

Minutes

Work Group and NAFDPIR Board members attending the face-to-face meeting: FDPIR Program Directors: Roxanna Newsom (NAFDPIR President), Florence Calabaza, Lorraine Davis, Betty Jo Graveen, Charles “Red” Gates, Benita Lewis, Mary Greene-Trottier, Jaime Prouty, Sharon Hadder (FSA), Dennis Pearson (AMS), and (FNS) - Rosalind Cleveland, Stephanie Cooks.

FNS Senior Staff in Attendance: Lisa Pino, Diane Kriviski, Cathie McCullough; **FNS Support Staff:** Patti Schock, Akua White, Dana Rasmussen, Nancy Theodore; **CNPP Support Staff:** Jackie Haven; **AMS Support Staff:** Sara Hernandez, Kasey Hall (intern); **DoD Support Staff:** Patricia Scott and staff via conference call; and **Office of Tribal Relations Staff:** Dustin Miller.

Work Group members not attending: Susie Roy, Sarah Kellogg-Eby, Kibbe Conti, Susan Anderson (CDC), Cathy Young (FNS MPR),

The FDPIR Food Package Review Work Group met in Alexandria, Virginia at FNS Headquarters on October 20-21, 2010. The meeting opened with a welcome from Lisa Pino, Deputy Administrator for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Diane Kriviski, Acting Deputy Associate Administrator for Special Nutrition Programs (SNP). Cathie McCullough, Director of the Food Distribution Division (FDD), provided an overview of the organizational structure of the Food and Nutrition Service, explaining how FDD works to provide services to its many customers.

History of the FDPIR Work Group: Nancy Theodore presented a session on the History of the FDPIR Work Group, highlighting the positive changes in the FDPIR food package since 1997. The Work Group discussed the selection process for new members, to include the length of time members are required to serve. Member attendance at meetings was also discussed, and it was agreed that future Work Group minutes would include a list of members who did not attend the meeting. Mary Trottier and Roxanna Newsom asked if recent legislation excluding Veteran’s benefits as income applied to FDPIR. Policy Branch researched the issue and found that income exclusion provided in the Indian Veterans Housing Act of 2010 does not apply to FDPIR. In addition, Policy Branch provided Work Group members with a copy of the Executive Summary of the Farm Bill Report to Congress on the FDPIR food package.

Future face-to-face-Work Group meetings - Work Group members expressed an interest in future face-to-face meetings being held at the ITOs. Program Support Branch (PSB) staff will continue to work with NAFDPIR to determine sites for future face-to-face meetings.

FDPIR Food Package Guide Rates: FNS sent proposed guide rate changes to Work Group members prior to the face-to-face meeting for their review and comment. The proposed changes suggested options to add more flexibility to the food package for 1-person households as well as add new food items requested by Work Group members. On September 28, 2010, the Agricultural Marketing Service purchased ground bison for the FDPIR food package for the first time since FY 2006. Bison will be offered on a limited basis from November 2010 through June 2011. The Work Group discussed a guide rate of 1-lb. of bison per person per month due to limited market availability of the product. One meat unit would include one pound of ground

Minutes

bison and one pound of ground beef. Interim guides rates will be issued beginning November 1, 2010 adding canned pinto and black beans and ground bison to the FDPIR food package.

Sara Hernandez (AMS) reported to the Work Group on two proposed products being considered for the FDPIR food package, Extended Shelf Life Eggs (ESL) and a 2-3 lb. fully-cooked whole muscle turkey roast. The liquid eggs product comes in a 16 oz. gable type carton with a screw cap and contains 8-9 servings. The Work Group expressed an interest in piloting the liquid eggs product and wanted more information about proposed guide rates and cost. AMS and FNS are planning to provide additional information at the next meeting. AMS secured three commercial samples of the fully-cooked reduced sodium whole muscle turkey roast for the Work Group to sample on October 21, 2010. The three samples ranged in size from 3.5 to 6 lbs. and had a sodium level of not more than 550 mg. per 100 gram serving. AMS continues to discuss size and cost requirements for the turkey roast with vendors. Current estimates for fully-cooked commercial turkey roasts are \$3.00 to \$3.50 per lb.

Low-fat bakery mix - The Work Group discussed the high level of sodium in the low-fat bakery mix and the large amount of flour and cornmeal products FDPIR participants are receiving each month. FSA is researching the availability of a smaller pack size and lower sodium level for the low-fat bakery mix. A smaller pack size would make distribution to one person households easier. Work Group members stated program participants are encouraged to take less cornmeal and flour and many do.

Farina – Jaime Prouty reported farina is being distributed in a plain white package with no label. Patti mentioned this is older packaging. Labels should have been sent from the warehouse for this product. Newer packages of farina will have labels attached.

Pasta products – Several Work Group members stated the product packaging for the pastas is fragile and often breaks open. Some packaging is also open at the ends. Lorraine Davis also reported the egg noodles clump together when cooked. Patti will check with the warehouses to see how the product is being stacked before PSB follows up with FSA and the vendor.

Holiday hams and hominy – Charles “Red” Gates requested the holiday ham be replaced with a ham of better quality. He also asked if yellow hominy could be replaced with white hominy. The Work Group will consider both requests at the next meeting.

Cream of mushroom and cream of chicken soups – Mary Trottier asked why the guide rate for soups did not increase since two new soups have been added to the food package. When Stephanie Cooks provides a nutritional analysis of the FDPIR food package at the next meeting, she will further explain why the guide rates did not change for soups.

Bottled orange juice - Take rates for bottled orange juice remain low. Work Group members were asked to remind participants to shake bottled orange juice before each use.

Reduced sodium processed cheese – FDD plans to shift to low sodium cheese for all of its other food distribution programs (schools, food banks, elderly, women, infants, and children) and

Minutes

discussed the idea with the Work Group. Work Group members expressed serious concerns with FDPIR participant acceptability. FDD agreed to send out samples to the ITOs and continue to discuss the issue with the Work Group.

New food requests for the FDPIR food package –

- Add a 2.5 lb. cheese loaf to the FDPIR food package in addition to the 5 lb. loaf to allow distribution to one person households every month versus every other month.
- Chocolate 1% UHT milk
- Frozen vegetables or stir fry vegetable mix

FSA confirmed the availability of a 2 lb. reduced fat cheese loaf; however, a 2.5 lb. loaf is not available. The new food requests were not discussed in detail. Nutritional and warehousing considerations will be discussed further at the next Work Group meeting.

Future Direction of FDPIR - Cathie McCullough shared her vision for the future direction of FDPIR:

- Ideally, ITO's would take responsibility for what is in the food package, with known cost and nutrition limitations; and
- If a winning argument could be made for a substantial increase to funding for distribution, programs would move to a regional distribution system to better accommodate localized buying, traditional foods, and regional food preferences.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans Overview – Jackie Haven from the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion provided an overview of the history of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs). She highlighted the significance of the DGAs to FNS Programs and the lessons learned from focus groups held recently to update the nutritional guidance for the 2010 DGAs, expected to be released in December 2010.

New 8-piece cut-up chicken – Roxanna Newsom reported she had already received the new cut-up chicken. The product is frozen in one mass, making it difficult to use only one or two pieces at a time. Frozen fluid (purge) from the chickens was also found in the bottom of a shipping container. Tribes are concerned that participants will refuse the chicken in its current state. Dennis Pearson asked for pictures of the chicken for follow-up with the vendor. AMS and FNS will produce a flyer explaining the frozen purge and safe handling of the product. AMS and FNS will also explore availability of individually frozen chicken parts for future distribution.

Product complaints - In response to several product complaints, Rosalind Cleveland provided each Work Group member with contact information for the PSB Product Complaint Team and the regions they cover. Work Group members were encouraged to contact complaint team members or use the hotline (1-800-446-6991) to report complaints in the future.

Minutes

Nutritional analysis of proposed guide rate changes – For the next meeting, Stephanie Cooks will provide a nutritional analysis of the proposed guide rate changes in comparison to current food package guide rates.

Nutrition Education Update - Akua White gave a status update of the timeline for completing the FDPIR Sharing Gallery and training module. She also discussed the purpose and benefits of the NutritionTalk listserv and reminded the Work Group of the opportunity to sign up. The Work Group discussed having a demonstration of the FDPIR Sharing Gallery and NutritionTalk listserv at the next NAFDPIR National meeting in Oklahoma.

Conference Call with DoD Fresh Produce Staff - Work Group members expressed concern about the following issues:

- Poor quality of products received
- Receipt of products not produced in the U.S.
- Poor customer service (products not provided in correct pack size; Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs) are not being accommodated on delivery times/schedules; vendors are not responsive to ITO problems/issues; trucks from vendors are improperly loaded, resulting in delays unloading at ITOs; vendors are not making all required products available; and vendors are not making timely product re-deliveries.
- **Actions to be taken:** Policy Branch agreed to share fresh produce list with DoD staff. FNS encouraged ITOs to document all problems in writing by email to field representatives with a courtesy copy to the DoD contact.

DoD staff will:

- Remind their prime vendors that fresh produce must be domestically grown.
- Issue guidance to vendors reminding them that all non-seasonal items must be offered to ITOs every month, unless DoD advises FNS of market conditions preventing purchase of certain items.
- Remind vendors seasonal items must be provided when available. When not available, DoD will provide notification and further guidance.
- Provide FNS with a list of field representatives and a contact at DoD.
- Research and advise FNS on redelivery policy.

USDA's Office of Tribal Relations (OTR) Overview – Dustin Miller, from the Office of Tribal Relations, gave a brief history of his experience working with ITOs and provided an overview of OTR's role in supporting and assisting tribes served by USDA Programs.

***This face-to-face meeting replaced the November 2010 FDPIR Food Package Review Work Group conference call. The next Work Group call will be scheduled after the holidays in early 2011 at a time and date to be determined.**