



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

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Alexandria, VA  
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**DATE:** October 19, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Replacement of Commodities due to Natural Disasters

**TO:** State Child Nutrition Directors  
All States

State Distributing Agencies  
All States

Regional Directors  
Child Nutrition Programs  
All Regions

This memorandum is a reminder of the disaster relief policies published in the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) *Commodity Program Disaster Manual*. Those States affected by the natural disasters should follow the procedures outlined below to obtain replacements for commodities lost or made unfit for consumption as a result of the disasters.

Commodities Used for Congregate Feeding and Household Distribution

FNS will replace all USDA commodities removed from inventory at the State or local level that are used for approved disaster congregate feeding or FNS-approved household distribution following a Presidentially declared disaster. The State agency is required to submit a request for replacement within 30 days of the end of the disaster, although interim requests for replacement may be made.

Unfortunately, FNS does not have the authority or the resources, to replace non-USDA commodities used for these purposes, nor does FNS have the authority or resources to reimburse organizations for the other costs, including labor costs, associated with these programs. We have sought such authority; however, this is dependent on Congressional action. Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) should be notified to maintain adequate records and request reimbursement from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which has the primary responsibility for providing disaster assistance.

Lost or Damaged Commodities

FNS also does not have the authority to replace USDA or non-USDA commodities that are lost, destroyed, contaminated or otherwise rendered unusable in a disaster due to flooding, fire, wind, power outage, or other cause. The State agency should contact FEMA for possible assistance, and should contact any private insurance companies to file a claim for the lost commodities. Contact information for FEMA is listed below. LEAs should be notified to maintain adequate records and request reimbursement from FEMA, the agency primarily responsible for providing disaster assistance.

State Child Nutrition Directors  
State Distributing Agencies  
Regional Directors  
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FEMA Contact Information:

Information about the assistance provided by FEMA:

- Regional FEMA Offices: <http://www.fema.gov/regions/> (After selecting your region, find “About Region” to access local contact information.)
- [http://www.fema.gov/press/2005/resources\\_katrina.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/press/2005/resources_katrina.shtm)

The FNS *Commodity Program Disaster Manual* can be downloaded at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/fd-disasters/>. If there are any questions, please contact your Regional office.



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