



The Lunch Line

a newsletter of
The Bureau of Food & Nutrition
The Iowa Department of Education

Please route to:

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Commonly Asked Review Questions

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School Breakfast Week

Just a reminder, School Breakfast Week is March 4-8, 2002. The theme is "School Breakfast: Join the Club." Get ideas by looking at the ASFSA web site.

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Often consultants visiting schools find many of the same issues arising. For this article, they were asked to share common review questions and concerns.

What types of costs can be charged to the lunch fund?

There are a number of items that may legally be charged to the school foodservice account.

- Utilities: If a school charges for electricity and the kitchen is not metered separately, then a formula must be used to calculate the cost. Calculate the percentage of space occupied by the kitchen and dining area in relation to the total area of the school building and prorate the bill. There is no allowance for higher energy use by ovens, etc. Prorating must correspond with actual usage for space and time of use. For example, if the cafeteria is used by the foodservice department six hours of the day, the school foodservice account should only be charged for six hours of the day. Remember the account can not be charged during vacation times including the summer months.
- New equipment: If equipment such as tables are purchased for the dining area and are also being used by the school for study hall, the cost of the tables would be split proportionately. The school would need to calculate the percentage of time the tables are used for meal service and the time they are used for other purposes. This amount would then be prorated.

- Wages for non-food service employees: If wages of personnel that are not food service workers (such as custodians and secretaries) are charged to the school meal programs, a separate time sheet should document the amount of time spent in the foodservice area.
- Parish rental charges for meal programs: Federal regulations require justification for the rent paid the parish for the use of the kitchen by the school foodservice program. The basis for arriving at the allowable amount is to be calculated as follows: The original cost of the building in which the kitchen is housed is to be multiplied by a factor which is that proportion of space the kitchen occupies of the total size of the building. Two percent of this amount is the amount allowed as an annual rental charge. (As an example, if the original cost of a building in which the kitchen occupies 10% of the total space within the building was \$500,000, the allowable annual rental would be determined by the following calculation:

$$\$500,000 \times .10 = \$50,000;$$

$$\$50,000 \times .02 = \$1,000$$

The parish could therefore justify charging the foodservice program a maximum of \$1,000 a year for rental.

How much should adults pay for meals?

Adults should always pay at least the full cost of preparing and serving the meal including the value of the commodities used. Reimbursement is received only for student meals and consequently the adult price should be significantly higher. In schools where adults eat at the student charge or slightly higher, students are subsidizing adult meals. Meals may be served at no charge only to those adults who are directly involved in the preparation and service of the meals. This could include food service staff, lunchroom supervisory staff, ticket takers or custodians who help with cleaning, unloading of commodities etc.

How long should financial and other records be retained by the school?

The Bureau of Food and Nutrition requires all records including menus, production records, daily participation sheets, monthly claim reports,

financial documentation and free and reduced applications to be kept on file for three years plus the current operating year. Some school auditors require that records of major equipment purchases be retained until the item is no longer used. Check with your school auditor before destroying old records.

Why does USDA require a “medium of exchange”?

While most districts feel they are getting an accurate meal count, frequently violations are cited because the system does not provide an appropriate medium of exchange. “Medium of exchange” is defined as cash or any type of ticket, token, ID, name, or number which eligible students exchange to obtain a meal. Performance Standard 1 counting violations occur resulting in recalculations of claims and potentially large overclaims when counts are not properly taken. A “medium of exchange” is necessary also for all counting systems, even those using checklists. In this situation, it would simply be the child giving his or her name.

While computerized counting systems are frequently recommended to provide quick accurate counts, they can be problematic. Many schools are taking short cuts to reduce costs by eliminating the coded ID cards and to increase line speed, but are failing to meet Federal guidelines. A computerized meal count based on visual identification of students with no “medium of exchange” is not acceptable. The student must provide the cashier with his/her name and account number, the medium of exchange. Per FNS-270 Meal Counting and Claiming manual page 29, when students carry no tickets, “Students would need some form of verbal identifier or other identification.”

The school’s counting system must be a method authorized and approved by the State Agency in the Policy Statement. The counting system, as implemented, must yield the actual number of reimbursable free, reduced price and paid lunches served each day. In addition, it should provide accurate counts of ala carte sales, second lunches and adult meals, all of which are non-reimbursable. All counts must be verifiable.

Why do we need to have a meal count at the “point of service” and how do we insure that reimbursable meals are taken?

Meals must be counted at the point of service where it can be determined that a reimbursable meal is served to each student counted. Before students leave the service area trays must be examined to be sure the student has the required meal components on the tray. If the point of service is at the beginning of the line, the last person serving or another monitor should observe all trays. If the school has a salad bar and students are obtaining all or part of a reimbursable meal at that bar, someone must monitor the trays at the salad bar.

It is essential that the person monitoring the meals for components be adequately trained on how to recognize a reimbursable meal based on the menu items and the school’s selected menu planning method. This should not be done by teachers or principals who are not trained and are often distracted with discipline problems.

Each SFA must declare their counting system on the Policy Statement. Schools should regularly check to see that this system provides an accurate count and that the method they are using to obtain the count is the same method authorized by the State Agency. For additional information about counting systems, refer to Program Aid FNS-270 Meal Counting and Claiming Manual.

If you can answer yes to any of the following questions, your counting system is not acceptable and must be revised.

- Are claims based only on meal counts taken in the morning in the classroom or at any other location outside the cafeteria before the meal is served?
- Are claims based on attendance records?
- Are meal counts based on the number of tickets/tokens sold and distributed or the number of meals paid for in advance?
- Is the number of free and reduced price meals claimed based on the number of students eligible to receive such meals?

- Are meal counts by category taken at the beginning of the serving line without checking that the meals served are reimbursable?
- Are meal counts by category based on visual identification of students with no backup system available for persons not familiar with students’ benefit level?
- Are meal counts based on tray or plate counts?
- Are back-out systems used which subtract one number (e.g. number of free and reduced price meals) from the total count to get another number (e.g. number of paid meals)?
- Are the identities of students eligible for meal benefits NOT protected?
- Is this a system that does NOT yield a reliable, accurate count of meals served by category?

What does Offer vs. Serve mean for those schools using the Food Based Menu Planning system?

Offer vs. Serve refers to the fact that the children may select which components they will take. The component groups refer to the food groups: meat/meat alternate, milk, bread/grain, fruit and vegetable. For lunch, children must select at least three components.

In Offer vs. Serve, can I make students take the milk or the main dish?

No. The child gets to select which 3 components he/she will take. Sometimes others within the school make a rule that children must take certain components. This is not acceptable. While teachers may teach the children the value of drinking milk, in Offer vs. Serve, the children choose whether or not they will select milk.

What do I need to have ready for the reviewer to be able to complete the nutrient analysis?

Standardized recipes are a must. Check to see that the following information is included in each recipe:

- All ingredients, described in specific terms, such as large eggs, bread flour, pinto beans, not eggs, flour or beans. Do not leave out any ingredients.
- Exact quantity of ingredients. A measurement range cannot be use, for example 2-3 T. salt. Terms such as “add salt and pepper to taste” will not serve as data for the analysis.

- Number of servings or portions.
- The serving size.

Also, don't forget any recipes. Include recipes for "jello with fruit", "frosting" for a cinnamon roll or cake or "gravy."

Recipes for leftover menu items served, seconds or extras must also be included if they are served during the week of the analysis. Remember that all foods offered as part of the reimbursable lunch or breakfast will need to be included in the analysis.

It is better to err on the side of being too detailed rather than to leave out foods and hastily gather information during the review.

What records do Residential Child Care Institutions need for a review?

- RCCIs with multiple locations must complete the Self-Monitoring Form for On-Site Reviews. This must be completed by February 1st of each year. The form is sent yearly with the Policy Statement and should be kept on file at the institution. It documents that the meal counting procedure is completed at the point of service following the procedure described in your Policy Statement.
- [Food Production records](#) must include the menu, food items, and quantity of each food served. These records are needed for all meals claimed for reimbursement and should be completed at each site where meals are served. They document that the correct components were served in sufficient quantities to comply with the meal pattern. When a cycle menu has been developed to meet component requirements, on-site staff must be careful that substitutions of items are made with similar foods so those menus still meet requirements.
- Edit Records for Meal Counts are to be completed monthly by each site to assist in determining that the daily count is accurate.
- Individual determination forms for free or reduced-price meal eligibility should be completed at the time of enrollment to document the eligibility status of the student. These records are best kept in a notebook either

alphabetically or by date of enrollment so they can be easily located. A [roster](#) can be used in place of a separate form for each student. Please use the suggested form from our web page.

- The Racial Ethnic Distribution form must be continuously updated throughout the year as students are enrolled.
- Financial records including invoices and receipts for food/foodservice supplies, cancelled checks, claims for reimbursement, and time sheets for foodservice employees are to be maintained in monthly files.

Also, be sure to display the AND JUSTICE FOR ALL poster. Notify our office if you need additional posters sent to your institution.

For additional information and copies of the suggested forms, please download a copy of "Residential Child Care Institutions Food Services Manual" located at <http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov:8001/Training/rcci.html>. We also have forms available from our main web page.

How should meal claiming be done in a Residential Institution?

This must be done by adults who can accurately record the number of reimbursable meals served to participants at the point of service. The system must provide a count of meals served by type (free, reduced and paid). A check off list used at the point of service is the standard procedure. An adult marks a check by the name of each child/client who takes a reimbursable meal. Meals prepared as "sick trays" are not always reimbursable, as most do not contain the required components. At the end of each meal, the check marks are added to determine the number of meals served. This is the document that is used to calculate the total number of meals served each month, not an attendance or enrollment record. This check off list should be updated as children enroll and withdraw. If a child eats at different buildings, they are to be checked off at the building where they are eating the current meal. In that case, they might be listed on more than one [meal production record](#).

Best Practice Awards



USDA has announced the categories for the 2002 Best Practice Awards. In order to encourage and reward outstanding practices in school foodservice, the Department will recognize outstanding practices in five categories.

A nomination should consist of:

- a complete and accurate description of the practice (at least 250 but not to exceed 300 words)
- appropriate numbers such as: dollars saved or increased participation
- relevant history, impact and/or cost effectiveness
- documenting photographs or newspaper articles
- one copy of any coloring books, posters, or videos that have been developed
- name and telephone number of a contact person (these should be printed or typewritten to alleviate any question of spelling)
- mailing address
- size or average daily participation of school or SFA
- the category for the nomination

The categories for 2002 are as follows:

- School Breakfast Program – Marketing used in the breakfast program and/or other creative or innovative ideas for breakfast foodservice or menu planning. Include enrollment and participation figures and percentage of increase.
- The Dietary Guidelines 2000 – Activities, which may include teachers, students and/or foodservice personnel to increase awareness of nutrition and choices people make in following the Dietary Guidelines. Try to incorporate all 10 guidelines to help you build healthful eating patterns and take action for good health. Use the booklet as a guide to find out some of the many ways to aim for fitness, to build a healthy base, and to choose sensibly.
- Healthy School Nutrition Environment – There are six components of a healthy school nutrition environment. Each one is important and has an impact on nutrition and physical activity. The

definitions of success, suggested activities, and how to's for making improvements are listed in the Guide to Local Action booklet in the Changing the Scene Kit. There are no limits to the number of components you may select.

The six components are:

- ◆ A commitment to nutrition and physical activity
 - ◆ Quality school meals
 - ◆ Other healthy food choices
 - ◆ Pleasant eating experiences
 - ◆ Nutrition education
 - ◆ Marketing
- Team Nutrition – Nutrition related activities sponsored by Team Nutrition Schools that provide effective learning opportunities for students and which demonstrate a strong link between the cafeteria and the classroom. Community involvement in school sponsored activities is demonstrated and strategic partnerships reinforce key Team Nutrition messages promoting healthy food choices to children, families and community members.
 - Successful Implementation of Afterschool Snacks – Practices resulting in successful and/or innovative implementation of the Afterschool Snack Program in eligible sites sponsored by school districts operating the NSLP. Efforts demonstrate that children are provided with a variety of healthy snacks that promote good nutrition after school.

All nominations will be judged using the following criteria:

- ✓ **Evidence of sustained excellence** (20 points)
Consideration should be given to overall management of the program. School and SFAs that have run a superior program for some length of time should receive the highest score.
- ✓ **Innovation** (20 points)
An idea that gives a new and effective twist to an old solution or that is an innovative and successful addition to school foodservice should

be rated accordingly. Creative and clever ideas should receive maximum ratings.

- ✓ **Impact** (20 points)
Evidence of increased participation or increased support or recognition from students, parents, teachers or the community.
- ✓ **Cost effectiveness and efficiency** (20 points)
The idea should make good use of the available resources and labor. An expensive new computer system that makes a major improvement in efficiency could be cost effective if the expenditure is in proportion to the results. Manpower and budgetary requirements should be reasonable in relation to the results.
- ✓ **Transferability** (10 points)
Awards should be established standards of excellence for other states to strive toward. Some judgement should be made as to how easily the idea could be implemented by other schools or SFAs.
- ✓ **Presentation** (10 points)
The material should be well presented. It should be well organized, complete, clear and succinct. Although well-written material may be rated highly, objective measures of success, results, and such items as photographs or letters of support from appropriate users, i.e. students, PTA members or teachers should also be considered as part of the presentation.

A copy of the nomination form is enclosed with this mailing or may be accessed on our web site. **All nominations are due into the Bureau by Friday, March 15, 2002.**

Commodity Dehydrated Potatoes

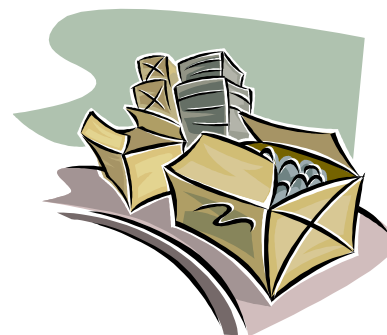


We are aware that many of you have had difficulty with the dehydrated potatoes. If you have been able to obtain a good product, please contact Dean Flaws with your recipe so we can pass the information along to others. Has anyone tried using it in baked yeast products? Let us know!

January Commodity Deletions and Reductions

Canned chicken (#0323) – Deleted in all warehouses

Diced chicken (#0325) – Reduced in Des Moines warehouse and cancelled in Mason City and Sioux City.



October 19, 2001

Iowa State Commodity Advisory Council Minutes Crown Point Center, Johnston, Iowa

The Iowa State Commodity Advisory Council met on Friday October 19, 2001 at the Crown Point Center in Johnston, Iowa. At 9:10 a.m., Commodities Consultant, Dean Flaws welcomed the 2001-2002 Iowa State Commodity Advisory Council Members. He stated that this Board would consist of the eleven members held over from last year and that there would be no new members this year.

Mr. Flaws introduced the Vendor Presentations for the morning.

1. Jim Moore – United Commodity Group

Mr. Moore presented information sheets and products to sample using commodity cheese, dry milk and fruits. The first sample he passed around was Bosco Sticks (Bread sticks with cheese in the center). Second, he passed around samples of Mozzarella and Cheddar string cheese. The third product was flavored applesauce in cups, 96 to case. Samples were cinnamon & blueberry. Next, he passed out a fruit snack and stated that these were going over well for sack lunches. The last item he passed out was the PBJ in a pocket. This has been a good product and now comes in 2 different sizes.

2. Greg Hules – Golden Valley Mgt.

Mr. Hules passed out information sheets on turkey products. He had samples of the Deli turkey. New products included a turkey and pork blend that he had made up for barbeque sandwiches and a meatball using the blended pork and turkey.

3. Gary Bornmueller – DBC Brokerage

Announced that the Chicken Fingers/Tenders were in. Also stated that A+Burgers were coming along well. Gary had samples of Honey Buns and he announced that Cutie Pies would be having some seasonal flavors such as pumpkin pie.

4. Glen Wood – Freedom Brokerage Inc.

Mr. Wood passed out a packet of information on his products. He passed around samples of Cheese Gorditos, Cinnamon Toast, Texas Cheese Toast, and Pepperoni Pizza Bagel. He also had individual packages of Chunky Pizza, Pepperoni Pizza, and Subway Ham and Cheese. All his items were excellent for use on an ala-carte line and were individually wrapped and could be heated in microwave ovens.

5. Peter Hans – Tabatchnick

Peter passed out packets of information on his products. We sampled the following products; flavored applesauce in 4oz cups (cinnamon, blue and green), Fruit Smoothies – good product for using commodity fruit, Petchek in 2 oz cups – using tomato paste, Marinara sauce – 2.5 oz cups – using tomato paste.

6. Malissa Marsden= AWG Group

Malissa presented information on Dannon Yogurt products and passed out samples of the new drinkable yogurt.

This concluded our Vendor Presentations at 11:05 a.m.

Mr. Flaws announced a 15-minute recess.

At 11:20 a.m., Mr. Flaws stated that before we start our Board meeting a Chairperson and Secretary needed to be appointed. Tracy Knebel made the motion to appoint Barb Rose and La Vonne Arndt to Co-chair this Board. They agreed they would co-chair. Secretary, Marlene Wright said she would continue to serve as Secretary.

Mr. Flaws then turned the Business meeting over to the Co-chairperson.

Co-chair, Rose called the first Board meeting to order at 11:25 a.m. She asked for a roll call. Present were: Rose, Arndt, Wright, Sass, Haugen, Buse, Knebel, Boldt and Malone. Hauschildt and Humphrey were absent. Minutes of the March 30 meeting were approved. Co-chair, Rose passed out the worksheets and vouchers for members to fill out and turn in. An information map was passed out showing members and their location in the state. The next meeting will be Friday, April 5, 2002 at the Crown Point Center, Johnston. Call to order will be 9:00 a.m. The meeting date for our bid, if needed was set for May 3, 2002 at East High School in Des Moines.

Mrs. Rose asked Mr. Flaws for the status of processing. Mr. Flaws passed out a three-year analysis of commodities ordered from 1999-2002. He stated that the following items were not in or had to be cancelled; Strawberries, Turkey Roasts, Chicken Patties, Chicken Nuggets – USDA had not purchased. He asked the board to study the sheet and we would discuss this matter in April. He informed us that the transportation committee working with Keck on delivery matters had been tabled and is currently gathering more information. Spring bids would need to be on margarine and ground beef patties.

The Board agreed we would not consider Brato for rebid next year. Question was asked on what was offered this year with Tabatchnick? Fruit Pops and Sorbet cups. All agreed we liked the Fruit Smoothies and applesauce cups that we sampled.

Mr. Flaws was asked if there were other schools having problems with the instant potatoes that came in on last Commodity order. His reply, "Yes, we have had a lot of calls on them." He mentioned that a school was working on a recipe and it will be put in the next Lunchline.

Future discussion will be held on the future of processing the following; fruit snacks, fruit smoothies, milk smoothies, pudding pops and

chicken fajitas. Mr. Flaws said this product could be available yet this year from USDA.

Mr. Flaws passed out a new form for Keck deliveries for the board to approve. Board discussed the form and approved it.

Mr. Flaws stated that the labels on the OJ have been changed.

Co-chairperson Rose asked for any other business to come before this board. Hearing none she adjourned the meeting at 1:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
Marlene Wright, Secretary



NOMINATION FORM

National School Lunch Program Best Practices Award
U.S. Department of Agriculture/Food and Nutrition Service

Name of School or School Food Authority (i.e. Sponsor) being nominated (no individuals, please):

Mailing Address: _____

Average Daily Participation: _____ Number of Schools: _____

Category (*check only one*):

- School Breakfast Program Initiative
- The Dietary Guidelines 2000
- Healthy School Nutrition Environment
- Team Nutrition
- Successful Implementation of Afterschool Snacks

Submitted by (Type or Print Name/Title): _____

Phone Number _____ Fax Number _____

Mailing Address (*if different than school being nominated*): _____

Description of Practice (*Include information on cost, history, and impact. Supporting documents or additional pages may be attached*)
