

Minutes

Work Group members on the call: FDPIR Program Directors/Managers: Betty Jo Graveen, Florence Calabaza, Benita Lewis, Mary Greene-Trottier, Charles “Red” Gates; Susan Anderson (CDC); Sarah Kellogg-Eby (FNS WRO); Kathy Sweitzer (FNS MPRO); Dennis Pearson (AMS); Dr. Talari Jude (FSA), Sharon Hadder (FSA); Patti Schock (FNS Operations), Laura Walter, (FNS PSB), Stephanie Cooks (FNS PSB).

Support Staff: Rogelio Carrasco (FNS, Policy).

Work Group members not on the call: Roxanna Newsom, Susie Roy, Lorraine Davis; Kibbe Conti

Minutes of the January 26, 2011 Work Group meeting were read. An email copy was sent to Work Group members for further review and comment.

- I. March Work Group Priority** - The priority for the March Work Group meeting was to discuss the FDPIR Regional Wish Lists provided by ITOs and add any additional foods to the list. The consolidated Wish List included foods in the Meat, Dairy/Eggs, Vegetable, Fruit, Nuts, Juice, Grains, Soups, Oils, and Miscellaneous categories. The Wish List also included suggested replacements for items currently offered in the food package that have been identified for improvement.
- II. WAFDPIR Update** - Benita Lewis provided an update on the recent WAFDPIR conference. WAFDPIR attendees discussed the process cheese offered in the FDPIR food package and their thoughts on a reduced sodium process cheese option. Benita said WAFDPIR attendees expressed their satisfaction with the current process cheese product and were not interested in changing to a reduced sodium option.
- III. Reduced Sodium Cheese Samples** - Work Group members expressed some confusion about the next steps for considering reduced sodium cheese in FDPIR. Some sampling ITOs were not sure how they should provide sensory feedback on the reduced sodium cheese samples they received in January. Florence Calabaza conducted a product taste test with the samples she received and will provide results to FNS by email. Mary Greene-Trottier asked that Joe Bluehorse be contacted for his feedback on the reduced sodium cheese samples also. Feedback was received from Yunus Lakhani in Western Region by email and Roxanna Newsom provided feedback during the January 26th Work Group call. FNS will also contact Susie Roy to follow-up on feedback for the product samples sent to Midwest Region.
- IV. ITO Regional Wish Lists** -
 - a. **Midwest** - Betty Jo Graveen asked that FNS add honey, salmon, and wild rice to the Wish List for Midwestern Region. Adding honey to the Wish List was discouraged at the October meeting because of the food safety issues it presented for infants. Wild rice is a traditional food for many Midwest tribes however, it is expensive and only occasionally available through grant or food assistance programs. Sharon Hadder will check to see if wild rice is available.
 - b. **Western** - Benita Lewis asked that FNS add mutton, garlic, smoked ham hocks, ground hog, rabbit, beef stew meat, pine nuts, canned chestnuts, and Crystal Light to the Wish List for Western Region. Western Region asked if it was possible to have a voucher system for purchasing local traditional foods. If individual ITOs had access to vouchers, they

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could purchase traditional foods locally that are specific to their regions without having to purchase different traditional foods on a national level. Current FNS policy does not allow for implementation of a voucher system to purchase traditional foods.

c. **Mountain Plains** - Mary-Greene-Trottier asked that frozen cooked turkey breast be added to the Wish List instead of raw turkey breast. Charles "Red" Gates specified that Mountain Plains would like Tanka bars, frozen blueberries, whole berry cranberry sauce and fresh eggs added to the Wish List. Mary asked about the status of the Work Group's request for enriched parboiled rice. FSA completed research and provided an update on parboiled brown rice however; ITO Work Group members thought brown rice would not be well received by FDPIR participants. Sharon Hadder will research pack size and price information for enriched parboiled rice for the May conference call. Patti Schock will check on availability of the seasonal pumpkin and cranberry sauce requested by Mountain Plains.

V. **Frozen Ground Bison** - Charles "Red" Gates discussed the importance of local traditional foods being available in the FDPIR food package. Bison was added to the food package as a traditional food however, the supplier experienced production delays and only limited amounts of bison have been delivered. AMS provided an update on the current status of the bison procurement. Since the previous bison supplier experienced weather-related delays catching and processing the bison, AMS granted approval for a new material supplier and grinding facility and production will continue. AMS will give an update on the new product delivery timeline at the next meeting. The limited amount of bison received by Western Region so far was very well-received. Western Region participants would like to receive more bison however, due to limited supply, bison distribution cannot exceed one pound per month per participant.

VI. **Extended Shelf Life Eggs** – AMS provided an update on the ESL eggs in 16 oz. cartons. There are approximately 10 servings in the 16 oz. carton. The vendor does not offer ESL eggs in a smaller pack size. Once the ESL egg product is opened, the shelf life shortens significantly. FDPIR participants will need an educational resource that explains how to properly store and use the product to ensure food safety and prevent waste. The Work Group expressed interest in piloting the ESL eggs for multi-food warehouse distribution.

VII. **Spices in the FDPIR Food Package** – Western, Southwestern, and Mountain Plains Regions included cooking and baking spices on the Wish List for the FDPIR food package. Many spices are grown in foreign countries and imported and would not meet the USDA Foods "American grown" requirement. Stephanie Cooks will further research the availability of domestically grown spices.

VIII. **AMS Update**

a. **Turkey Breast Tenderloin** – AMS conducted Market research to determine availability of a 3 lb. frozen ready-to-cook turkey breast tenderloin for FDPIR. The whole muscle fully-cooked turkey breast sampled by the Work Group at the October 2010 face-to-face meeting is available in average sizes of 4 to 6 lbs. at \$3.00 to \$3.50 per lb. The 4 - 6 lb. product size is not consistent with the current guide rates in FDPIR and a 3 lb. fully-cooked product is not widely available in the commercial market.

i. Program Directors felt the fully-cooked product would be more acceptable to their participants. A fully-cooked product would allow more convenience in meal and sandwich preparation. There was also a concern that a ready-to-cook product would be more like a holiday turkey than a

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ready-to-eat deli-product. AMS and FNS will continue to explore options for commercially available fully-cooked turkey breast products.

- b. **Frozen 8 pc. Cut-up chicken** – There is currently only one vendor for the frozen 8 pc. Cut-up chicken product for FDPIR. No additional bids have been received for this product. A new frozen chicken product must be purchased to ensure availability of frozen chicken beyond April 2011. Individually frozen (IF) split chicken breasts (\$1.04/lb.), drumsticks (\$0.76/lb.) and thighs (\$0.84) are commercially available in 2.5, 3, and 5 lb. resealable bags.
 - i. Program Directors preferred the option of both white and dark meat being available to FDPIR participants versus the option of choosing only white or dark meat. To ensure availability of frozen chicken beyond April 2011, as an interim measure, they would recommend procurement of a frozen IF split breast product if both white meat and dark will not be available near term. AMS and FNS will continue to research options to provide both IF white and dark meat chicken parts on an ongoing basis.
- c. **Holiday Hams** – FNS staff participated in a product acceptability taste test conducted in Alexandria, VA with fresh and frozen holiday hams. Tasters noted there was more liquid lost in reheating the frozen ham than the fresh ham. The reheated frozen ham had a saltier taste due to the loss of liquid. The quality of both ham products was very similar. FNS will check to see if an acceptability survey can be provided to ITOs to record feedback from FDPIR participants on the frozen holiday ham they currently receive.
- d. **Reduced sodium cream of mushroom and cream of chicken soups** – The new soups are still in the clearance process and are expected to be available in June or July 2011. AMS will provide another status update for the creamed soups at the March 2011 Work Group meeting.

IX. FSA -

- a. **Blue cornmeal** is also available at \$21.95 for 25 lbs.
- b. **Skim evaporated milk** is available commercially and can be substituted for evaporated whole milk in the food package at any time. **Low-fat bakery mix** - still waiting for an answer on lowering the sodium and the availability of a smaller package size.
- c. **Whole wheat cracker** – the current cracker vendor does not want to produce the unsalted top cracker and a whole wheat cracker. FSA will see if the vendor can provide whole wheat cracker samples for testing before the Work Group makes a decision about adding the whole grain cracker.
- d. **Whole Grain tortillas** – Sharon will check into the availability of whole grain tortillas for FDPIR.