Reply to
Attn. of: SFSP-223

Subject: Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) 1990 Census Data

To: STATE AGENCY DIRECTORS (Special Nutrition Programs) - Colorado ED, Iowa, Missouri DH, Montana OPI, Nebraska ED, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming DHSS

Attached are: (1) the field specifications and other technical information concerning the special tabulation; (2) a printed copy of the "special tabulation" developed for Food and Nutrition Service use from the Bureau of the Census (BOC) for your State; (3) a list of State data centers through which you may obtain other information necessary for use of the special tabulation; and (4) a list of every five-digit county identifier in your State.

This special tabulation provides, for each census block group in your State, the number and percentage of children, ages 0-18, below 185 percent of poverty. As explained in Attachment 2 to SFSP-196, census block groups are sub-units of census tracts. Census tracts vary in size from 2,500 to 8,000 persons, with an average of approximately 4,000 persons per tract. Block groups, on the other hand, are defined by housing units, numbering between 250 and 550 units, with an average of 400 units (or roughly 900 persons) per block group.

Because block groups generally include a relatively limited number of children, we believe that the information contained in the special tabulation will be an excellent tool for conducting outreach in the 1995 SFSP. This may be especially true in rural areas, where pockets of poverty may be harder to identify in school attendance areas and census tracts which are geographically much larger than in urban areas.

In addition, we believe that the BOC material will also be an excellent tool for site eligibility determinations under certain conditions. In general, we believe that the special tabulation should not be used when relevant, current-year information on free and reduced price eligibility in neighborhood elementary schools is available. School data is far more current than census data (which were collected in 1990) and should more accurately represent current neighborhood economic conditions.
However, there may be certain circumstances which warrant the use of the data in the special tabulation to establish site eligibility, even when current-year school data are available. The special tabulation might be especially useful if:

1. The potential site is located in a rural area, where geographically large elementary school attendance areas may obscure localized pockets of poverty which can be identified through the use of block group data.

2. School data show an area to be close to the 50 percent threshold, and the block group data may reveal specific portions of the school's attendance area which are SFSP-eligible.

3. Mandatory bussing has affected the percentage of free and reduced price eligibles in neighborhood schools, and the school is unable to "factor out" the pupils bussed in from other areas and provide the sponsor with data on the percentage of free and reduced price eligibles in the school's immediate neighborhood.

In any of these circumstances, use of the block group data contained in the special tabulation may help to more precisely ascertain a neighborhood's true current income poverty status.

In response to specific questions you may have, we would also like to address the use of other census-based materials in site eligibility determination:

1. Will you be able to use the census tract information transmitted in SFSP-196 in lieu of the block group data being made available in this BOC product? SFSP-196 specifically limited the use of the data in Attachment 1 to the 1993 SFSP, since the attachment only listed those census tracts in which at least 50 percent of all persons (not children) had income below 185 percent of poverty. At the time we issued SFSP-196, Attachment 1 was the best available source of 1990 census data. Now, however, the availability of the special tabulation provides you and your sponsors with more geographically precise (block group, not tract) information on the income poverty status of children (not all persons) in a neighborhood. Therefore, information from SFSP-196 shall not be used to document site eligibility for the 1994 SFSP.

2. Will you be able to use other data from the 1990 census (specifically, information from Summary Tape Files 3 and 4) in lieu of the block group data being made available in the BOC product? These data shall not be used since they do not utilize the same income poverty guidelines utilized by FNS to determine free and reduced price eligibility. For its own purposes, the BOC has developed separate income poverty standards which are slightly different than those developed by FNS and other Federal agencies in determining eligibility for means-tested programs. However, the
special tabulation which we are transmitting with this memorandum does employ the same income poverty standards used to establish free and reduced price meal eligibility in FNS school programs in 1990.

(3) Will you or your sponsors be able to use other census products which had been developed under contract to document site eligibility? To date, the Child Nutrition Division has seen two such products, both of which were methodologically flawed and would not have produced accurate site eligibility determinations. If you or your sponsors wish to use such products in lieu of school data or the special tabulation, you must submit those products to us for prior review and approval far in advance of the 1994 program's commencement.

Finally, you should consider the special tabulation's potential as a pre-program monitoring tool which could help identify sites for which sponsors have made improper eligibility determinations. If sources other than the special tabulation are used to determine site eligibility, and if the special tabulation shows the area to have substantially less than 50 percent eligible children, you may wish to follow up quickly to more closely examine the basis for the sponsor's determination of site eligibility.

Please contact my staff at (303) 844-0359 if you have any questions regarding this memorandum.

for
ANN C. DEGROAT
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Attachments
General: The technical specifications for this special tabulation--, including an explanation of the record layout and suggestions concerning the use of block group maps--are contained in this attachment.

Tabulation Obtained from Disk: To save you time, we have taken the liberty of printing the census information for your State from the BOC. Disks were received in our office that were prepared in the SuperCalc format on high density disks. The disks may also be saved in ASCII text. We are aware that not every State has the capability, or the desire, to use SuperCalc; however, if you would like a magnetic disk for your State developed by the BOC, prepared in SuperCalc or ASCII text, please notify us and we will send one to you.

Record Layout: The record documentation explains the layout of the "fields" within each record, and should be consulted as you read the following. Each block group is a record, and each record contains the following information:

(1) Column 1, 12-digit identifier as follows:
   o Five-digit state and county identifier.
   o Six-digit census tract/block numbering area (BNA) identifier. Please note that most of the six digit identifiers end in two blank spaces. BOC has converted all tract/BNA identifiers ending in "00" to end in "blank blank" to facilitate the use of certain mapping software packages with the special tabulation (see below).
   o The one-digit block group identifier.

Please note that this 12-digit identifier has been enclosed in quotation marks so that it will be read as a "text ring" by SuperCalc. This prevents the two blanks in many of the identifiers from being read as space delimiters by SuperCalc.

(2) Column 2, Urban/Rural identifier: If the block group is within one of the 18 "metropolitan areas" (MAs) or one of the 250 metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) in the nation it is, in most instances, "urban" for our Program purposes. If the block group is within an MA or an MSA, the number "1" appears; if not, the number "2" appears.

(3) Column 3, Total Children 0-18: This is the total number of children within the block group, minus the number of university students living in dormitories or military personnel residing in barracks or on board ships.

(4) Column 4, Children below 185 Percent of Poverty: All children within the block group from families with income below 185 percent of poverty, except for university students and military personnel. As
explained in the cover memo, FNS income poverty guidelines—not those normally used by the BOC—were used in this column.

(5) Column 5, Children for Whom Income Poverty Level was not Computed: Normally, this would include all children 0-18 in the block group who either (a) reside in institutions or (b) live with non-family members (i.e., foster children). For our purposes, the portion of (a) comprised of university students and military personnel were removed from the "not computed" category. In other words, what remains in Column 5 is all children 0-18 residing in institutions, plus all children 0-18 who live with non-family members, minus children through age 18 who are in the military or who are university students. University students and military personnel were also removed from Column 3, Total Children, and Column 4, Children below 185 Percent of Poverty. Finally, although pre-college children at prep schools are "in institutions", they do not appear in the "not computed" category. Instead, BOC procedure is to count them as part of their family at home.

(6) Percentage of Children below 185 Percent of Poverty: The percentage of children within the block group below 185 percent of poverty as defined by FNS. The formula for this computation is simply columns 4 plus 5 divided by column 3.

Maps for Block Groups: In order to use the information in the special tabulation, you and your sponsors will need to be able to identify the geographic boundaries of particular block groups. This can most readily be done by consulting your State Data Center (SDC). A list of all SDCs in the country was transmitted as Attachment 3 to SFSP-196. However, the list of SDCs included as Attachment 3 to this memorandum has been updated as of October 19, 1993. In addition, Attachment 3 to this memorandum provides a coded list of services provided by each SDC, including the type of mapping services provided by the SDC (see last page of Attachment 3, under "Geographic").

The special tabulation's usefulness for each State will depend, in part, on the cooperation of their individual SDC. Many SDCs are part of State government and, if they have the staff and resources, may be willing to provide you with free copies of block group maps, or even to work directly with you in determining block group boundaries. When requesting mapping information, you should know the six-digit census tract/BNA identifier and the single-digit block group identifier. [Note: Remember that, if the six-digit tract/BNA identifier ends with two blank spaces in this listing, it was originally "00".] This will enable you to request specific "Census Tract/BNA Outline Maps" which show the geographic boundaries of tracts and BNAs and "County Block Maps" which show the precise outlines of individual block groups.

Finally, if you have personnel with a high level of computer sophistication, it may be possible to work with the SDC to obtain software mapping packages called "TIGER/Line Files". This software can
be loaded onto a hard drive and programmed to facilitate the identification of specific geographic boundaries for each census block group.

Block Group "Anomalies": A casual glance at the records in the special tabulation may raise questions about the data presented for certain block groups. Here are answers for some of the questions which we believe will most likely arise:

- "Why do some block groups contain all zeroes?" In most cases, these are industrialized or commercial areas in which there are no housing units or in which existing housing units are unoccupied. In other cases, these may be "pre-list" block groups defined by the BOC prior to the census, but then not used.

- "Why do some block groups contain a number for total children, but all other columns are zeroes?" These block groups are wealthy and contain no children below 185 percent of poverty, no foster children, and no institutionalized children.

- "Why do some block groups contain larger numbers of children whose poverty status was not computed?" These are likely block groups which contain institutional housing for children. Please keep in mind that this could include "institutions" which are relatively unknown, even to residents of the community, such as halfway houses, "safe houses" for battered women, group homes for recovering alcoholics or addicts and their children, homes for runaways, etc.
RECORD LAYOUT

UNIVERSE: PERSONS 0..18 YEARS OLD EXCEPT THOSE LIVING IN
COLLEGE DORMS (87) AND
MILITARY GROUP QUARTERS (95..98)

BYTE: ITEM:

1..1 QUOTE

2..3 FIPS STATE CODE
   01..56 = ALABAMA..WYOMING

4..6 FIPS COUNTY CODE
   NNN = COUNTY CODE

7..12 CENSUS TRACT/BNA CODE
   NNNNSS = LEGAL TRACT CODE RANGE
   NNNN = TRACT/BNA NUMBER (0001..9999)
   SS = SPLIT TRACT SUFFIX
   ' ' = NOT A SPLIT TRACT
   01..99 = SPLIT TRACT NUMBER

13..13 CENSUS BLOCK GROUP
   1..9 = BLOCK GROUP NUMBER

14..14 QUOTE

15..16 IN CMSA/MSA
   1 = IN CMSA/MSA
   2 = NOT IN CMSA/MSA

17..22 CHILDREN (PERSONS 0..18 YEARS OLD)

23..28 CHILDREN WITH DHHS POVERTY LEVEL BELOW 185% OF DHHS POVERTY

29..34 CHILDREN WHOSE DHHS POVERTY LEVEL IS NOT COMPUTABLE

35..42 \( \frac{(23..28 + 29..34) \times 100.0}{16..20} \) (" XX.XX")
PERCENT IN POVERTY
Definitions

Census Tracts or BNAs: Subdivisions of counties which include between 2,500 and 8,000 people. On average, they contain about 4,000 people. Some rural census tracts are known as BNAs. (Block numbering areas)

Block Groups: Sub-units of census tracts which include between 250 and 550 housing units. On average, they contain about 400 units, or about 900 people.

Blocks: Sub-units of block groups. On average, there are about 30 blocks in each block group.
19107 Keokuk County, IA
19109 Kossuth County, IA
19111 Lee County, IA
19113 Linn County, IA
19115 Louisa County, IA
19117 Lucas County, IA
19119 Lyon County, IA
19121 Madison County, IA
19123 Mahaska County, IA
19125 Marion County, IA
19127 Marshall County, IA
19129 Mills County, IA
19131 Mitchell County, IA
19133 Monona County, IA
19135 Monroe County, IA
19137 Montgomery County, IA
19139 Muscatine County, IA
19141 O'Brien County, IA
19143 Osceola County, IA
19145 Page County, IA
19147 Palo Alto County, IA
19149 Plymouth County, IA
19151 Pocahontas County, IA
19153 Polk County, IA
19155 Pottawattamie County, IA
19157 Poweshiek County, IA
19159 Ringgold County, IA
19161 Sac County, IA
19163 Scott County, IA
19165 Shelby County, IA
19167 Sioux County, IA
19169 Story County, IA
19171 Tama County, IA
19173 Taylor County, IA
19175 Union County, IA
19177 Van Buren County, IA
19179 Wapello County, IA
19181 Warren County, IA
19183 Washington County, IA
19185 Wayne County, IA
19187 Webster County, IA
19189 Winnebago County, IA
19191 Winnebago County, IA
19193 Woodbury County, IA
19195 Worth County, IA
19197 Wright County, IA
20001 Allen County, KS
20003 Anderson County, KS
20005 Atchison County, KS
20007 Barber County, KS
20009 Barton County, KS
20011 Bourbon County, KS
20013 Brown County, KS
20015 Butler County, KS
20017 Chase County, KS
20019 Chautauqua County, KS
20133 Neosho County, KS
20135 Ness County, KS
20137 Norton County, KS
20139 Osage County, KS
20141 Osborne County, KS
20143 Ottawa County, KS
20145 Pawnee County, KS
20147 Phillips County, KS
20149 Pottawatomie County, KS
20151 Pratt County, KS
20153 Rawlins County, KS
20155 Reno County, KS
20157 Republic County, KS
20159 Rice County, KS
20161 Riley County, KS
20163 Rooks County, KS
20165 Rush County, KS
20167 Russell County, KS
20169 Saline County, KS
20171 Scott County, KS
20173 Sedgwick County, KS
20175 Seward County, KS
20177 Shawnee County, KS
20179 Sheridan County, KS
20181 Sherman County, KS
20183 Smith County, KS
20185 Stafford County, KS
20187 Stanton County, KS
20189 Stevens County, KS
20191 Sumner County, KS
20193 Thomas County, KS
20195 Trego County, KS
20197 Wabaunsee County, KS
20199 Wallace County, KS
20201 Washington County, KS
20203 Wichita County, KS
20205 Wilson County, KS
20207 Woodson County, KS
20209 Wyandotte County, KS
21001 Adair County, KY
21003 Allen County, KY
21005 Anderson County, KY
21007 Ballard County, KY
21009 Barren County, KY
21011 Bath County, KY
21013 Bell County, KY
21015 Boone County, KY
21017 Bourbon County, KY
21019 Boyd County, KY
21021 Boyle County, KY
21023 Bracken County, KY
21025 Breathitt County, KY
21027 Breckinridge County, KY
21029 Bullitt County, KY
21031 Butler County, KY
21033 Caldwell County, KY
State Data Center Program Coordinating Organizations
(Includes Business and Industry Data Center Initiative Components)

Since 1978, the State Data Center (SDC) Program has provided training and technical assistance in accessing and using Census data for research, administration, planning, and decisionmaking by the government, the business community, university researchers, and other interested data users. The Business and Industry Data Center (BIDC) Program, initiated in 1988, supports the business community by expanding SDC services to government, academic, and non-profit organizations that directly serve businesses.

The SDC/BIDC organizations also provide additional services denoted by various codes beneath their entry, and defined on the last page.

For more information on the SDC/BIDC programs, contact the Data User Services Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233-8300, (301) 763-1580.

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General

T  Tape copies, Printouts, Extracts, and Software for accessing and downloading census data.
OL  Online data services.
CD  CD-ROM products and services.

Geographic

MAP  Mapping capabilities.
MC  Ability to copy Census maps.
TGR  TIGER

Other

NL  Newsletter, Technical Journal.
FT  Foreign Trade