

Minutes

Work Group members in attendance: FDPIR Program Staff: Roxanna Newsom (NAFDPIR President), Tod Robertson (SWR VP), Connie Martinez, Sharon Wheeler (SWR), Lou Hankins, (FNS SWRO); Jenelle Gimlin (WR VP), Lorraine Davis (WR); Mary Greene-Trottier (MPR VP), Kathy Sweitzer (FNS MPRO); Betty Jo Graveen, Gloria Goodwin (MWR); Sara Hernandez (AMS), Lena Milton (FSA), Laura Walter, Patti Schock, Stephanie Cooks, (FNS).

Work Group members not at the meeting: Jaime Prouty-Nolan (NAFDPIR Treasurer), Gregory Nothstine (NAFDPIR Parliamentarian); Shari Bebeau (MWR), Susie Roy (MWR VP), Samia Hamdan (FNS MWR), Melissa Baker (FNS WRO); Desiree Bergeron (WR); Charles “Red” Gates (MPR).

Visitors: Laura Castro (FDD Director), Shirley Roberts (Chief, FDD Household Operations), Dana Rasmussen (Chief, FDD Policy), Matthew Martin (FDD), Barbara Lopez (FDD), Erica Antonson (FDD).

I. USDA Foods Updates

a. Wish List Status –

- i. **Frozen pork chops** – two vendors have shown interest in providing frozen pork chops. AMS has completed draft specifications for the product. FNS will put together a timeline for procurement of frozen pork chops based on available funding. AMS confirmed it will request boneless, unmarinated, frozen pork chops, stacked and packaged side-by side so that single chops can be removed from the package without thawing all of the pork chops. AMS reminded ITOs to subscribe to CP News to get email notification of the procurements AMS is working on.
- ii. **Alaskan Pollock filets** – Two vendors have shown interest in providing frozen Pollock filets to FDPIR. December 2012 NAFDPIR survey results indicated frozen Pollock received the lowest preference scores as a new product for FDPIR. FNS plans to move forward with the frozen pork chops first and consider frozen Pollock at a later time.
- iii. **Low sodium blended vegetable juice (similar to V8)** – the solicitation process does not allow USDA to require a specific commercial brand of blended vegetable juice. AMS will contact blended vegetable juice suppliers to request samples of their product for a taste test. Workgroup members asked to be included in the taste test process.
- iv. **Blue cornmeal**- Only one vendor responded to the FSA Sources Sought Notice and typically, USDA prefers to have two vendors for products offered in FD programs. Because blue cornmeal is a regional food, it might be an item for consideration in the Regional Vendor pilot. Roxanna asked if the large number of Navajo participants interested in the product would warrant a different distribution approach since the vendor pilot is on hold for now. Tod Robertson asked if the area serviced by the regional vendor pilot will include programs interested in blue cornmeal. ACTION ITEM: FNS will continue to monitor progress on the vendor pilot and report back to the group when more information is available.

Minutes

- v. **Frozen fruit & vegetables** – It was suggested by some work group members that perhaps a survey of program and participant freezer space is needed before moving forward with research on other frozen items for FDPIR. ITOs asked if FNS can assist with questions for a short Survey Monkey and paper survey NAFDPIR plans to administer to programs and households for at least one month to get adequate feedback. Roxanna suggested a full survey of the entire food package be administered by NAFDPIR at the 2013 annual conference in Denver, CO.
- vi. **Butter** – butter is now coming into the warehouses and will be available for ordering once sufficient quantities are in the warehouse. Challenge Dairy is the vendor for the 1 lb. butter product. An announcement will go out through the FNS Regional offices when butter is available. Butter will be entered into AIS on January 31, 2013. Programs can contact Doug Friesen for the AIS code. ITOs will be asked to fair share the product and not order more than a two month supply. ACTION ITEM: FNS is preparing a Household fact sheet and FDPIR fats and oils tip sheet for program staff and participant use. The factsheet and tip sheet were sent via e-mail to FNS regional offices along with fair share ordering information on January 31.

b. Other USDA Foods of Interest –

- i. **Canned salmon complaints** – AMS has received pictures and vendor information for the canned salmon with a disproportionate amount of dark skin and bones. AMS will review the product specification and contact the vendor to resolve the issue. In the future, AMS asked that complaints be processed through WBSCM for easier tracking and resolution. It would also be helpful if the FNS website was updated to include “how to” information on submitting complaints. AMS encouraged ITOs to either submit the complaints through WBSCM directly or provide pictures, lot codes, or other information for FNS to enter a complaint in WBSCM.
- ii. **White hominy** – AMS will specify white hominy for the April – June 2013 ordering cycle. If white hominy is not available, the warehouses have a yellow hominy supply projected to last through April or May 2013.
- iii. **Mini crackers** – At the November meeting, the workgroup voted to add mini crackers to the food package on an alternating basis (6 months) with regular unsalted top crackers. FNS will consider this item once the Wish List foods are completed.
- iv. **Buffalo/Bison** – two buffalo/bison suppliers have completed the initial review process and been approved. Additionally, one of the vendors has almost completed the product technical review process, which is the next step to being a USDA-certified vendor. The earliest possible timeframe for buffalo/bison consideration is fall 2013.
- v. **DoD Fresh Produce** - cherry and grape tomatoes have been added to the DoD Fresh catalog. Some programs have already received them and others have not. FNS will check with DLA on availability of the grape and cherry tomatoes across regions. Laura Walter spoke with DLA about workgroup customer service and quality concerns from the November meeting. DLA

Minutes

will contact programs directly to follow-up on their individual concerns.
Reminder: Please contact DLA and/or respond to customer service surveys, especially when you experience produce delivery issues.

- vi. **DoD fresh eggs** – FNS spoke with DLA to explore if produce vendors can deliver fresh eggs in addition to their DoD Fresh produce. The current DLA produce contracts do not include provisions to deliver additional items.
ACTION ITEM: FNS will further investigate with DLA the possibility of fresh egg deliveries through other regional vendors that service military installations and report on the next call.

II. Other Business –

- a. **Wild rice** – workgroup members asked about the status of wild rice. Based on the NAFDPIR survey administered in December 2012, preference for wild rice varied from region to region. Some work group members suggested that the results reflected lack of knowledge about traditionally-harvested wild rice. Blended commercial wild rice, such as Uncle Ben's was more well-known in some communities. Wild rice is harvested in the Midwest once a year in late August, early September. Given the additional food package costs associated with other higher priority wish list foods, it is unlikely that FNS can offer wild rice as a seasonal item and distribute it through the warehouses this fiscal year.
- b. **Quick cooking white rice** – quick cooking white rice remains an item of interest from the Las Vegas NAFDPIR conference in 2010. Mary asked FNS to consider quick cooking white rice for program participants based on interest and convenience. FNS will keep this item on the list of foods to research after working through the November 2012 Wish List foods.

III. The next workgroup conference call will be on Thursday, March 28, 2013 from 1:30 to 3:00 pm. FNS will send a meeting request to workgroup members.

IV. Meeting Adjourned