



In Good Taste

**UPDATE FROM NCDA&CS FOOD DISTRIBUTION DIVISION
FALL 2010**

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DIRECTORS MESSAGE

By Gary W. Gay

As I sit down to write this article the word that comes to mind is WOW! We here at Food Distribution have been extremely busy. We are receiving enormous amounts of food each day; both warehouses have already reached out for outside storage facilities. We all are just trying to keep our heads above water and I am sure you are doing the same.



Our warehouse staff has also set a new record by receiving and unloading 17 trucks in one day. Our truck drivers have become strangers around the warehouse as they are now continually on the road delivering these wonderful USDA commodities all across this great state.

Child Nutrition Reauthorization has almost come to a halt with only a few days left before the September 30 deadline. The holdout seems to center around taking money from SNAP to pay for reauthorization which many Democrat members will not go along with this way of funding reauthorization. That is where we stand right now. If something does not happen real soon we will be looking at a Continued Resolution that will carry over until after the November election. Then the new congress would take up reauthorization.

To date, we have had very few cancellations for planned shipments of commodity foods which are very good for this time of year. Be sure to look at your 209 Report and monitor your commodities.

We are currently planning for our 2010 March Across Carolina and our USDA Commodity Academy for new Directors and Supervisors. I look forward to seeing everyone at the DPI Fall Conference. We have been asked to conduct a mini session on the NC Farm to School Program; this session will focus on GAP Certification.

I hope to see you soon.



FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM

The NC Farm-to-School Program is off to a great start this year with record setting sales for watermelons, cantaloupes, sliced, and grape tomatoes. Over \$94,000 in sales set a new record high for these items. Wow! We were very fortunate to have good weather at the beginning of the school year but now we are very dry throughout the state which has taken a toll on Kennebec potatoes. I recently sent an email to everyone about the cancellation of the potatoes; with the extreme dry weather the yield for the potatoes fell to more than half of usual production. We regret this has happened but wanted to inform those of you that had placed orders into NC-ECOS as soon as possible so you could make other arrangements in your menu planning. Speaking of NC-ECOS, we hope you are finding this process a very user friendly way of placing orders for Farm to School fresh fruit and vegetables. If you have any problems with logging in please contact John Hearn from our office. I will be sending out my next notice to place Farm-to-School orders on December 1st for items in January, February, and March. These produce items are pink lady apples, sweet potatoes (jumbo), apple slices, and collards.

By the time this newsletter is sent out, you will be receiving different varieties of apples, broccoli, sweet potatoes, cabbage, and collards. We hope to top new sales records and hope you and the kids will enjoy. Again, thank you for supporting this program and NC Agriculture!

October 2010 has been proclaimed Farm to School Month. A copy of the proclamation by Governor Beverly Perdue follows the Apple Growers advertisement.

The NC Apple Growers Association is sponsoring a cash drawing. Just by participating in the Farm to School Program and purchasing NC grown apples, your school district is automatically entered. Watch for the winning notifications mid January 2011. See the following advertisement or visit www.ncfarmtoschool.com for more details.

NC Farm to School News

Home Grown for North Carolina Schools



In appreciation for your apple order this year, the N.C. Apple Growers Association and the apple growers who furnished Red Delicious, Golden Delicious, Jonagold, Jonathan, Gala, Rome and Pink Lady apples will be conducting a cash drawing. Just for having furnished a nutritious menu item to the kids in your district, you have the opportunity to win from one of five cash drawings. Each drawing will be for **\$250.00**, for a grand total of **\$1,250.00**. The drawings will take place in mid-January after all apple orders are complete.

No entry forms are necessary; school districts will be automatically entered from orders made for the specific drawings. All drawings and notification to Child Nutrition Directors will be made mid January, 2011.

Thank you for your support of the N.C. Farm to School Program. We hope the schools in your district enjoyed the North Carolina grown apples. Best of luck in the drawing!

If you have questions please contact Jack Ruff, NCDA & CS marketing specialist at jack.ruff@ncagr.gov

Please visit www.ncfarmtoschool.com for more information about NC Farm to School!!!



got to be
NC
FARM TO SCHOOL
Marketing Division
Steve Troxler, Commissioner



Governor's proclamation

State of North Carolina



BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE
GOVERNOR

FARM TO SCHOOL MONTH

2010

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Farm to School program is operated by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & CS Food Distribution and Marketing (NCDA&CS) divisions and supplies fresh North Carolina grown fruits and vegetables to school districts statewide; and

WHEREAS, for the 2010-2011 school year the North Carolina Farm to School program will offer North Carolina grown fruits and vegetables, including watermelons, cantaloupes, slicing and grape tomatoes, several varieties of apples, broccoli crowns, sweet potatoes, green and red cabbage, Irish potatoes, collards, romaine lettuce, strawberries, yellow squash, zucchini, and blueberries to school districts statewide to serve in cafeterias; and

WHEREAS, the fruits and vegetables in the North Carolina Farm to School program are grown by North Carolina farmers from the Coastal Plains to the Mountains; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina farmers who supply produce for the North Carolina Farm to School Program are certified in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), a food safety certification that ensures that all produce is grown and packaged under safe conditions, are also members of the NCDA&CS "Goodness Grows in North Carolina" program; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina farmers who supply produce for the North Carolina Farm to School Program donate fifty cents per case of produce sold to the school districts for Nutrition Education in North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, NCDA&CS Food Distribution Division works with Child Nutrition directors across our State to determine what items of locally grown produce can be utilized by school cafeterias, collects produce orders and delivers produce to the school systems; and

WHEREAS, the Markets Division works with North Carolina farmers to harvest, pack, and store produce in climate controlled facilities in order to maintain optimum quality and shelf life, it also develops programs for school districts to promote North Carolina grown produce and nutrition education for students; and

WHEREAS, buying produce directly from North Carolina farmers has opened additional markets, and ensures that students are receiving the freshest produce possible;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE, Governor of the State of North Carolina do hereby proclaim October 2010, as "**FARM TO SCHOOL MONTH**;" and I call upon the people of North Carolina to commend its observance.



Handwritten signature of Beverly Eaves Perdue.

BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE

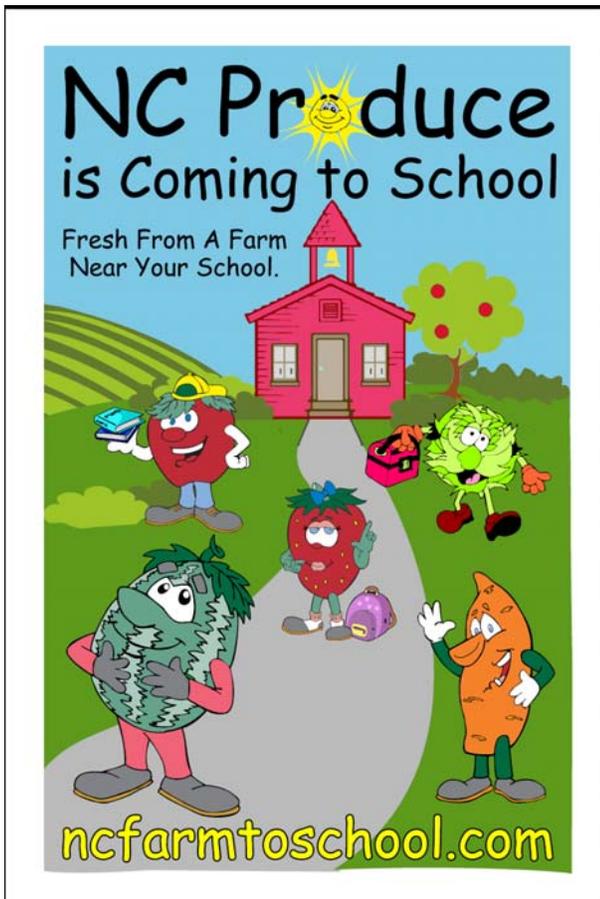
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh, North Carolina, this 15th day of September in the year of our Lord two thousand and ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

NC FARM TO SCHOOL POSTERS AND TABLE TENTS

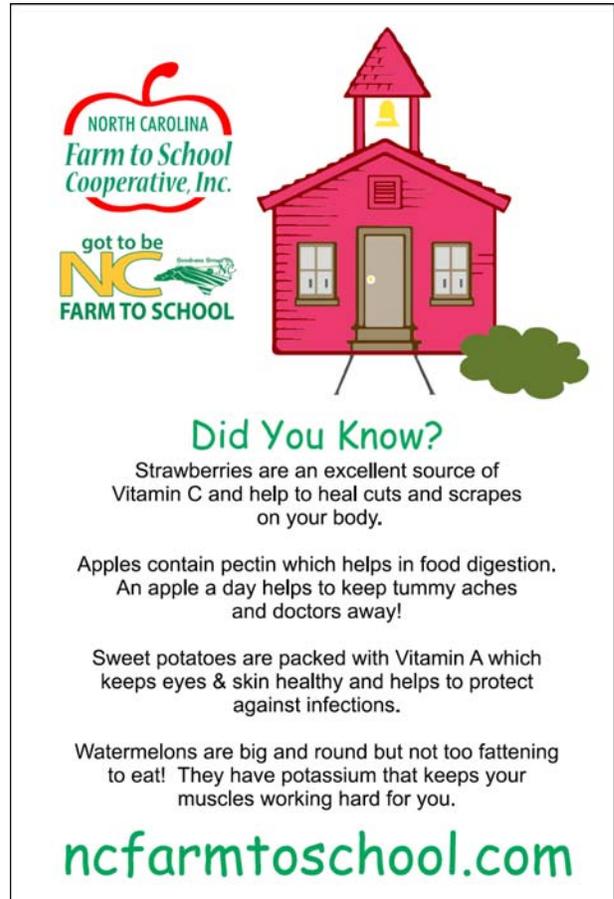
NCDA&CS has made available Farm to School Posters and Table Tents for you to display in your cafeterias. These posters and table tents were purchased with money that was accessed on every case of NC Farm to School product. For every case sold .50 cents is kept and goes toward nutrition education.

We will be distributing posters and table tents during the NCDPI Fall conference. If you did not register your quantity by September 27, 2010, there will be extras available.

Front of 4x6 Table Tent



Back of 4x6 Table Tent





COMMODITY PROCESSING NEWS

LOWER SODIUM SPECIFICATIONS FOR PROCESS AND BLENDED CHEESE

FNS continues to make improvements in all of its USDA Foods to align them with the most current Dietary Guidelines for Americans. One of the improvements slated for School Year 2012 is to reduce the sodium levels in Process and Blended Cheeses. USDA currently buys process cheese that contains 422 mg per ounce and blended cheese that contains 450 mg per ounce.



To reach this goal, FNS partnered with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to encourage cheese manufacturers to formulate cheeses with lower sodium levels. Last month, FSA conducted market research through a Request for Information/Sources Sought Notice to determine what types of reduced sodium cheeses were available commercially. FSA asked cheese suppliers to submit their reduced sodium specifications and describe how

the reduction would impact the cost, quality, and food safety of the products. As a result sodium levels will be reduced from as much as 450 milligrams per serving to between 200 and 300 milligrams per 1 ounce serving.

FSA released the solicitation for the Calendar Year 2011 process cheese today. **The reduced sodium process cheese specification will be in effect with July-December 2011 deliveries for the following products and codes:**

Commodity Name	Code	Group	Pack Size
CHEESE 30 LVS	B064	5	6/5 LB LOAVES
CHEESE SLICED YEL	B065	5	6/5 LB SLC LVS
CHEESE SLICED W	B066	5	6/5 LB SLC LVS
CHS RDU SKIM SLC Y	B119	5	6/5# SLC YELLOW
CHS RDU SKIM SLC W	B133	5	6/5# SLC WHITE
CHSE RDU FAT 2	B007	5	12/2 LB LOAVES (HH Programs)
CHEESE RDU WHT 2	B204	5	12/2 LBS (HH programs)
CHEESE RDU YEL 2	B205	5	12/2 LBS (HH programs)

HOW LONG WILL USDA FOODS LAST??



Experts disagree on how long a product can be kept in storage before it goes out of condition. Storage conditions such as temperature and humidity drastically affect the length of time that food can be stored and remain at optimal quality.

There has been some recent discussion about how long will USDA Foods last. If a commodity is stored at the proper temperature will it still be good after one year, two years after the pack date? Not all USDA foods come with a pack date on the carton, in which case, you should clearly mark the carton with a receipt date using month and year.

USDA stopped producing fact sheets with how long you should keep an item. Visit the FNS website for the latest in “Best if used by” guidance at www.fns.gov/fdd/facts/ click on Best if used by guidance.

Research done by this office has led us to, this realization, if you want to know how long an item will be good for, we recommend you contact the manufacturer and they can advise you on the recommended shelf life for each of their respective products. Each commodity item may vary from vendor to vendor, therefore the shelf life recommendations should come from the manufacturer.

Basically, it comes down to making good sound judgment calls on when a commodity food item is too old to be utilized. In August of 2010 we received some canned fruit product with a 2009 pack date. This is fruit that was left from the 2009 crop. It is possible we may deliver commodities to you late in May and you will hold them over the summer to start school. These commodities are still good provided they have been properly stored.

Our field staff has been instructed when visiting schools and looking at utilization and current inventory levels, to note excessive and/or slow moving inventory. Commodities that have not moved over a long period of time need to be looked at and transferred to someone that can use them before they get to old and require disposal. Anytime you have a commodity that is not being menued, please call us and we will help you find a home for it.

If you have questions concerning the shelf life of USDA Foods, give us a call we will be glad to assist you.

Record Year for USDA Commodities

Again we broke another record for this state. WOW!! For the 2009 -10 year we received 60 million dollars in USDA commodity foods; this is up from the record set last year which was \$52 million. USDA commodity foods received for the National School Lunch Program increased by one million from \$36.5 million to \$37.5 million. We have seen a tremendous increase in USDA commodities for our household programs. We welcome all this food because there are people out there who need and rely on these food assistance programs to get them through these difficult economic times.

USDA COMMODITY BEEF PRICES GOING UP

You may have noticed that the price for beef USDA is currently paying is more than was this time last year. Beef prices have increased between 18-25 percent. Prices are averaging \$2.30 a pound for A594 coarse ground beef. Last year USDA paid \$1.70 - \$1.80 per pound for coarse ground. The A608 fine grind beef is going at \$2.53 per pound this year, last year is averaged at \$1.29 a pound USDA does not expect prices to drop much. The price increase is due to increased testing requirements imposed on the vendors for pathogen testing.



Turkey Roast Delay

FNS USDA has informed us that they are experiencing problems purchasing Turkey Roast. They have advised us not to expect any deliveries until late January 2011.

NEW CHILD NUTRITION ADMINISTRATORS



Stefanie Almond, Child Nutrition Director - Stanly County Schools

Liz Cartana, Child Nutrition Director - Chapel Hill/Carrboro Schools

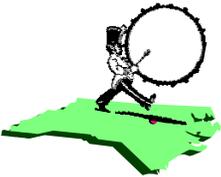
Jessica Obrochta, Child Nutrition Contract Manager - Pender County Schools

Velma Smith, Child Nutrition Director - Weldon City Schools

NCDPI FALL CONFERENCE

We look forward to seeing everyone at the Sheraton Imperial, October 20-22, 2010. We hope you will plan to attend the NCDA breakout session on Farm-to-School, and learn about GAP certification on October 21st.

Food Distribution is pleased to announce two sessions on GAP certification and Farm-to-School. We will have two guest speakers discussing GAP audits and the requirements of GAP Audits. Also, three Child Nutrition Directors will be there discussing barriers and success stories about Farm-to-School in their school districts. We hope to see you there!



2010 MARCH ACROSS CAROLINA

Note location change for Raleigh

It is that time of year again for our annual USDA Commodity Food Show so mark your calendars.

November 3, 2010 Dorton Arena NC State Fairgrounds

November 4, 2010 Hickory Metro Convention Center

Our Raleigh location has been changed back to the Dorton Arena. We were scheduled to hold our show at the Raleigh Convention Center but some last minute contractual terms could not be agreed upon so we are returning to the Dorton Arena this year.

Registration will be from 8:30 a.m. till 9:00 a.m. with a USDA training session on commodities from 9:00 a.m. till 10:00 a.m. with the Food Show starting at 10:00 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. We are expecting a large number of vendors again this year. Processing continues to grow each year in this state and it would be beneficial for you to attend this show to see first hand and to sample the commodity processed foods our vendors are offering.

Call Bob Sitton or Allison Medlin with questions.

USDA COMMODITY ACADEMY



We will be holding our USDA Commodity Academy on February 9 and 10, 2011 at our office in Butner. This training is centered on an intense look at how the USDA program works in our state. Come learn how you can make the commodity program work as an asset to your program. The training is intended for new child nutrition directors and supervisors but all are welcome. I would encourage you to attend, it never hurts to take a refresher course. The training will be conducted over two days and we will make it very enjoyable. I hope you will join us in February to take advantage of this training opportunity.

AMERICAN COMMODITY DISTRIBUTION ASSOCIATION (ACDA)

If you don't know what ACDA is or stands for; it is an association that works just with USDA Commodities. Members of this professional association are made up of representative from USDA, state agencies, agricultural and commodity organizations, manufacturers, brokers, distributors, and child nutrition directors. From the field to the school and all in between, ACDA links everyone together.

I would like to invite you to attend our annual conference in New Orleans this year. We will be at the Sheraton in New Orleans on April 29 through May 3, 2011. This is a great conference to learn about USDA commodities and network. I will be sending out more information as the conference approaches.



ACRONYM LIST

- ACDA - American Commodity Distribution Association
- ARRA - American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
- ECOS - The Electronic Commodity Ordering System
- FDD - Food Distribution Division
- FNS - Food and Nutrition Service
- FY - Fiscal Year
- NCDPI - North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
- NCECOS - North Carolina Electronic Commodity Ordering System
- SFA - School Food Authority
- SNA - School Nutrition Association
- SY - School Year
- USDA - United States Department of Agriculture
- WBSCM - Web Based Supply Chain Management
- WNC - Western North Carolina

For more information go to: <http://www.commodityfoods.usda.gov>

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 Gary W. Gay Director of Food Distribution
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