Reply to

Attn. of: SFSP-343

SUBJECT: Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)
Policy Memorandum # 11-98: Certifying Eligibility Of Sites Serving Migrant Children

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

(Child Nutrition Programs)

Although the 1998 SFSP is now underway, we are still concerned about how to maximize the program’s impact, especially in unserved or underserved rural areas. We are particularly interested in efforts to target children and sponsors in migrant communities. This memorandum is intended to remind you about procedures that may be taken to simplify certification of sites serving the children of migrant workers. It is based on guidance which was originally issued in SFSP-195 Q&A #9, dated April 4, 1993.

Section 225.6(c)(2)(ii)(A) of the regulations allows sponsors proposing to serve migrant children to obtain data from a migrant organization to establish site eligibility. The data would support the eligibility of the group of children who would be served at the proposed site. This provision is intended to make it easier for sponsors of migrant sites to participate (since some migrant sites are located in affluent farming areas, these sites would otherwise have to be enrolled in order to participate), and receive the additional meal benefits that SFSP offers to migrant children.

We are aware that documenting the income of small groups of migrants may be difficult for some sponsors, particularly since data describing migrant workers has often been inadequate. The most reliable data is collected through the Department of Labor’s National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWSS); however, these data only describe agricultural crop workers.
A recent profile of farm workers describes changes in demographics, household composition, income, use of Federal programs, and immigration status of farm workers, since 1988. The report, written for the Commission on Immigration Reform, is based on data collected for NAWS. It reveals that, by 1995, 61 percent of farm workers were living in households below the poverty level. That is a significant increase since 1990, when it was disclosed that 50 percent of farm workers lived below the poverty level.

Therefore, we continue to support the guidance in SFSP-195 Q&A #9 which indicates that a migrant site needs only to have written certification from a migrant organization which attests that the site serves children of migrant farmworker families. If you have any questions concerning any of the issues addressed in this memorandum, please contact our office at (303) 844-0359.

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