purpose in fiscal year 1969.
- From October 1968 to October 1970, the number of children receiving free or reduced-price meals more than doubled. This number will continue to grow through the school year.
- Free or reduced-price lunches should now be available to *all* eligible children in schools which participate in the School Lunch Program.

C. Improvements in Other Nutrition Programs

A wide range of Federally-assisted nutrition programs have achieved significant impact in the last year. These efforts include:

- The Office of Economic Opportunity's emergency food and medical service program. Working through local groups, this program has been instrumental in the development of new ways to improve the basic food assistance programs.
- The Department of Agriculture's nutrition education programs, which have been expanded in cooperation with the Land Grant Universities. Nutrition education has been enhanced through the use of 7,000 non-professional nutrition aides who perform Outreach work.
- The Office of Education's programs to develop curriculum guides and nutritional information for schools. Eight pilot projects are being launched to show how schools can use innovative techniques to meet the health and nutrition needs of disadvantaged children.
- The Nutrition Program of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, sponsored by the Center for Disease Control. The Center is funding twenty nutrition demonstration programs.
- The National Nutritional Surveillance System. This System will monitor the nutritional status of the entire population, with special emphasis on low-income groups. Planning for the System is now complete and implementation is underway.

- The authorization of the Department of Defense to use food stamps in the military commissary system. This will enhance the food purchasing power of low-income military personnel and their dependents. The 1971 budget included a 20 percent pay increase for enlisted personnel in the lower ranks, a measure which will do much to eliminate the problem of inadequate diets. The Department of Defense is also taking additional steps to upgrade the food service provided to military personnel.

D. Consumer Protection and Information Activities

All Americans benefit from consumer protection and nutrition education programs. These programs guard citizens against hazardous or misleading products, and enable them to obtain better nutrition for each dollar they spend on food. Improvements in consumer protection and nutrition information activities have advanced along several fronts during the past year.

These include:

- The Food and Drug Administration. In September, 1970, the FDA contracted with the National Academy of Sciences to produce nutritional guidelines (both maximum and minimum nutritional content) for certain classes of food. These guidelines will be useful to the consumer and to the food industry. Representatives of the food industry have already expressed interest in using them. The Food and Drug Administration has also begun a program to assure that meaningful consumer choice can be made on the basis of food labels, and that these labels include information on nutritional content.
- The Federal Trade Commission. The FTC has recently created a division on food enforcement. It has also been reorganized so that all of its efforts are better focused to protect the consumer. Particular attention is being given to advertising aimed at children.
- The Department of Agriculture. USDA is intensively studying dietary patterns, primarily in poverty areas. The knowledge these studies yield will be used to help develop better government food programs, and also to improve public food buying and eating habits. As part of these efforts, the Department is also studying the nutrient content of foods, the blending of food components, and the fortification of foods. The Department is working with the food industry and the mass media to assure better communication with groups having special nutritional needs, such as the poor and elderly.

(A more detailed summary of major Federal accomplishments, organized by agency, is attached, beginning on page 6.)

State and Local Governments and the Private Sector

Action by the Federal Government to improve the nutrition and health of our citizens is important. But action in the private sector and by the State and local governments is essential. Only with the help, encouragement and leadership of these institutions can significant and lasting improvements be made in the nutrition of the American people.

It is most encouraging that the private sector and the State and local governments are already deeply committed to solving the problem of malnutrition. Their actions in the last year include:

- Nutrition and hunger conferences, which have been held in nearly all of the fifty States, to focus attention on the problems of hunger and malnutrition. Over one-third were called by the State governors. Other conferences have been sponsored by State agencies, City governments, universities, private and professional organizations. These conferences have gone beyond mere study of the questions. They have

struggled with the real nutritional problems facing their communities and have tried to help solve them.

- Public Alert for Better Nutrition. The food industry, working through the Food Council of America, has developed a publicity campaign to encourage better nutrition habits among American families.
- The Advertising Council, working closely with private industry and several government agencies, is developing a public service campaign to stimulate public interest in better nutrition.

Voluntary Efforts

True to a strong American tradition, volunteer organizations and individual volunteers in all parts of the Nation are working to help the needy get food and nutrition information. These vital efforts complement the activities of the Federal, State and local governments, and those of the private sector. They include:

- Local business organizations in Philadelphia which are helping to finance seven school breakfast programs.
- A multi-faceted program in San Diego which joins the efforts of the Salvation Army, local religious organizations and community groups, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the City Welfare Department. These agencies have jointly established and staffed neighborhood food distribution centers.
- Students in Oklahoma who have helped teach families how to use donated foods wisely.
- Seven organizations and eleven individual volunteers in Athens, Georgia, who have helped over 200 needy families obtain donated foods.
- The Wichita, Kansas, Red Cross which has been delivering school lunches to three inner-city schools.
- The Senior Citizens Club of Modesto, California, which provides food stamp information at food stores and community centers.

These significant efforts are a tribute to those responsible, and a measure of the growing national commitment “to put an end to hunger in America.”

MAJOR ACHIVEMENTS BY FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

Many Federal agencies have made important contributions toward the goal of better nutrition. The accomplishments of agencies most affected by Conference recommendations are included in this summary.

A. Department of Agriculture

1. *Accepted two-thirds of recommendations.* — More than two-thirds of the White House Conference recommendations referred to the Department of Agriculture were accepted and will have an impact on program direction.

2. *Expanded Food Stamps.* — The largest body of recommendations affecting the Department of Agriculture relates to the food assistance programs operated by the Food and Nutrition Service. Prominent among these recommendations were proposals to liberalize the food stamp coupon issuance schedule. On December 18, 1969, the Department announced a new schedule providing increased bonuses and reduced purchase requirements for most families. The new schedule makes it possible for all participating families to purchase an adequate diet at a cost of no more than 33 percent of income. The following table demonstrates the effect of these interventions:

TABLE 1. — *Comparison of Food Bonus (for a family of four)*

<i>Monthly Income</i>	<i>Old Schedule</i>	<i>New Schedule</i>
\$ 0- 19.99	\$58.00	\$104.00
50 – 59.99	44.00	96.00
100 – 109.99	34.00	81.00
150 – 169.99	28.00	64.00
250 – 269.99	24.00	34.00
330 – 359.99	24.00	26.00

These liberalizations produced a significant increase in program participation and costs, as outlined in the table below:

TABLE 2. — *Food Stamp Expansion*

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Participants (end of year)</i>	<i>Costs (millions)</i>
1965	632,867	\$56
1966	1,217,247	64
1967	1,831,888	114
1968	2,411,891	185
1969	3,224,233	248
1970	6,469,946	575

3. *Improved Administration of Food Stamps.* — The Conference also urged close coordination of the food programs with the proposed Family Assistance Plan. The Department,

in cooperation with the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, is developing plans for the interfacing of these two programs. In June, the President announced his intention to transfer the Food Stamp Program to HEW in conjunction with implementation of the Family Assistance Plan. In the Administration's June and October revisions of the Family Assistance Plan, it was also contemplated that a family could simply check a box on their FAP application and receive their food stamp benefits automatically.

In addition, to these steps, the Conference supported legislative efforts for the improvement of food stamp programs, including:

- simultaneous operation of food stamps and commodity distribution in program areas;
- permitting the aging to use stamps to purchase food either for home preparation or for prepared meals delivered to homes by non-profit agencies; and
- providing variable purchase plans for recipients, to give them more flexibility in coordinating their stamp purchase with availability of income.

The Administration has accepted these proposals in substance and has supported them in the Congress' review of the food stamp amendments.

4. *Special nutrition programs for vulnerable groups.* — The Department is now experimenting with food certificate programs directed toward *specific target groups*, such as pregnant women and infants, to determine the effectiveness of such programs in improving their diets and health. The Department is also giving increased attention to *improving the nutritional adequacy* of the commodities being used in the *commodity distribution* program through such efforts as:

- enriching macaroni,
- providing iron fortification of farina and corn grits,
- recognizing regional preferences for varieties of beans,
- increasing the usage of instant dry milk to improve the acceptability of the milk distributed, and
- improving methods of distributing and delivering commodities.

5. *School lunches provided free or at reduced prices to low-income children.* — In line with Conference recommendations, Public Law 91-248 was enacted in May of 1970, applying a national minimum income standard of eligibility for free and reduced-price lunches. This act provides authority to:

- increase the amount of Federal financial assistance available for free and reduced-price lunches,
- introduce education and training demonstration projects in schools, and
- finance evaluation studies

6. *Expansion of Nutrition Aides Program.* — The nutrition education program, using non-professional aides drawn from the local communities served, is recruiting additional aides and is increasing the number of families served. This program is being continually evaluated to assure that: (a) the families served are those in greatest need of assistance; (b) the program provides equal opportunity to all races; and (c) the program is effective in operation. Monitoring to date indicates significant improvement in the diets of families reached.

7. *Better information and improved program evaluation.* — Accompanying these actions to improve and expand programs, *evaluative efforts* were undertaken to ascertain the effectiveness of alternative feed programs. The pilot program for assistance to pregnant women and infants included comprehensive evaluation as a part of the program from its inception. A special study of child nutrition programs was undertaken to examine alternative delivery systems. Program evaluation criteria in the Food Stamp Program are being changed to reflect a shift of emphasis from the impacts of food stamps on food expenditures to the nutritional adequacy of the

diet provided with the stamps. Studies are also being initiated to improve the effectiveness of the Commodity Distribution Program until it is replaced.

8. *Consumer Protection and Education.* — The Department of Agriculture is conducting extensive applied research on food habits and choices. Particular emphasis is being placed on the dietary patterns and problems in low-income areas to serve as a basis for developing the most effective techniques for improving diets through nutrition education and food programs.

Other research is being directed at the nutritional content of foods, including advantages gained through blending food components and through fortification with specific nutrients.

The Department is continuing to emphasize its cooperative information programs of working with industry and the media to create greater awareness of the importance of good nutrition. In line with Conference recommendations, special efforts are being made to:

- reach particularly vulnerable groups in the population — including low-income, ethnic, or age groups, and groups with language barriers;
- encourage participation in food programs;
- promote voluntary activity;
- emphasize food safety and the avoidance of food hazards; and
- increase consumer understanding of USDA standards, grades and labels.

B. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

1. *Most Recommendations Accepted.* — Approximately 70 percent of the recommendations of the White House Conference referred to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare were accepted.

2. *The Family Assistance Plan and better nutrition for the poor.* — Perhaps the greatest contribution that HEW could make toward upgrading the nutritional status of people at “high risk” is through *the Administration’s Family Assistance Plan*. This welfare-reform proposal includes many features — both administrative and programmatic — recommended by the Conference. For example, the inequity of variable eligibility and benefit standards between States will be virtually eliminated as national standards are applied. The payment for the aged, blind or disabled would nearly close the poverty-income gap for these groups.

3. *Improved Program Coordination.* — As a direct result of the Conference recommendations, the Secretary of HEW approved the establishment of a *Special Assistant for Nutrition Programs* in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health and Scientific Affairs to provide a departmental focal point for all nutrition-related activities. Each regional director has also designated an individual on his immediate staff to coordinate nutrition activities at the regional level. These nutrition contacts will be particularly concerned with close cooperation among Federal agencies.

4. *Strengthened Nutrition Program.* — The transfer of the Nutrition Program from the Regional Medical Program Service to the Center for Disease Control also provides emphasis to comprehensive nutrition programming within the Department. In CDC, the Nutrition Program will be able to provide direct service, program evaluation and review — in addition to technical advice and consultation with State and local health agencies. The Center is supporting twenty nutrition demonstration projects. These projects concentrate on geographic areas and special groups with identified nutrition problems, and are designed to provide for the active participation of the people served.

5. *Surveillance.* — *The Health and Nutrition Evaluation Study*, a new component of the Department’s National Health Survey, will provide information about the nutritional status of the entire population on a regular basis, as suggested by several recommendations of the Conference. The results of this study will be used to provide data on a continuing basis to identify changing food and nutrition problems.

In other surveillance efforts, the Department will carry out surveys targeted on American Indians and certain migrant populations. The Maternal and Child Health Services expects to complete its study of child nutrition later this year.

6. *Nutrition Education.* — Special efforts will be made to revise health curricula at the primary and secondary levels. Approximately eight pilot projects will be funded by the Office of Education to demonstrate creative approaches to linking existing school and community health resources, so that the multiple needs of disadvantaged children are met more adequately through the provision of a broad range of physical, mental health, and nutrition services. Nutrition education as an integral part of school lunch and breakfast programs will be included to improve the quality of health education. Initially, about two million dollars will be available for such demonstration projects.

The Office of Education is also developing a nutrition information guide on Child Feeding Programs and is drafting a curriculum guide of “Nutrition Education and the School Lunch in Elementary School.”

In the area of improved professional nutritional education, the Center for Disease Control is developing teaching aids and programs for continuing education of professionals engaged in nutrition and nutrition-related activities. Particular attention will be given to curricula changes in medical and dental schools.

7. *Comprehensive Health Care.* — Various recommendations dealt with improvements in the health delivery system. The Administration has taken several steps toward upgrading present health delivery — particularly for the disadvantaged. The proposed Family Health Insurance Program, which would replace Medicaid for those poor families with children (including the “working poor”), is one of these steps. A total review of Federal health programs is also underway, and certain changes will be recommended by the President early in 1971. Meanwhile, every effort is made in departmental programs — both direct and indirect — to include a complete range of health services, including dental care, family planning, and screening for preventive care.

8. *Food Safety.* — Many recommendations relating to food safety called for a comprehensive review of the list of foods termed “generally recognized as safe” (the so-called GRAS list). To implement these recommendations, the following steps have been taken or are planned:

- a. The Food and Drug Administration is reviewing all items on the list and those which received “prior sanction.” This review will focus on safety, appropriate use, and concentrations of certain substances in food.
- b. Once the information is compiled, FDA will make a safety decision on each GRAS items, and item that received “prior sanction.” The project is scheduled to be completed by the end of calendar 1971.
- c. This review has been structured to facilitate a continuous analysis of GRAS items in the future through a data storage and retrieval system.

Along with GRAS review, FDA is attempting to improve the safety of our food supply by *improving the microbiological testing of foods.* The laboratory methods of detecting common food microbial agents are being standardized and perfected in all FDA laboratories. Once this step is complete, FDA will train State, local and private testing laboratories in these standard methods.

9. *Nutritional guidelines.* — The Conference expressed concern over the increase in formulated foods, and the concomitant loss of consumer control over the nutritional quality of foods purchased. To offset any possible deterioration in the nutritional content of food, FDA is establishing *nutritional guidelines for certain food classes* (with the guidance of the National Academy of Sciences). These guidelines will suggest to food processors the minimum and maximum levels of nutrients that should be present in foods. By December, 1970, the suggested

nutrient specifications for one class of foods will be completed and submitted to the FDA for evaluation. By 1972 a major portion of the nutritional guidelines project will be complete and, through these guidelines, the foundation laid for a sound and comprehensive national food standards policy.

In addition to nutritional guidelines, *nutritional specifications* are being incorporated into new food standards when appropriate. For example, FDA has established a standard for an enriched macaroni product with improved protein content. This standard, if approved, will require a minimum quantity and quality of protein considerably above that now required for enriched macaroni. Protein quality and quantity specifications are also being written into vegetable protein products that simulate meat. A proposal for doubling iron fortification for flour and bread is also under review.

10. *Labeling for Nutritional Content.* — FDA has completed the first step in the development of a nutrient labeling program. After extensive discussions with nutritionists and consumers, FDA has developed three nutrient labeling plans that are now scheduled to undergo consumer acceptability tests.

The food industry has expressed great interest in nutrient labeling and many of the major food manufacturers and distributors are expected to use FDA's nutrient labeling proposal. At that time nutrient labels begin to appear on market shelves, a cooperative food industry and FDA consumer education campaign is planned to teach the consumer how to best use the new labeling approach.

An improved labeling procedure for iodized salt has been prepared and a regulation written. The regulation will help consumers differentiate between iodized and non-iodized salt. Several proposals have also been written which will allow labeling of foods for fat content. These proposals are now being considered by the Commissioner of FDA.

C. Office of Economic Opportunity

1. *Support of ongoing programs.* — Numerous activities of the Office of Economic Opportunity have had a direct impact on the implementation of Conference recommendations. In various parts of the country, OEO grants have been used to:

- pay the costs of administering school lunch programs on a temporary or start-up basis;
- purchase school lunches for eligible students who cannot afford the costs;
- administer school breakfast programs;
- provide senior citizens with hot, nutritious lunches; and
- expand local food assistance programs by providing additional warehouse space, and by facilitating certification and the issuance of Food Stamps and Commodities.

2. *Increased participation.* — To help facilitate greater utilization of food assistance programs, various OEO agencies have provided essential information and Outreach services. Legal Services lawyers have continued to provide information to as many clients as possible concerning opportunities for services.

3. *Better methods of solving food problems.* — Contracts have been awarded to study marketing problems and possibilities for using fortified foods in various poverty areas. Grants have been made to analyze the school lunch program in an effort to achieve maximum cost-effectiveness, nutritional value, and acceptance.

4. *Trained manpower.* — OEO has sought the alleviation of malnutrition and hunger through the training and use of aides to increase food manpower and improve food delivery.

OEO is currently addressing these and many other health and nutrition problems through its comprehensive neighborhood health centers and related programs.

D. Federal Trade Commission

1. *Revitalized consumer protection.* — One of the major purposes of the July 1970 reorganization of the Federal Trade Commission was to improve regulatory efforts in the vital field of consumer protection. Several steps have already been taken to insure that the regulation of food advertising receives greater emphasis and that staff efforts are more productive.

2. *Creation of a new “food enforcement” unit.* — A special food enforcement section has been established within the Division of Food and Drug Advertising. Special monitoring procedures have been established to focus increased attention on food and beverage advertising, and the Commission is currently receiving scripts and story-boards from all major networks.

3. *“Preventive enforcement”.* — The food enforcement section has formulated a program of preventive enforcement to insure that advertising does not mislead the consumer as to the nutritional value of food products.

First on the list of priorities are matters involving misrepresentations which may result in immediate and positive injury to the public health.

Second on the list of priorities are matters involving misrepresentations that indirectly affect the health or nutrition of the consuming public by diverting purchases from a nutritious product to a less nutritious substitute. For example, the Commission is currently instituting proceedings against certain manufacturers of “instant” meals. An industry-wide investigation of “diet” breads and soft drinks is being conducted.

Claims concerning the nutritional value of breakfast cereals, a staple in the diet of millions of children, are also being actively reviewed by the Commission staff. The Commission is also proceeding against certain candy manufacturers for making unwarranted nutritional claims in their advertising.

4. *Special protection of children.* — The Commission is devoting considerable attention to claims in advertising directed at children and to the advertising of food products consumed by children. Children are, by far, the most vulnerable to deceptive advertising of this nature and they play an important role in their parents’ choice of breakfast cereals, soft drinks, candy bars, and other foods.

E. Department of Labor

Recommendations affecting the Department of Labor fall into two main categories: expansion of employment opportunities in health and nutrition occupations; and assistance to seasonal agricultural workers.

1. *Expansion of training and skill development program in health and nutrition occupations.* Fifteen million dollars was added to training efforts for health occupation in 1971.

The Departments of Labor and HEW have established a Joint Committee on Health Manpower to help develop closer working relationships at all levels in the area of medical and environmental health manpower. An experimental training program for physicians’ assistants has also been jointly developed to train returning veterans with medical corps experience to help doctors provide medical services in rural areas of Tennessee.

2. *Assistance to seasonal agricultural workers.* — The Department’s Annual Worker Plan is helping over 100,000 migrant workers to obtain steadier employment — and therefore better nutrition and health — through regularizing recruitment and scheduling. Unemployment Insurance coverage for migrant workers was included in the Administration’s proposed bill but was deleted in Congress. It will be proposed again in the next session of Congress.

F. Department of Defense

1. *Better diets for military personnel.* — A joint service regulation was issued in March 1970 to improve the diets of military personnel. Daily menus now include a wider selection of food items. Legislation is being drafted to provide a uniform food allowance to all enlisted personnel.

2. *Use of food stamps at commissaries and more purchasing power for low-ranking enlisted men.* — The Department of Defense has authorized the acceptance of food stamps for purchases of food items in military commissaries, and the Defense budget for 1971 included a proposed 20 percent pay increase for enlisted personnel in the lower ranks.

3. *Improved feeding arrangements.* — DOD is conducting an in-depth review of the military feeding operation. Several Conference recommendations will be incorporated into the long-range Research and Development Food Program initiated July 1970 by the U.S. Army Laboratories at Natick.

As recommended, the Army is testing the feasibility of consolidating multiple company size dining halls and utilizing central kitchen facilities. Fort Lewis, Washington, has been designated as a pilot test site to determine the extent of cost saving and improved food delivery.

G. Department of Interior

The Department of Interior is primarily responsible for the recommendations of the subpanels concerned with the Pacific and Caribbean Territories and American Indians and Alaska Natives.

1. *Helping the American Indian.* — Several significant steps have been taken to alleviate the plight of American Indians and to hasten the development of water resources and other facilities to strengthen Indian agriculture:

- Increasing substantially the funding of the general assistance program for needy Indians to meet increased need. The Bureau assisted the Navajo Tribe and Tribes on four reservations in North Dakota by (1) helping the Navajo Tribe enter directly into an agreement with the Department of Agriculture to receive supplemental foods, and (2) assisting the North Dakota Tribes to enter into an agreement with the State of North Dakota to secure supplemental foods.
- Providing additional funds in 1971 for an inventory of critical water needs for the first stage of construction of the Navajo Irrigation Project (which will shorten the time when water can be delivered to the first 10,000-acre increment of the ultimate 110,000-acre project); and

2. *Improving nutrition in the Territorial Areas.* — Many recommendations were aimed at greater self-sufficiency in food production and less dependence on more expensive and nutritionally inferior imported foods. Although implementation is largely the responsibility of the Territorial governments, a number of steps have been taken:

- Increased commercial fishing is being promoted in all territorial areas, in order to provide more protein foods for the indigenous population and improve the economy; and
- problem areas in developing a viable indigenous food industry have been identified.

H. Department of Justice

1. *Initiated surveys of nutritional standards and food service facilities.* — The Bureau of Prisons has completed a program-wide nutrition survey to insure that inmates of Federal prisons and detention homes receive nutritionally adequate meals. The survey indicated that the diet of prisoners meets, and even exceeds, levels determined to be adequate.

Special attention is being given to ways to achieve the most efficient food service operation – including on-the-job training for inmates as well as food service personnel. Criteria for an on-the-job training program for personnel have been developed as part of a survey of food service facilities and operation.

2. *Updated standard guidelines.* — As recommended by the Conference, the Administrator of Food Services has continued to update standard guidelines to assist prisons and detention homes in the proper rations of food and most efficient foods service operation. State and local officers are also provided with consultant and inspection services on request.