Reply to
Attn. of: SFSP-335

Subject: Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Policy Memorandum
#7-98: Meals Prepared in Schools

To: STATE AGENCY DIRECTORS - Colorado ED, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri DH, Montana OPI, Nebraska ED, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming DHSS

This memorandum responds to questions that have been raised about whether or not meals prepared by schools for the SFSP may meet the meal requirements of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). As you know, Section 225.16(g)(1) of the SFSP Regulations authorizes State Agencies (SAs) to permit sponsors which serve meals prepared in schools participating in the school meal programs to substitute the meal pattern requirements of the NSLP and the SBP for the meal requirements of the SFSP. The purpose of this provision is to reduce the burden on local schools that participate in the SFSP by permitting them to continue using a meal planning system that is familiar, while at the same time ensuring that meals served in the SFSP meet a recognized nutrition standard.

When this provision was incorporated into the SFSP Regulations, there was only one pattern each for school lunches and breakfasts, and the lunch and breakfast patterns for schools did not vary significantly from the corresponding patterns for the SFSP. However, as you know, in recent years the range of meal planning options available to local schools has expanded, and given the diversity of the options, meals prepared by schools may now differ considerably from meals prepared using the SFSP meal patterns.

Nevertheless, we continue to believe that it is advantageous to authorize schools preparing meals for the SFSP to use the menu planning system they are familiar with during the school year. This policy facilitates efficient use of school facilities for the SFSP. Moreover, school meals are required to meet established nutrition standards during the school year, regardless of the meal planning option elected by the school. For these reasons, with the approval of the SA that administers the SFSP, schools that prepare meals for their sites and for non-school sponsors that contract with schools to provide meals may serve meals under the SFSP that meet the requirements for the school meal programs. We wish to point out that there are
no optional planning alternatives for snacks served under the NSLP. Therefore, snacks prepared by schools must meet the meal pattern for supplements established at Section 210 of the NSLP regulations. This pattern is identical to the meal pattern for snacks in the SFSP Regulations.

We would like to emphasize, however, that this authority to depart from the specific meal patterns of the SFSP does not extend to operational requirements. In particular, non-school sponsors are not authorized to implement "offer-versus-serve" at their sites. Section 13(f)(7) of the National School Lunch Act limits this option to school sites administered by school food authorities and operated in the same manner as during the school year.

If you have any questions, please call our office at (303) 844-0359.

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Standardized Recipes

Advantages of standardized recipes:

1. *Uniform quality of food.*
2. *Uniform quantity of food prepared.*
3. *Saves time for cooks, managers and dieters.*
5. *Consistent cost of menu items.*
6. *Helps in training.*
7. *Satisfaction - customer.*

Standardized recipes tell you how to make a certain menu item. Recipes are considered standardized when they have been tested in given situations and repeatedly produce good quality results. If you follow a standardized recipe exactly, you will have a good quality product with a specific number of servings each time.

Standardized recipes can help control food and labor costs, prepare the same quality food each time, and produce a specific number of servings each time. Using standardized recipes also assures that the nutritional content of the food product is the same each time. This is important when implementing the Dietary Guidelines in order to accurately conduct a nutritional analysis identifying if the Dietary Guidelines have been met.

Favorite recipes of a institution or the institution cook can be standardized by preparing them with specified ingredients and amounts and then testing the product on teachers, students, parents, and administrators. When a product has been accepted by those testing it and it has consistent qualities and yields, the recipe has been standardized. In order to achieve consistent results, the recipe must be written down so that all cooks achieve the same results.

Information to be included on each standardized recipe:

1. Name of recipe.
2. Ingredients.
3. Weights and measurements.
4. Directions.
5. Number of servings.

See the USDA Recipes for content and examples.