



Food & Nutrition Service



FY 2007 Corporate Priorities

**A BRIEF DESCRIPTION
AND GUIDE**

October 2006

The USDA Strategic Plan and FY 2007 Priorities

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) mission is “to increase food security and reduce hunger in partnership with cooperating organizations by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthful diet, and nutrition education in a manner that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence.”



This mission is embodied in USDA’s Strategic Goal 5, “Improve the Nation’s Nutrition and Health,” which encompasses key responsibilities, strategies and performance measures for the nutrition assistance programs administered by FNS. The plan is used annually to set priorities that align FNS’s operations with these longer-term program goals.

Why set priorities? The reason is simple—our mission is vital, but our resources are limited. We must make difficult choices regarding the initiatives on which we will focus each year. FNS’s priority-setting process involves both headquarters and regional offices in making these choices as an organization.

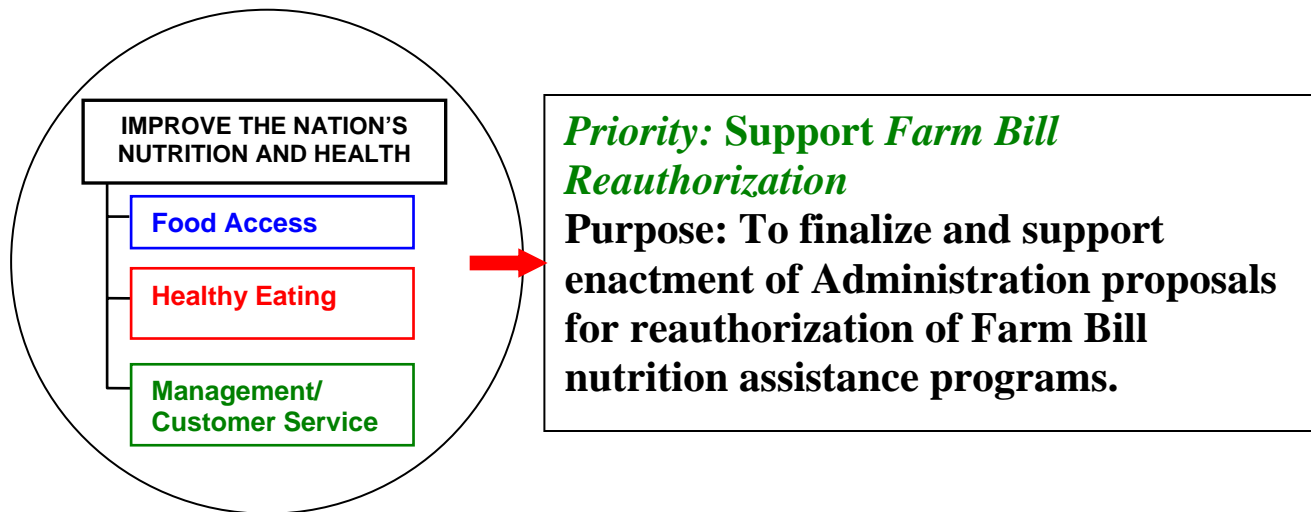
This Guide to the FY 2007 Priorities describes the results of that process. It offers a brief overview of what FNS will focus on during FY 2007 in order to fulfill its mission, identifying key goals and describing key priority projects to advance them.

FY 2007 Priorities

- 1. Support Farm Bill Reauthorization**
- 2. Increase Food Stamp Program Access**
- 3. Increase Summer Nutrition Access**
- 4. Advance the Faith Based and Community Initiative**
- 5. Enhance Nutrition Education and Promotion**
- 6. Implement the 2005 Dietary Guidelines in Program Policy**
- 7. Improve Food Stamp Integrity**
- 8. Improve CACFP Management**
- 9. Build a New FNS**

This booklet links each priority initiative to relevant parts of the strategic plan and to major FNS goals for FY 2007, and describes it briefly.

Supportive of All Goal 5 Objectives



Key Priority Tasks:

- Develop legislative and budgetary proposals, based on selected options
- Identify and develop supporting materials and communications strategy for legislative process
- Analyze and respond to external proposals

Objective 5.1: Improve Access to Nutritious Food

FY 2007 Goal:

Improve access to nutritious food through USDA nutrition assistance programs

Priority: Increase Access to Federal Nutrition Assistance Programs

Purpose: To ensure that all those eligible for the programs administered by FNS are able to easily access the benefits available to them with dignity and respect. Targets all programs, with a special focus on Food Stamps and SFSP.

Key Priority Tasks:

Food Stamp Program

- Conduct FSP Access and ME reviews and corrective action
- Continue grant and pilot projects that promote access
- Promote “user-friendly” policy options that improve access
- Provide outreach and informational materials to States, and inform the public via media campaign
- Use bonuses to award States with strong access; promote and share promising practices
- Encourage all States to develop outreach plans

Summer Food Service Program

- Complete clearance of Seamless Summer Interim Rule
- Partner with private non-profits to identify opportunities to promote the program
- Focus on underserved areas through regional business plans

Faith-Based and Community Initiative (FBCI)

- Share information with, and conduct targeted outreach to, faith-based and community-based organizations (FBOs/CBOs)
- Share FBCI “success stories” with the public via the web and published reports
- Track and encourage FBO/CBO applications for USDA-supported grants
- Include FBO/CBO participation and impact in evaluation plans

Objective 5.2: Promote Healthier Eating Habits and Lifestyles

FY 2007 Goal:

Promote better diets among those eligible for Federal nutrition assistance

Priority: Enhance Nutrition Education and Promotion

Purpose: To promote healthy eating and active living behaviors consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and *MyPyramid* through program-specific nutrition education and integrated cross-program nutrition education and promotion.

Key Priority Tasks:

- Promote the *HealthierUS* School Challenge; recognize schools that meet criteria for silver and gold certification
- Implement Education and Administrative Reporting System (EARS) to improve management of Food Stamp nutrition education
- Promote State Nutrition Action Plans (SNAPs) in all States
- Develop a core set of nutrition messages for use in all FNS programs
- Strengthen internal and external collaboration and partnership
- Promote innovative nutrition education products

FY 2007 Goal:

Ensure that food benefits effectively support better diets

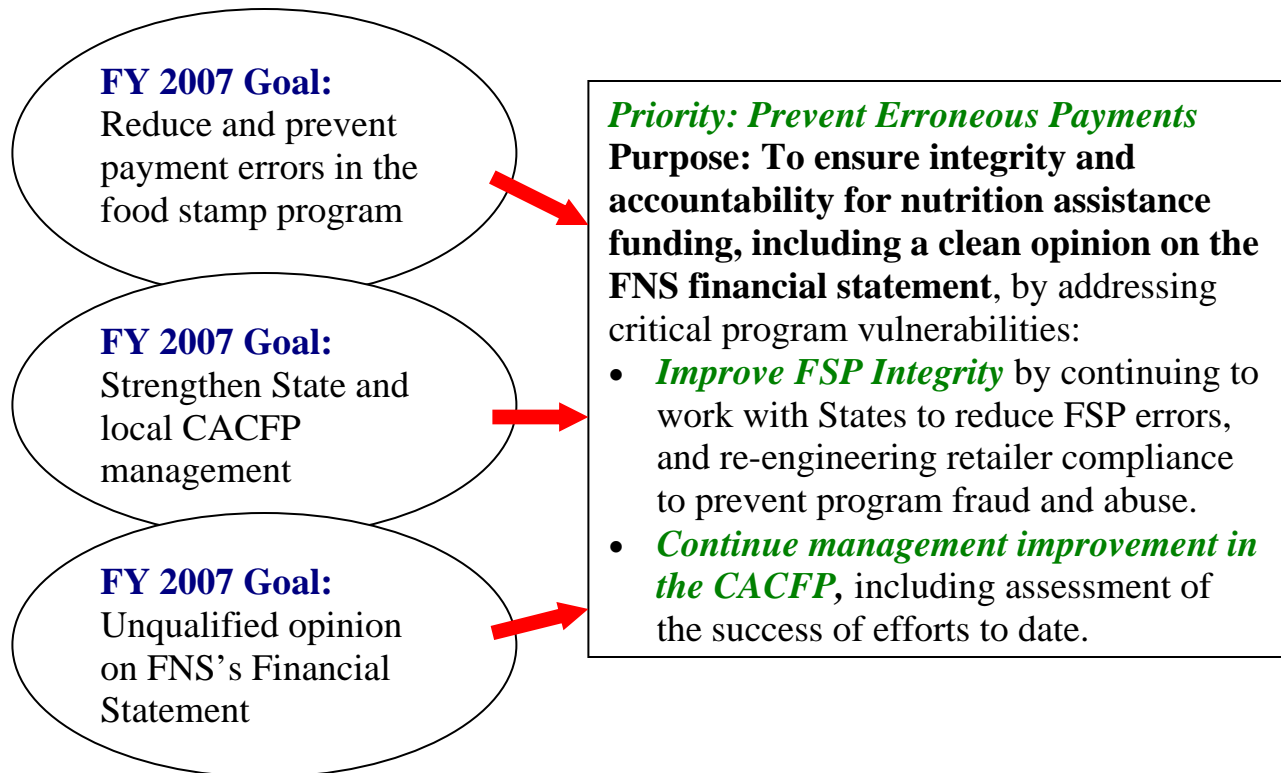
Priority: Implementation of 2005 Dietary Guidelines in Program Policy

Purpose: To design policy and program delivery updates to improve consistency with the DGAs, *MyPyramid* and the Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs).

Key Priority Tasks:

- Develop changes to Child Nutrition Programs' nutrition standards and meal patterns
- Revise Thrifty Food Plan
- Revise WIC food packages based on IOM review findings
- Revise program materials and guidance to include new children's food guidance system
- Review and recommend improvements to the FDPIR food package

Objective 5.3: Improve Nutrition Assistance Program Management and Customer Service



Key Priority Tasks:

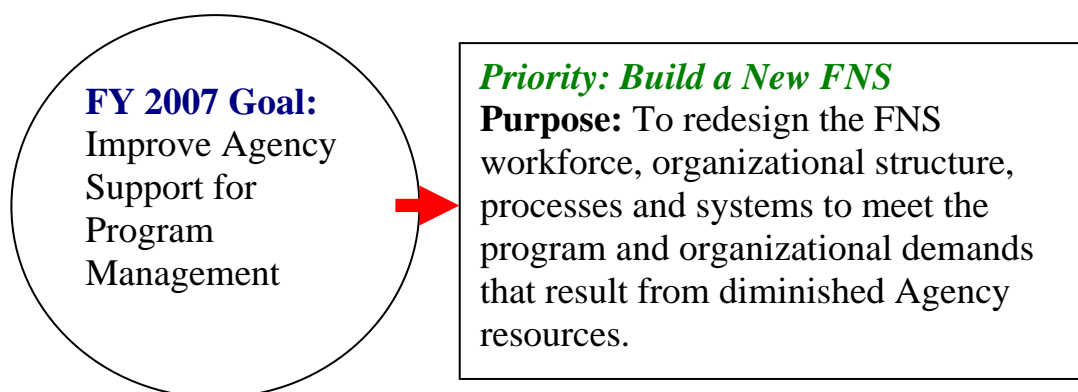
Food Stamp Integrity

- Continue to evaluate State payment accuracy progress; work with target States to improve payment accuracy
- Re-engineer retailer compliance business processes with new technologies
- Re-focus compliance policy to better balance sanctions for non-trafficking offences and add measures to further reduce trafficking.

CACFP Management

- Oversee USDA clearance of Final CACFP Integrity rule
- Use findings of Child Care Assessment Project to develop recommendations for further action, including possible legislative changes
- Conduct Management Evaluations
- Collect data for reimbursement tiering accuracy study

Objective 5.3: Improve Nutrition Assistance Program Management and Customer Service



Key Priority Tasks:

- Plan multi-year effort to re-engineer organization and processes
- Develop new quarterly reporting system for key management information
- Implement targeted eGovernment/IT improvement projects
- Improve human capital planning and management with new training and staff development strategies and a modernized personnel records system.

This priority reflects FNS commitments to USDA eGovernment and Human Capital Management Initiatives.

Stewards of a Major Mission



The Federal budget for nutrition assistance is large—\$59 billion in FY 2006—and the programs make a positive impact on the lives of millions of people in the U.S. every day. Yet FNS provides policy direction and oversight for this major enterprise with fewer than 1,400 full-time staff. Administrative resources represent one-third of 1% of the total FNS budget, and the FNS workforce less than 2% of all USDA employees.

With so much entrusted to a limited number of people, FNS has made efforts to enhance operational efficiency a priority. The planning and priority-setting process reflected in this Guide is one of a range of tools that the Agency uses to optimize its operations, including a strong training and staff development program, increased automation, and business process reengineering. FNS leaders recognize that every staff-year is critical to accomplishing our mission. The planning system includes some additional tools that help us plan and coordinate this work together:

Core Activity Commitments define specific expectations for the ongoing tasks required to keep the programs and the Agency operating effectively. Managers include these commitments in their workplans and report on their accomplishment.

The **FNS Resource Map**, akin to an Agency-wide workplan, reflects all of the staff commitments that FNS has made for the fiscal year by organizational unit and work function, providing senior leaders with a clear picture of how FNS employees are being deployed.

To learn more about FNS, visit our web site at <http://www.fns.usda.gov>.

