

Minutes

Work Group members in attendance: FDPIR Program Staff: Tod Robertson (NAFDPIR President); Jaime Prouty (NAFDPIR Treasurer); Fi Davis (NAFDPIR Parliamentarian); Anna Sterner (NAFDPIR Secretary); Perry Martinez (SWR VP), Connie Martinez (SWR); Jenelle Gimlin (WR VP), Lorraine Davis (WR), Desiree Jackson (NAFDPIR WR Nutritionist); Mary Greene-Trottier (MPR VP), Charles “Red” Gates (MPR), Jana Millner (NAFDPIR MPR Nutritionist); Roxanna Newsom (Ad Hoc Vendor Pilot Advisor); Lou Hankins (FNS SWRO); Samia Hamdan (FNS MWRO); Jessica Creed-Capsel (FNS MPRO); Melissa Baker (FNS WRO); Sara Hernandez (AMS); Yvette Newell (DoD, DLA, Proxy for Pat Scott); Julie Skolmowski (Chief, PSB, FDD), Matthew Martin (FNS), and Stephanie Cooks (FNS).

Work Group members not at the meeting: Susie Roy (MWR VP), Gloria Goodwin (MWR); Theresa Gordon (NAFDPIR MWR Nutritionist); Carmen Robertson (NAFDPIR SWR Nutritionist); Lena Milton (FSA).

Visitors: Laura Castro (Director, FDD); Janice Fitzgerald (Chief HH Ops, FDD); Dana Rasmussen (Chief, Policy, FDD).

- I. Pueblo of Acoma Food Distribution Program (FDP) Site Visit:** On December 2nd, the Workgroup travelled to the Pueblo of Acoma FDP to observe program operations and tour the warehouse and store facility. Pueblo of Acoma FDP distributes USDA Foods using the store and tailgating models. The areas served by the Acoma Food Distribution Program include Acoma and Laguna reservations, and nearby towns of Grants, Milan, San Rafael, San Fidel, Cubero, and Seboyeta. A five member program staff serves an average of 270 participants each month providing certification and nutrition education services, stocking the warehouse and store, and making tailgate and home deliveries to program sites. Pueblo of Acoma receives DoD produce deliveries once a week and food deliveries monthly. At the end of the month, staff follow-up with participants who have not picked up their food package for the month. Plans for the NAFDPIR 2015 annual meeting in Albuquerque include a day long site visit to Pueblo of Acoma to observe program operations and tour the reservation.

Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council (ENIPC) Inc. FDP Site Visit: On December 3rd, the Workgroup travelled to the ENIPC Inc. FDP to observe program operations and tour the facility. The ENIPC Inc. distributes USDA Foods using warehouse and tailgating models. The areas served by the ENIPC Inc. Food Distribution Program include the **Nambe, Tesuque, Picuris, Pojoaque, San Ildefonso, San Juan, Taos, and Santa Clara Pueblos**. A nine member program staff serves an average of 1,400 participants each month providing certification and nutrition education services, stocking the warehouse, the delivery trucks, and the in-house distribution staging area, and making tailgate deliveries to program sites. The ENIPC Inc. warehouse receives DoD produce deliveries once a week and food deliveries monthly. At the end of the month, staff follow-up with participants who have not picked up their food package for the month.

While visiting the ENIPC Inc. FDP, the Workgroup toured the warehouse, visited a tailgating site at the San Ildefonso Senior Center, met with Governor Terry Aguilar, visited the home of Mrs. Adelpia Martinez, a program participant, and visited the Pueblo cultural center/store.

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II. Site Visit Debrief Session – The session opened with member/visitor roll call/introductions. The group thanked Connie Martinez (Pueblo of Acoma Program Director) and Perry Martinez (Eight Northern Pueblos Program Director) for their hospitality during the site visits. The visits highlighted how important FDPIR is to tribal leaders and program participants living in rural communities. The visits also highlighted each site's capacity to store additional food in case program participation continues to increase. Program staff shared the impact distribution issues have on program operations, such as product availability and access. Although FDPIR is considered a supplemental program, workgroup members report that many participants in remote areas have limited access to food resources and rely heavily on USDA Foods. In addition, government activities, such as the FY 2014 government shutdown, also have an impact on FDPIR operations and service delivery. Programs rely on services such as tailgating to conduct outreach and provide service to participants in near-by communities. Remote areas also face challenges identifying nutritionists to provide nutrition education services to their participants and having the most up-to-date nutrition education resources that include MyPlate. FNS Regions work with ITOs to provide nutrition education resources using administrative funds however, ITOs would also like to have input on what items to purchase with other end-of-year nutrition education funds, when possible.

III. DoD Fresh Update

- a. Seneca Nation Shell Egg Pilot** – The shell egg pilot is in its second month and distribution is going very well. Seneca Nation reports they have had no issues with product breakage/losses. Participants receive one dozen eggs per person in lieu of egg mix each month and the product is very well received. Seneca Nation receives the shell eggs weekly with their produce deliveries. The product has a shelf-life of one month. No egg mix is being distributed. FNS Northeast Regional staff plan to visit Seneca Nation in mid-December to offer technical assistance and support for the shell egg pilot. Members asked if FNS will pilot the shell eggs at a tailgating site also. FNS plans to work with Seneca Nation to complete a staff/participant survey to determine the success of the shell egg pilot. Once results are received, FNS will share them with the Workgroup and consider next steps for egg products in FDPIR. Workgroup members asked that FNS include a survey question about use of eggs and family size in the survey. They also requested that Seneca Nation present a session on the shell egg pilot at the 2015 NAFDPIR conference. They would also like for FNS to assess Seneca Nation take rates for egg mix before the pilot and how these take rates compare to take rates for the shell eggs. In consideration of a possible transition from egg mix to shell eggs, Western Region members expect that some areas, like Alaska, will be unable to receive and distribute shell eggs. This would potentially eliminate their option for an egg product in the food package.
- b. New Products of Interest** – The Workgroup discussed new products that may be of interest to FDPIR participants through the DoD Fresh program. These products include: fresh green beans, fresh spinach, lemons, green chiles, fresh cranberries, heads of lettuce, strawberries, watermelon, clementines, garlic, cilantro/herbs, leeks, and green onions. **ACTION ITEM:** DoD will provide cost, shelf life, and seasonal/domestic availability information for these items for further consideration before a decision is made.

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IV. FDPIR Policy and Funding Update

- a. **FDPIR Funding** - The FY 2014 President's Budget provided \$104M for FDPIR funding which included \$40.189M for administrative costs and \$63.811M for food costs. During FY 2014, an additional \$15.5M in food funding was received to address participation increases and corresponding inventory levels. For FY 2015, an additional \$5M was requested to purchase traditional foods in FDPIR. Workgroup members asked to be updated as more funding information is available. **ACTION ITEM:** FDD will provide updated FDPIR funding information as it becomes available.
- b. **FDPIR Study** – The contractor for the Study is making good progress with data collection. The draft report is on schedule for delivery by late spring 2015, in time for the NAFDPIR annual meeting in Albuquerque. At that time, the workgroup will have the opportunity to review the draft report.
- c. **FDPIR Participation** - Workgroup members would like quarterly program participation updates be sent out to the group prior to future meetings. **ACTION ITEM:** FDD Policy Branch will provide the quarterly updates in the future.

- V. **NAFDPIR 2015 Annual Meeting Planning** – The meeting will be held in Albuquerque, NM from June 14-18, 2015. This meeting falls in a NAFDPIR Board election year. The NAFDPIR Board requested support from FNS for two General Sessions during the annual meeting. The sessions would be a general FDPIR update and a food package review workgroup meeting. The annual meeting schedule is currently tentative. The Board may need additional FNS support for a nutrition education session and possibly a Civil Rights session during the meeting. FNS staff will continue coordination with the Board to finalize the agenda and plans for sessions needing FNS support.

- VI. **Traditional Food Priorities** – FNS provided traditional foods research information as requested by the workgroup. The information included current FDPIR guide rates, cost and nutrient information for food package protein items, cost and nutrient information for frozen Pacific salmon, and FDPIR traditional foods comparative funding estimates for ground bison, wild rice, blue cornmeal, and salmon fillets based on the \$5M funding figure identified in the Farm Bill. This information is provided as an attachment to the minutes. USDA provided traditional foods sources sought information to the workgroup in FY 2012 that identified one potential vendor for blue cornmeal and no potential vendors for organic (traditionally grown) wild rice. USDA is working to update this sources sought information for FY 2015. There are currently no approved vendors for blue cornmeal and organic wild rice. There is currently one USDA approved vendor for ground bison. **VOTE 1:** The workgroup voted to use the \$5M in traditional food funds to purchase ground bison, if the funding becomes available. Vote 1 results by workgroup member are attached to these minutes. Workgroup members discussed the challenges of making traditional foods available for all tribes with only \$5M in funds. Ground bison was identified as a restricted food for elders of the Navajo Nation. In addition, it is expected that other tribes may have a low take rate of ground bison due to cultural preferences. Tod Robertson, NAFDPIR President, requested FNS identify a blue cornmeal vendor for FY2015 in case additional funding for traditional foods becomes available.

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NAFDPIR workgroup members expressed their plans to talk with their Congressional representatives about more funding for FDPIR traditional foods.

VII. FY 2014 and 2015 FDPIR Food Package Work Planning –The workgroup recapped accomplishments for FY 2014. These accomplishments include the frozen pork chop pilot, the NAFDPIR pork chop and traditional foods preference surveys, DoD fresh produce contract modifications to allow for piloting shell eggs, the decision to purchase no salt added corn and tomatoes for FDPIR, development and publication of the FDPIR outreach brochure, DoD fresh produce package size updates, DoD fresh customer service surveys, 1 lb. boxes of spaghetti replaced the bagged spaghetti, and the FDD Complaints Team webinar for entering product complaints in the system.

- a. Protein Items in the Food Package** - The workgroup discussed the low take rate and higher cost of the frozen fully-cooked turkey breast product in the food package. They also discussed the pork chop survey results, which indicated that programs preferred the frozen pork chops received during the pilot in FY 2014. **Vote 2:** The workgroup voted to replace the frozen turkey breast with a 1 lb. package of boneless pork chops. Vote 2 results by workgroup member are attached to these minutes. The turkey breast is only offered in FDPIR. If the turkey breast is removed from the FDPIR food package, the current contract for the product will be terminated and the product will no longer be available.
- b. Vote 3:** The workgroup also voted that USDA research cost and availability of a boneless uncooked turkey product to potentially replace the 3 lb. frozen boneless pork holiday hams FDPIR receives as a bonus during the November/December holiday season. The appearance and taste of the holiday hams are less desirable. Vote 3 results by workgroup member are attached to these minutes. The workgroup will schedule a meeting in late January to discuss the information USDA provides on the boneless turkey. **ACTION ITEM:** AMS will research cost and availability of the boneless uncooked turkey product for the January meeting.
- c.** FNS contacted workgroup members who were not at the meeting to request their vote on the three issues raised for vote in the meeting. All votes received are reflected in the attached voting results.
- d. Current guide rates for milk products** - The NAFDPIR Mountain Plains VP asked if guide rates for milk could be changed to allow participants to take all eight units of either skim evaporate milk or 1% UHT milk. **ACTION ITEM:** FNS will provide a cost comparison of the milk products at the January meeting.

VIII. Product Packaging and Labeling – USDA recently updated labeling for household sized cans of fruits and vegetables. The updated specification for labels on household canned fruits and vegetables now requires vendors to use 2 colors other than black and white on their labels. The label must also include a picture of the container's contents. These specification changes are effective with all procurements in the July/August 2014 timeframe and beyond. Vendors will be using up their older labels for product purchased before this time. **ACTION ITEM:** AMS will monitor product purchased after this time to ensure compliance with the new labeling specification updates.

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- IX. Communications Update** – FNS received sample FDPIR banner templates, photos, and color choices from the USDA Design team for workgroup review. Members of the NAFDPIR Marketing Team compiled the workgroup’s comments for further edits to the banners.
- X. Other Business**
- a. FDPIR Regional Vendor Pilot** – The Regional Vendor Pilot Study will evaluate pilot operations in the 4 participating sites. The Study draft report is expected to be complete in late winter. FNS will share Study results when more information is available.
 - b. United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) Extension Resources** – Jana Milner shared two UTTC publications with the workgroup. The *Food is More Than Something to Eat* publication highlighted life skills classes designed to support individual values and strong families and communities. The *Food Sovereignty* publication highlighted UTTC’s Land Grant Program mission, vision, values, and goals.
- XI. Meeting Adjourned**