

**FDPIR Food Package Review
November 16, 2006 Conference Call Notes**

		Present	Not Present
1.	Betty Jo Graveen, Lac du Flambeau FDP	X	
2.	Dennis Pearson, AMS (Alternate - Cathie Smith)	X	
3.	Karen Kell, FNS-SERO	X	
4.	Lorraine Davis, Navajo Nation	X	
5.	Lorraine Whitehair, CDC	X	
6.	Melanie Todd, Chickasaw Health System		X
7.	Nancy Gaston, FNS-HQ	X	
8.	Nancy Theodore, FNS-HQ	X	
9.	Pat Roberts, Menominee FDP		X
10.	Ray Capoeman, Quinault FDP		X
11.	Ron Ulibarri, AMS-HQ		X
12.	Rosalind Cleveland, FNS-HQ	X	
13.	Roxana Newsom, Chickasaw FDP	X	
14.	Sarah Kellogg-Eby, FNS-WRO	X	
15.	Scott Krueger, Menominee Tribal Clinic		X
16.	Sharon Hadder, FSA-HQ	X	
17.	Sheldon Gordon, FNS-HQ	X	
18.	Susan Anderson, CDC	X	
19.	Red Gates, Standing Rock Sioux (Mary Greene-Trottier)	X	
20.	Steve Freeman, FSA-HQ		X
21.	Tony Nertoli, Sault Ste. Marie		X

The food package review work group assembled on the conference call at 1:00PM (EST) on Thursday, November 16, 2006. Sheldon Gordon took roll call at 1:05PM

Goals for FY 2007-2008

I. Goal 1 - Healthier Food Options: Meeting the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

A. Reduced or low-sodium canned vegetables

Discussion 1- Group discussed the values of low sodium foods in the food package. According to FDA requirements, many of the fruits and vegetables offered in the food package meet the requirements for "healthy." Healthy is defined by FDA as "must be low in fat and saturated fat, and neither cholesterol nor sodium may be present at a level exceeding a disclosed level such as ≤ 480 mg/per serving (see chart below).

Nutrient	Free	Low	Reduced/Less	Healthy
Sodium	Less than 5 mg per reference amount and per labels serving	140 mg or less per reference amount (and per 50 g if reference amount is small)	At least 25% less sodium per reference amount than an appropriate reference amount	≤ 480 /RA, /l.s. and /50g if small RA

Two group members submitted results after polling recipients on their need or desire for low/reduced vegetables. Their responses indicated that a lower sodium option for most vegetables would be ideal. The group was able to narrow down the list of vegetables offered to corn and green beans that recipients have commonly expressed interest in having as a healthier option.

Task 1a: FNS (Sheldon) will contact AMS to gather product information - availability, cost, etc. on low sodium corn and green beans and share with group before next conference call. **Due by December 28, 2006.**

Also, group members discussed having some commodities offered on a seasonal basis due to low take rates, concerns with storage, and cost. Canned pumpkin and sweet potatoes were the two commodities that were suggested to be offered seasonally. Both canned commodities seem to peak only during the winter holiday season, and then are in low demand during the remaining

fiscal year. Offering, these commodities seasonally may help to offset prices for other foods and eliminate stockpiling in the warehouses.

Task 1b: ITO Program Directors are being asked to respond to the questions below to Sheldon by **COB Thursday, December 28, 2006.**

Yes **No** Offer canned pumpkin and sweet potatoes as a seasonal commodity.

B. Reduce total fat in food package.

Discussion 2 – Instead of offering both the regular and reduced-fat bakery mix, we would only offer the reduced-fat bakery mix in the monthly food package. Questions concerning the take rates were discussed as well as other possible alternatives for the regular bakery mix. The consensus from the group was to help promote the healthier product nutrition education information would be needed such as in classes or use of brochures. Many felt without the nutrition education component informing them of the health benefits the product would fail. FSA confirmed that we are currently purchasing the reduced-fat bakery mix from commercial vendors but hopes that Javits-Wagner O'Day (JWOD) will be able to offer the product again soon.

Task 2: ITO Directors Program Directors to poll recipients to determine if we can remove the regular bakery mix from the package and only offer the reduced-fat bakery mix. **ITO Directors are being asked to respond to question below to Sheldon by COB Thursday, December 28, 2006.**

Yes **No** Only offer reduced-fat baking mix in the package.

Discussion 3 - Remove shortening from the current food package. A mixed reaction was expressed among the work group members regarding this change. However, at this time removing shortening from the food package has been tabled. USDA in its efforts to meet one of the recommendations in the 2005 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* may be removing the shortening offered in all commodity programs. This is being seen as a way for USDA to reduce total fat in all commodity programs and help combat the increasing obesity rates in America. Also, the issue of offering oils in the program containing no *trans* fat was raised.

Task 3a: FNS will gather information and report on the status of shortening being offered in all USDA's commodity programs. **Information due by Thursday, December 28, 2006.**

Task 3b: FSA to research oils containing no *trans* fats for program. **Due to FNS by Thursday, December 21, 2006**

C. Increase Whole Grains

Discussion 4 – Group discussed ways to increase whole grain consumption among recipients. A suggestion was made to the work group about researching 50/50 mix whole grain bakery mix. FNS will be offering whole wheat pasta (spaghetti and macaroni) to schools in the upcoming school year and then soon after will offer it to household programs. Many group members felt that nutrition education will be very important to increasing the appeal and awareness of whole grain items in the food package. Many felt recipients would not like or know how to use some of the products. Therefore, take rates for these types of products would be low. One suggestion from the group was to ask recipients to submit recipes utilizing whole grains in their native dishes to USDA. These recipes could then be incorporated in the River of Recipes booklet. FNS is creating a listserv for FDPIR that may serve as the vehicle to help disseminate information such as this among ITO directors.

Task 4: FSA will survey with vendors to see if a whole grain (50/50 mix) bakery mix is available on the commercial market. If so, obtain product information. **Due to FNS by COB 12-28-06.**

II. Goal 2 - Guide rates: Modify to accommodate the 1-person households' monthly distribution package and select smaller pack sizes for certain commodities.

A. Choose smaller pack sizes from current chart to narrow down to top 3-4 items.

Discussion 5 – Availability of some items from the chart were discussed among the group.

- i. Saltine Crackers – FSA was able to determine that the requested 8 oz pack size is available on the commercial market. The cost/lb would increase from \$0.7125 to \$0.8250.

Task 5a: FNS will perform a cost analysis for offering the suggested 8 oz package of saltine crackers for the 1-person household. **Due to group by COB 1-4-07.**

- ii. Farina/Cream of Wheat - It was determined that the 14oz pack size currently offered in the food package is the smallest available on the commercial market. A suggestion from one of the group members was to see if 1-person household could receive a package every month and forgo one of the non-whole grain breakfast cereals.

Task 5b: FNS will perform a nutritional analysis as well as a cost analysis for offering the suggested 14 oz cream of wheat/farina in a monthly package for the 1-person household. **Due to group by COB 1-4-07.**

- iii. Oats – FSA was able to determine that a smaller pack size is available for the quick oats in an 18 oz tube (canister). The estimated cost for the product in the smaller pack size is about twice the amount we are currently purchasing it at \$0.3518/lb for the 42 oz compared to \$0.7781/lb for the 18 oz.

Also, a concern was raised about the acceptability of the quick oats. It was mentioned the recipients have asked for the regular slow cooking oats. In a response from FNS, it was stated that the quick oats currently offered in the food package came about as a result of recipients requesting the quick oats for its convenience.

Task 5c: FNS will perform a cost analysis for offering the suggested 18 oz tube (canister) of quick oats for the 1-person household. **Due to group by COB 1-4-07.**

- iv. Macaroni and Cheese – The current 26 oz macaroni and cheese dinner offered is a special USDA commodity in that it requires a thicker pasta noodle and has a specially blended cheese sauce so that it would hold well on the serving line for schools and the recipients would only have to use water to make the product. Currently, on the commercial market there are convenience types that only require adding water such as Kraft's Easy Macaroni and Cheese dinner that can be found in single servings (cup/pouch).

Since this past conference call on November 16, FSA received feedback from our sole macaroni and cheese vendor. The vendor indicated they would be able to provide a 7.25 oz box of macaroni and cheese in the following pack sizes: 12, 24, or 48 count.

Task 5d: FNS will confirm with FSA that this product will be the same type of convenience product (just add water) currently offered, but made with thinner wall pasta as well as obtain cost information from FSA. **Due to group by COB 1-4-07.**

- v. Cheese – To accommodate the one person household work group members discussed the pros/cons of offering both the regular cheese in a 5 lb loaf and the 2 lb loaf of reduced-fat cheese. Some members felt that we are offering more of an incentive to offer the regular cheese every month than the healthier reduced-fat version, if we decide to go with offering the 2lb reduced-fat cheese loaf every month. Currently, vendors do not produce a 2 ½ lb loaf on the commercial market.

One member felt that recipients could receive the 2 lb reduced-fat cheese loaf and on the third month receive another loaf to account for the missing 2 lbs. From an ordering, storage

and distributing perspective, this can become an arduous task. ITO directors would have to keep track of what type of cheese each recipient took each month so that recipients did not go over their allotted amount of cheese.

Task 5e: FSA will survey vendors to see if any of them are willing to produce the regular and reduced fat cheese in a 2 ½ lb loaf and at what price. **Due to FNS by COB 12-28-06.**

- B. Current changes to the guide rates for canned and frozen meat products included increasing the amount of frozen ground beef and frozen cut-up chicken that may be substituted for canned meat products. Over the next few months, FNS will monitor if any changes have occurred in take rates between the canned meats and frozen meats by recipients.
- C. Revisit canned meat/frozen meats list – With more and more tribal organizations procuring coolers for the warehouses the demand for canned meats items may decrease. It has been mentioned many times by group members that many of the recipients do not favor the canned meat commodities and would prefer more frozen meats. To help determine our next steps regarding offering alternatives to the canned meats in the program, we will use the information above in II B as our guide.

III. Goals 3 - Explore possibility of offering UHT milk in the program.

- A. Discussion 6 – The group discussed procuring 1% or 2% UHT milk to replace the evaporated milk and non-fat dry milk (NDM). It was noted some time ago that the recipients did not like the NDM when it was reconstituted. FNS will review the take rates on the evaporated milk and NDM to determine if we can remove it from package and access the cost of the UHT milk. Also, it was addressed that UHT pack size should be further researched for a larger pack size – 64 oz carton. Prices provided by FSA were based on the price/gallon of a 32 oz (quart) carton. The pack size that would be desirable for this program would be the 64 oz carton.

Task 6a: FSA will research 64 oz carton UHT milk product availability and cost. **Due to FNS by COB 12-28-06.**

Task 6b: FNS to review take rates on evaporated milk and NDM by next call. **Due to FNS by COB 12-28-06.**

IV. Old business -

- A. Corn Syrup – A member of the group raised the concern about corn syrup that was previously on list for the 2006-2007 food package review cycle. While corn syrup may still be a concern in the food package, the group earlier this year re-prioritized items from the 2006-2007 review cycle for the current 2007-2008 review cycle. At the end of the 2007-2008 review cycle when the group reviews our targeted goals and accomplishments, we may at that time consider adding this to the list for the following food package review cycle.
- B. Juice Concentrate – AMS indicated that it may be Summer/Fall 2007 before the product is available for a test buy. In the meantime, AMS will send a notice to industry informing them of the change in the USDA commodity program (which is to move away from juice in the 46 oz can (full strength) to 11.5 oz can juice (concentrate)). In April 2007, AMS plans to attend the Fruit & Vegetable Industry Meeting and will present the changes in the USDA commodity program. **AMS** will provide updates, if any, on the next call.
- C. Cream of Mushroom Soup & Hominy – AMS re-approached JWOD concerning their ability to produce these product. From their meeting, it was determined that JWOD was interested. If any production occurs, it may take up to a year or two. **AMS** will keep the group posted if any updates are available on the next call.

- D. Commercial Labels – FNS received replies back from four ITO directors regarding Group B commodities still arriving in commodity labels. FNS has advised FSA representatives to inform vendors that we want all Group B commodities to be in commercial labels.

Next Conference Call -

The next work group session will be at 1:00 PM Eastern time (10:00 AM Pacific Time) on either **Thursday, January 4, 2007 or Thursday, January 11, 2007**. An email to the group will be sent out for a group consensus of the date. Sheldon will provide the agenda and call-in information when it is available.

Meeting adjourned at 2:28 PM EST.

Minutes submitted by,
Sheldon Gordon