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Food and Nutrition

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MORE COUNTIES GET FOOD STAMPS

ONLY ONE COUNTY NOW WITHOUT A FAMILY FEEDING PROGRAM

BEAVER COUNTY, OKLA., is now the only county in the Nation without immediate plans for a family feeding program, following the February 21 and March 19 food stamp designations of 87 counties in 12 States. When President Nixon pledged on May 6, 1969, to put an end to hunger in America, there were 430 counties without food programs.

Among the 87 designated counties were five Colorado counties which have been without any food assistance program. The remaining areas have been operating the food distribution program. The designation of these counties is in keeping with the provisions of the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973, which mandates a nationwide food stamp program by June 30, 1974.

Only 25 counties scattered in five States remain to be designated for the food stamp program. Forty-five States, plus the District of Columbia, are now operating, or are designated to operate statewide food stamp programs.

OPERATIONS TO BEGIN IN PUERTO RICO

THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM will soon be operating in Puerto Rico. Officials in Puerto Rico and the Food and Nutrition Service are working together to set up the administrative channels necessary to operate the program.

Puerto Rico will stagger the openings of the food stamp program in its various municipalities, beginning in May and continuing through March 1975. The existing food distribution program will continue to meet the food needs of low-income families until the food stamp program is fully implemented in Puerto Rico.

STATES IMPLEMENT QUALITY CONTROL PROGRAMS

ALL STATES CURRENTLY operating food stamp programs are working on implementing quality control programs.

The purpose of quality control is to determine the validity of the caseload. To do this, each State selects a random sample of participating households in which one or more persons do not receive public assistance. Reviewers then conduct home interviews with these recipients, verifying criteria for eligibility and making sure that the household is paying the correct purchase requirement and receiving the appropriate coupon allotment.

The most recent reports submitted show that 27 States have completed at least 85 percent of the sample, which is the minimum needed to produce statistically valid results. Those States which did not reach 85 percent cited problems in sample selection, lack of staff, and insufficient staff training. Five States did not implement a quality

control program until after the reporting period.

The 27 States which completed 85 percent of the sample are: Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

Several other States completed at least 50 percent of the required sample: Alabama, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Oregon, Texas, Utah and Wisconsin.

As a result of the quality control reports, the Food Stamp Division is making changes in food stamp regulations and operating procedures to reduce error rates. These changes include:

- Revising food stamp regulations to permit States to use a standard utility allowance.

- Expanding the language of a household's responsibility to report income changes of \$10 or more.

- Extending averaging authority to include deductions as well as income.

- Broadening the section on "Refusal to Cooperate" to include quality control reviews.

New Members Appointed To National Advisory Council

THREE NEW COUNCIL members will be attending the next meeting of the National Advisory Council on Child Nutrition, March 25-26.

Two of the members will be serving in the new positions created by the Na-

tional School Lunch and Child Nutrition Act Amendments of 1973, which called for representation of urban and rural school food service supervisors. Thelma Becker, school food service supervisor for the Souderton Area School District, Montgomery County, Pa., will represent rural schools; and John Schloegel, director of school food service for the Archdiocese of New Orleans, La., will represent urban schools.

Named to represent teachers is Carolyn Courtney, who teaches fourth grade in the Hot Springs, Ark., public schools. She replaces Edward Schwartzkopf, a Lincoln, Neb., public school teacher whose Council term has expired.

The new members will serve 3-year terms on the Council.

FNS PROPOSES CHANGES IN SUMMER FEEDING REGULATIONS

THE FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE has proposed a series of changes in the regulations for the Special Food Service Program for Children.

The principal changes proposed are increases in the rates of reimbursement that FNS pays to the sponsors of the programs, in both the special summer operation and the year-round phase of the program.

In the Special Summer Program, proposed changes:

- Increase the maximum rate of reimbursement from 30 cents to 34 cents for a regular meal; and from 10 cents to 11 cents for supplemental food.

- Increase the amount of extra cash assistance available to service institutions, in instances where all or nearly all children are in need of free meals, and the institution cannot financially meet this need. This assistance has been boosted from 60 cents to 70 cents

for a regular meal; and from 15 cents to 18 cents for supplemental food.

In the Year-Round Day-Care Program, proposed changes:

- Increase the maximum rate of reimbursement from 30 to 34 cents for a lunch or supper; from 15 to 17 cents for breakfast; and from 10 cents to 11 cents for supplemental meals (snacks).

- Increase reimbursement to year-round food service which serve especially needy children, raising the rate from 60 cents to 70 cents for lunch or supper; from 20 cents to 23 cents for breakfast; and from 15 cents to 18 cents for supplemental meals.

It is proposed that the changes in the Special Summer Program would be put into effect on April 15, while the changes in the year-round program would be effective July 1.

FUNDING FOR SUMMER FEEDING ANNOUNCED

THE FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE has announced a tentative allocation of \$50.6 million to the States for operation of the Special Food Service Program this summer. The same amount was allocated last year and \$33 million was spent.

FNS announced the planned funding distribution on March 15 so that States and FNS Regional Offices could immediately begin approving applications of sponsors for the summer program. This year's program aims to feed 1.5 million children through public and nonprofit private service institutions such as day care centers and recreation programs.

According to the planned distribution, States will receive a 40 percent increase over last year's expenditures. In addition, FNS is holding \$4.4 mil-

lion in reserve and will survey the States in early May to determine which of them have need for additional funds.

Project Tests New Ways To Boost Lunch Participation

EATING WITH FRIENDS is a social experience, not just a pitstop to refuel the body. That's the idea behind a project now beginning in the high school lunch program in Carrollton City, Ga. By improving the cafeteria's social climate, school officials hope to increase student participation in the National School Lunch Program and reduce littering and food waste.

Plans include making the cafeteria less "institutional" with fresh paint, smaller tables, brightly colored chairs, new silverware and dishes, and live or recorded music. Students will help decorate the cafeteria, plan menus, and even serve some meals.

In a special section for seniors, smorgasbords and family-or restaurant-style service will provide a change from the usual cafeteria line.

Additional WIC Projects Selected

AN ADDITIONAL 39 project areas in 15 States have been selected to take part in the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). This brings to 255 the number of project areas in 45 States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

An estimated 59,000 women, infants and children will participate (monthly) in the 39 projects. The cost of the program in the 39 areas is expected to be about \$3.9 million for a 3-month period.

The WIC program provides cash grants to States to make specific supplemental foods available to pregnant and lactating women, infants and children up to 4 years of age. The first WIC project area opened in Pineville, Ky., on Jan. 15.

OFF PRESS

● "The Food Stamp Program and You" (C-193) is an educational slide series designed to teach people using food stamps and other members of the community how the food stamp program works.

The two parts of the slide presentation can be presented independently or together. The first part, directed to potential participants, provides a general introduction to the program. The second tells how to use food coupons and gives tips on shopping and nutrition.

Copies of the 61-frame color slide set have been made available free of charge to State agencies which administer the food stamp program. Others can purchase the slides plus an illustrated narrative guide and a soundtrack on cassette for \$18.50 from Photography Division, Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

● "Food Makes the Difference: Ideas for Economy-Minded Families" (PA-934) has been revised and is now available from the Food Stamp Division, Food and

Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

The colorful four-page flyer lists ways to help families on low budgets prepare nutritious meals. Included are menu suggestions for a full week and a listing of economical buys from each of the four main food groups.

● "Special Food Service Program for Children, Summer 1974" (PA-1079). This one-page flyer provides a general introduction to the summer program and tells prospective sponsors how to apply.

Prospective sponsors may obtain copies of the flyer by writing to the nearest FNS Regional Office.

● "Equipment Guide for Preschool and School Age Child Service Institutions" (PA-999) specifies equipment needed by day care centers and other institutions serving meals to between 15 and 100 children through the Special Food Service Program. Copies are available for 25 cents from Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

