



# *In Good Taste*



**UPDATE FROM NCDA & CS FOOD DISTRIBUTION DIVISION  
WINTER JANUARY 2010**

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## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Gary Gay

I hope all is well with everyone and as we start into a new year, it is our hope for a safe and successful year for all. My staff and I look forward to working with you in 2010.



USDA commodity shipments have run very smoothly so far this school year. To date, there have been very few cancellations and we have many more truckloads due to come into the State.

Many of you were concerned as well as I about the newspaper article in USA Today concerning the safety and quality of USDA foods. The article portrayed USDA foods as of being poor quality and below fast food standards. I feel this article was not true and that USDA foods are of high quality. USDA chose not to respond to this article and remain silent. Sometimes being silent can give the perception that the newspaper article was true. However, in this case I know different. I hope with some encouragement USDA will mount a campaign to rid the population of these myths concerning USDA foods.

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## COMMODITY OUTLOOK

### FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES (FNS)

**All Canned Vegetables:** In July 2009, USDA started purchasing only low-sodium canned vegetables for our school programs. The new sodium level will not exceed 140 mg per ½ cup serving.

**Corn:** Some of the early low-sodium canned corn deliveries were delayed, but we expect to purchase all remaining orders for SY 2010. Corn producers harvested a larger than expected crop, so we purchased more canned and frozen corn for January-June 2010 delivery.

**Peaches:** Clingstone and freestone peach crop production was plentiful again. The overall quality of the crop is exceptional this year. We also purchased additional quantities of canned clingstone peaches and frozen freestone peaches for January-June 2010 delivery.

**Beef and Pork Products:** Due to limited FY 2009 funds, we've delayed some beef and pork purchases to November and later delivery. Beef prices have remained stable, and we expect to purchase all remaining SY 2010 orders. We also expect to purchase all the pork products on order, and we anticipate low prices and plentiful supplies for the remainder of the school year.

**Fish:** USDA successfully purchased tuna ordered for delivery early this school year. However, the tsunami on American Samoa has disrupted production. We anticipate delivery delays and may need to cancel orders that would be delivered later this school

year. We are looking into the possibility of offering bulk Pollock for further processing. We anticipate it will be available for a test buy later this school year.

**Poultry Products:** We expect to purchase all remaining SY 2010 orders. In SY 2011, USDA will be changing the specification for batterbreaded chicken to reduce the fat and sodium content.

**Whole-Grain Products:** USDA began a pilot project last school year to test whole-wheat pancakes and tortillas in schools. Because of the success of the pilot, these products have been offered for January-June 2010 deliveries and will be available to schools in SY 2011. These items will increase the list of already available whole-grain products to schools: whole-grain rotini, spaghetti, and macaroni; rolled oats; brown rice; long-grain, parboiled brown rice; whole, dry kernel yellow corn (for processing only); and whole-wheat flour.

**Cheese:** Prices for cheese have been low, which has helped us purchase more under the 2009 long term contract. Lower prices are allowing you to get more for your entitlement dollars so you may have an opportunity to order additional USDA Foods for delivery later this school year. Mozzarella cheese will have a lower salt level for new purchases in Calendar Year 2010. The lower salt levels will translate into a sodium reduction of about 15 percent. Instead of approximately 240 mg sodium per 1 ounce serving, the new cheese will contain 130-175 mg per 1 ounce serving.

[www.commodityfoods.usda.gov](http://www.commodityfoods.usda.gov)



### **USDA BREADED CHICKEN**

If you noticed there is no USDA Breaded Chicken to order for next school year, you are correct. USDA has pulled the plug on the breaded chicken for now. The reason; it was too high in fat and sodium content. USDA is looking at a skinless roasted chicken product very similar to the KFC roasted chicken they offer. This is still in the testing phase but hopefully next year at this time this product will be offered for schools to order. We will keep you posted on this item.



### **USDA Bonus Dried Cherries – Update**

Just last week, a USDA Inspector from Virginia came to Butner at our request and re-inspected almost 1300 cases of Dried Cherries. We have just learned these cherries did not pass the re-inspection. We are now waiting on word to proceed with disposal. These cherries are dated either September 2, or September 3, 2009. These are the only two dates effected so be sure to give close attention once we receive permission to dispose as there are other September dates that will not be covered.

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## NOTICE ON NON COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT

**This email was sent out to** All State Distributing Agencies from USDA FNS:



Below is an email we distributed May 19, 2009 regarding noncompetitive procurement and bonus commodities. Each time a different bonus food is made available to schools, we receive the same questions regarding the applicability of noncompetitive procurement. While bonus turkey and bonus nonfat dry milk are used as examples in the original email, the noncompetitive procurement is not limited to those two commodities and would apply to any commodity processing, be it bonus or entitlement, where there is only one supplier of a particular end product.

**From:** NPA [mailto:NMPA@fns.usda.gov]

**Subject:** Non Competitive Procurement

**To: All State Distributing Agencies:**

Food Distribution Division considers purchases from turkey processors who are using bonus turkey to make finished end products for sale to States or recipient agencies to be items available only from a single source. That determination is made because none of the 3 processors are making the same item which could be competitively bid. We are relying on 7 CFR 3016.36 (d)... (4)(i)(A) and (C) as shown below.

(4) Procurement by *noncompetitive proposals* is procurement through solicitation of a proposal from only one source, or after solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate.

(i) Procurement by noncompetitive proposals may be used only when the award of a contract is infeasible under small purchase procedures, sealed bids or competitive proposals and one of the following circumstances applies:

(A) The item is available only from a single source;

(B) The public exigency or emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation;

(C) The awarding agency authorizes noncompetitive proposals;

We will not require States or school districts to go through a competitive process to take advantage of the finished end products that contain "bonus" turkey produced by House of Raeford, Culinary Standards, or JTM Foods. As long as you agree on price with the processor, you are free to purchase the finished product.

As FNS continues to provide raw “bonus” commodities to processors, States and recipient agencies can adapt this to other commodities such as non fat dry milk (NFDM). However, if 2 or more processors are making like products such as macaroni and cheese using bonus commodity, a competitive procurement would be in order.

**David C. Brothers**  
**Food Distribution Division**



## **USDA COMMODITY ORDERS FOR 2010-11 SCHOOL YEAR**

The deadline for you to get your USDA commodity orders into ECOS is March 1, 2010. Please don't delay; March 1 will be upon us before you know it. If you need any assistance please contact Lonnie McMillan or Debbie Ball at (919) 575-4490.

USDA has decided to cancel (9) truck loads of Beef for school year 2010 , (4) loads of A608 beef ground 40#, (2) loads of A616 beef patties VPP 40#, and (3) loads of A594 diverted to processors (2) loads to Advance Food Company Inc. and (1) load to JTM Provisions Company, Inc..

The cancellation is due to high prices. Individual schools tied to these cancellations will be contacted by NCDA & CS staff.

Also, as directed by USDA/FNS, for school year 2011-2012, NCDA & CS /FDD, has placed Fruits and Vegetables orders for the first half of the school year, July 15, 2011 through November 15, 2011.



## **HOLDS AND RECALLS:** **THE IMPORTANCE OF TRACKING FOOD**

Holds and recalls are valuable because they remove products that have quality problems or may cause harm. It is critical to be able to track food within a school or school district so that a suspect food can be located quickly. Think of traceability as a chain. Each piece of information must be intact so it can link a product from its original source to your schools.

The most important pieces of information for identifying specific USDA Foods products are the contract and delivery order numbers. These numbers can be found on the boxes

or case packaging, but are not usually found on the individual units within a case. If the product is removed from the original case at the school district level or at individual schools, the identity of the product may be lost.

To be prepared for a hold or recall, it is critical that you use a method or system for maintaining identifying numbers when you remove products from the original packaging. This could be as simple as writing the contract and delivery order numbers on a blank label and sticking it on each product unit. Just imagine for a moment the worst case: a product you received is recalled and is suspected of being contaminated. This product needs to be removed immediately from the food supply. Could you locate the product quickly and easily in your facility? Most recalls in the NSLP are not the result of imminent food safety dangers. But, we should always be prepared for any emergency situation. At the very least, being able to track food products allows you to identify and locate them quickly and promotes timely, accurate replacement and/or reimbursement should a hold or recall occur.

To learn more go to: [www.commodityfoods.org](http://www.commodityfoods.org).



## **NC FARM - TO - SCHOOL NEWS**

Ted Fogleman, Assistant Director

It is hard to believe that we are halfway through another school year and we are right in the middle of shipping jumbo sweet potatoes and apple slices. These are two new items we have added to our menu of North Carolina Farm-to-School produce for this school year. We have been pleased with participation levels but hope to add new customers as well. I want to remind everyone of the upcoming schedule for strawberries and blueberries.

Week of April 26 - Strawberries

Week of May 3 – Strawberries

Week of May 17 – Strawberries

Week of May 24 – Strawberries and Blueberries

Week of June 21 – Blueberries



I will be emailing a survey at the end of March for those willing to participate.



## **ACDA**

The American Commodity Distribution Association will be holding its Annual Conference April 17-20, 2010 in Orlando Florida. This is a great conference focused on all aspects of the USDA Commodity Program. To find more information about this conference, please visit the home page of the American Commodity Distribution Association at [www.commodityfoods.org](http://www.commodityfoods.org).



## **CONGRATULATIONS & WELCOME**

### **Child Nutrition Retirees**

From all of us at NCDA&CS Food Distribution Division, congratulations and know that we wish each of you the very best in your retirement. We thank them for their contributions and leadership in serving meals to the children from their respective counties.

John Hastings, Beaufort County Schools  
Cheryl Smith, Bladen County Schools  
Elizabeth Taylor, Johnston County Schools  
Janice Bodenhamer, Onslow County Schools  
Harriett Walker, Weldon City Schools (moved to ASPIRE Program)



### **New Child Nutrition Administrators**

Join us in welcoming these new CN Administrators to their new positions. We extend a warm welcome and look forward to working with them.

Gwyn Roberson McBride, CN Director, Beaufort County Schools (March 3, 2010)  
Ethel Satchell, Foodservice Contact, Beaufort County Schools  
Amy Medlin, CN Director, Bladen County Schools  
Chantay Stanley, CN Supervisor, Currituck County Schools  
Ron Alexander, Interim CN Director, Halifax County Schools  
Rachel Langley, CN Supervisor, Johnston County Schools  
Byron Sackett, CN Director, Lincoln County Schools  
Susan Calloway, Interim CN Director, Stanly County Schools  
David Jones, HR Director Weldon City Schools

If we have overlooked anyone in this edition, please contact us to ensure we have been notified of the change. We will see that it makes the next edition of the newsletter.

## **Gail Weams, Retired**



2003 Asheville's Women of The Year.

2007 Department of Agriculture's Employee of the Month.

2008 Presented the Commissioner's Award for Excellence.

2008 Presented the State Employees' Award for Excellence.

Gail Weams announced her retirement from NCDA&CS Food Distribution Division effective February 1, 2010.

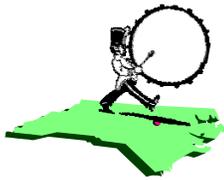
Gail joined with the Department of Agriculture September 9, 1980 managing the Food Distribution Program on the Cherokee Indian Reservation. November 1, 1991 she took the position of Commodity Distribution Representative where she has traveled 25 Western North Carolina counties, training, visiting and reviewing all Recipient Agencies of USDA commodity foods. She has been a great asset to this division and we all wish her well in her retirement.



## **NEW ARRIVAL**

Amie Shinn Aue and husband Rob are very proud of their new arrival on Monday January 25, 2010. Roman Julius Bertram Aue announced his own arrival at 9:12 AM weighing in at a mere 9 lbs. 15 oz – 21" long. He will be borrowing the car next month. Congratulations to Amie and Rob!





## **2010 MARCH ACROSS CAROLINA**

Mark your calendars for November 3 & 4 2010.

The dates are set and the **two** locations will be confirmed next week.

It was decided to forgo the New Bern show for 2010 due to budget and travel limitations.

See schedule below:

Wednesday, November 3, 2010 –Location TBA, Raleigh, NC

Thursday, November 4, 2010 - Hickory Metro Convention Center, Hickory, NC

Sign in at each location will be 8:30 – 9:00

NCECOS training 9:00 – 10:00

Processing food show 10:00-2:00

We hope to see you there!

Call Bob Sitton or Allison Medlin with questions.



## **2010 USDA COMMODITY ACADEMY**

You are welcome to join us in Butner for our fourth annual USDA Commodity Academy. This training is targeted for new directors and supervisors but is open to anyone who would like to attend. Our training takes place over two days February 10-11, 2010 and we cover the USDA Commodity Program from A to Z. We try to keep things interesting and have a few laughs along the way. For those who attend you can receive credit hours from SNA. If you would like to know more about this training or make reservations, please call Gary Gay or Bob Sitton at (919) 575-4490. You still have time to reserve a seat.



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## ACRONYM LIST

- ACDA - American Commodity Distribution Association
- AMS - Agricultural Marketing Service
- CND - Child Nutrition Division
- DoD - Department of Defense
- ECOS - The Electronic Commodity Ordering System
- FDA - Food and Drug Administration
- FDD - Food Distribution Division
- FNS - Food and Nutrition Service
- FFAVORS - Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Ordering and Receipt System
- FSIS - Food Safety and Inspection Service
- SNA - School Nutrition Association
- SY - School Year
- USDA - United States Department of Agriculture

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Steve Troxler ..... Commissioner of Agriculture  
Gary W. Gay ..... Director of Food Distribution  
Bob Sitton.....Editor/Administrator for Field Services  
Allison Medlin .....Publisher

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