

December 19, 2002

Baby Fruits or Vegetables with DHA

**Regional Director
Child Nutrition Programs
All Regions**

In response to a number of inquiries, we wish to clarify that certain baby food products containing DHA cannot be served to infants as part of a reimbursable meal in the child nutrition programs. DHA is an omega-3 fatty acid known as docosahexaenoic that may be added to commercially prepared fruits or vegetables.

The source of DHA in some lines of baby food products, such as Beech-Nut First Advantage Sweet Potato Souffle or Tropical Blend, is egg yolk. These DHA-added products combine fruits or vegetables with dried egg yolk, heavy cream, rice flour, vanilla extract, and other ingredients. They are not labeled or marketed as desserts, but they contain similar ingredients that may not be appropriate for an infant younger than 8 months of age. Introducing these “dessert-like” ingredients into an infant’s diet at an earlier age could result in a food sensitivity or a food allergy.

Although DHA-added products cannot contribute to the infant meal pattern, they may be served as additional foods to infants 8 months of age or older. Since they contain several ingredients, additives, or extenders that could cause allergic reactions, we recommend that the center, the provider, or the school check with the infant’s parent or guardian, before serving them.

**STANLEY C. GARNETT
Director
Child Nutrition Division**