

ECOS Presentation for ACDA

March 2004

Presented by:

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Virginia Department of Agriculture and
Consumer Services

OOO, PICK ME, PICK ME! I WANT TO BE "THE SNACK OFFICIAL" LAMB!...



USDA Electronic Commodity Ordering System

Login:
Password:

Welcome to USDA Online Ordering



USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) was established to provide:

- needy people with access to a more nutritious diet
- improve the eating habits of the nation's children
- stabilize farm prices through the distribution of surplus foods

This site allows SDAs and Recipient Agencies (RA)



SDA Considerations prior to opening ECOS to Recipient Agencies

- A) Will ECOS provide the SDA with better data about RA preferences?
- B) Has SDA scheduled sufficient time to train state staff on ECOS functions?
- C) Has SDA adequately explained advantages of ECOS to RAs but not oversold ECOS?
- D) Schedule enough mandated small group training sessions on ECOS for RAs.
- E) Validate e-mail address of RA when assigning ECOS log on ID and passwords.

SDA Considerations prior to opening ECOS to Recipient Agencies

- F) Strongly consider use of Pre-survey feature to capture RA preferences prior to surveys.
- G) Consider using an office e-mail **ECOS Alert**, to notify RAs to respond to ECOS.
- H) Schedule sufficient time before survey deadlines to allow SDA to roll up delivery orders.
- I) Provide some sort of refresher training, helpful hints and reminders for RAs.
- J) Will low volume/high turnover non-school agencies also get ECOS? Expect training issues.

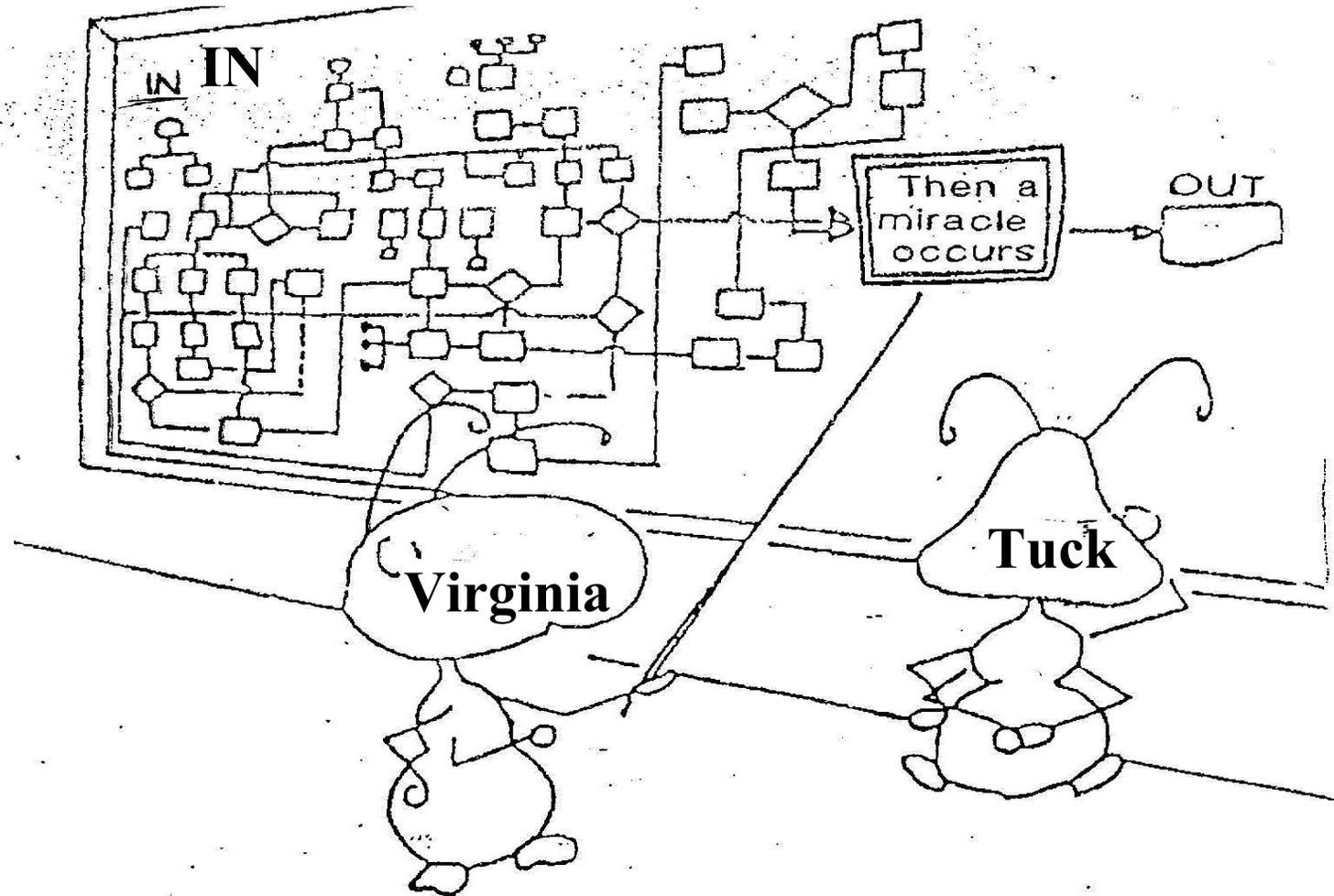
Complications of USDA's Commodity Ordering System

- A) Capped items prevent RAs from receiving what they request.
- B) USDA annual cheese contract conflicts with RA bid and award cycle.
- C) USDA does not purchase all commodities offered (price & availability issues)
- D) Private schools and small volume agencies are still at the mercy of requests by large volume RAs.

Complications of USDA's Commodity Ordering System

- E) Truck load shipment requirements result in SDA consolidation of RA requested delivery time periods so RAs can't get commodities when they requested
- F) DO status codes have enlightened RAs about the complicated process of USDA's bid process.

ECOS Operational Diagram



Good work, but we may need a little more detail here.

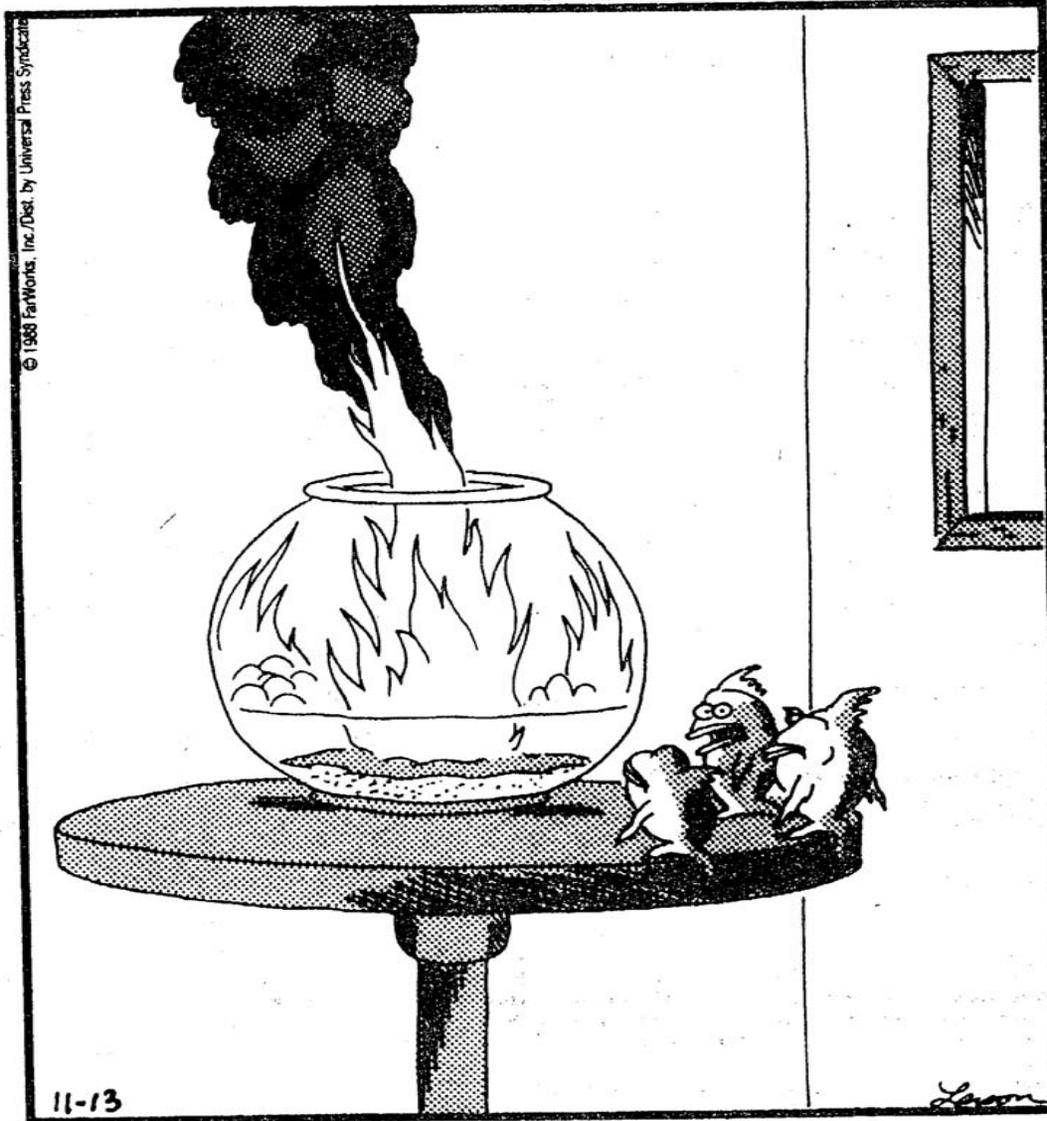
Does ECOS offer RAs what they want, when they want it? Is it an improvement over the current SDA protocol for allocating commodities?

- A) Yes – ECOS provides choices for schools about volume that Virginia’s old format of fair-share did not.
- B) ECOS worked well during the diced chicken recall. RAs saw cancellations of their request in the ECOS reports and received delivery credits in 30 days!
- C) ECOS worked well when commodities were taken from contracted warehouses for emergency feeding after Hurricane Isabel. RAs saw entitlements adjusted for products used by the Red Cross and for products served at schools used as emergency shelters (FNS executed entitlement adjustments in ECOS.).

Does ECOS offer RAs what they want, when they want it? Is it an improvement over the current SDA protocol for allocating commodities?

- D) FNS and EDS have been highly supportive and responsive during the pilot to questions and recommendations posed by Virginia
- E) Make sure that state procedures maximize the opportunities for RAs to receive what they request. (EX. When combining requisitions, be sure to capture demand from small RAs first so that rounding occurs against large volume RAs.)

THE FAR SIDE / BY GARY LARSON



**“Well, thank God we all made it out in time. ...
‘Course, now we’re equally screwed.”**



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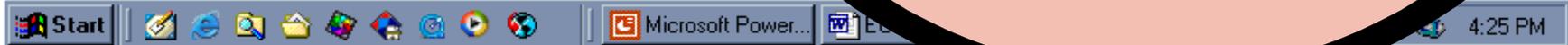
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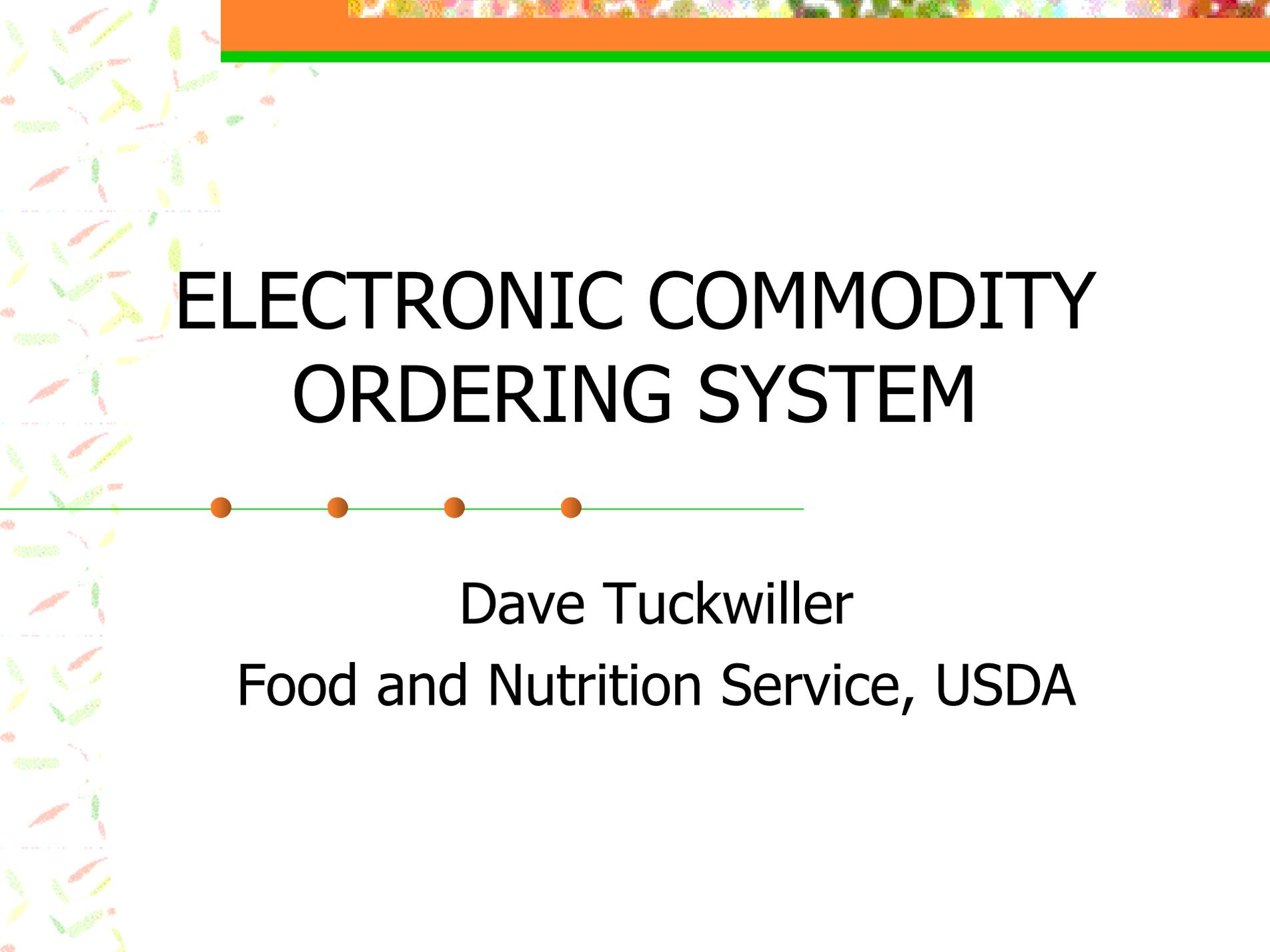
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ELECTRONIC COMMODITY ORDERING SYSTEM



Dave Tuckwiller

Food and Nutrition Service, USDA

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Roll out was completed by March 31, 2003
- EDI was shut down on June 30, 2003
- Development/Modifications
 - Home page, Filter, and email program specific
 - Round survey report

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Development/Modifications
 - Commodity Code Outlays Report
 - Report changes
 - Assign orders in "order"
 - Email notification for placed orders
 - Split shipment redesign
 - Hardware/Software upgrade

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Development/Modifications
 - Suppressing emails
 - Email capability
 - Commodity Worksheet sort
 - Added information to survey emails
 - Ability to download reports to excel

CURRENT DEVELOPMENT

- Reference Links
- Transfers/Synchronization
- Report Changes
- Industry Access
- Notice to Deliver information
- Value of commodities delivered report

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

- Report changes
- Entity Codes Report
- Pound commodities vs. case commodities
- Shipment notification
- Multiple selection on reports
- Move shipping location to 1st requisition screen

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

- Maintain selection criteria
- Show selection criteria on reports
- Remove "W" suffix
- Filter delivery periods
- Links to commodity fact sheets
- Processing
- Changing requisitions prior to roll-up

RECIPIENT AGENCIES

- SDA Choice
- Training
 - Materials
 - System Access
- FNS Support

RECIPIENT AGENCIES

- SY 05/06 ●
- Start planning now

- Schedule training
 - System
 - Procedures
 - Monitoring
 - Reality

- Start slowly