



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

December 30, 2009

**Food and
Nutrition
Service**

**3101 Park
Center Drive**

**Alexandria, VA
22302-1500**

Dear State Agency Director:

Welcome to your first year of participation in the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). CSFP is an important part of the Federal nutrition safety net provided through the Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs. Through the program, USDA provides foods to supplement the diets of low-income pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants, children under 6 years old, and the elderly. USDA also provides administrative support to States, which in turn make USDA foods and administrative funding available to local organizations. We are committed to helping you manage an effective CSFP in your State. The information provided in this letter and the enclosed New CSFP State Welcome Packet (Welcome Packet) will be helpful in getting your program started.

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), an agency of USDA, administers CSFP at the Federal level. On December 24, 2009 FNS assigned your State its final caseload allocation, made available to you as of January 1, 2010. You should begin operating CSFP as soon as possible after January 1 so needy individuals in your State receive these benefits quickly. Keep in mind that even if local agencies are not yet prepared to serve their entire caseload, they can elect to serve a portion of their caseload to see how things go operationally. In fact, local agencies can begin certifying recipients now in preparation for distributions in the coming weeks.

In order to begin serving participants as soon as possible, your FNS Regional Office will be actively assisting you in ordering USDA Foods food for distribution and in answering any questions you may have about the program. Please see the Welcome Packet at Tab 1 for more information about your State's contacts in your FNS Regional Office. Additional information about ordering USDA Foods can be found in the Welcome Packet at Tab 3.

We will also hold a two-day training session on January 26-27 at FNS Headquarters to give you an overview of the program and to highlight your State's responsibilities in administering CSFP. In recent weeks, you should have received a letter inviting you to this training and requesting you to RSVP. Please remember to RSVP as soon as possible, and no later than January 6, 2010, in order to secure your spot for the training.

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In the meantime, we are providing the enclosed Welcome Packet, which includes detailed information on the CSFP training session, FNS Regional Office and Headquarters contacts, food ordering, and CSFP policy.

We look forward to working with you to provide CSFP benefits in your State.

Sincerely,



Cathie McCullough
Director
Food Distribution Division

Enclosures