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NEW LEGISLATION FOR FOOD PROGRAMS

ON JUNE 30, President Nixon signed Public Law 93-326, the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Act Amendments of 1974. Major provisions of the law:

- Provide for a level of commodity assistance, or cash in lieu of commodities, of not less than 10 cents a lunch, with an annual escalator clause, to take effect July 1, 1975. For this fiscal year (July 1, 1974-June 30, 1975), at least \$290 million worth of commodities (about 7 cents per lunch) will be donated to schools with another 3 cents' worth of cash or commodities.

- Continue the present income guidelines for reduced-price lunches and breakfasts that allow setting eligibility standards 75 percent above national income poverty guidelines.

- Increase the appropriation authorization for nonfood assistance from \$20 million to \$40 million.

- Increase the appropriation authorization for the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) from \$40 million to \$100 million for this fiscal year 1975.

ON JULY 12 the President also signed Public Law 93-347, which amends the Child Nutrition Act, the Food Stamp Act, and the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973.

The respective amendments:

- Continue until June 30, 1977, the distribution of commodities (which may include seafood) to: needy families pending transition to the food stamp program, institutions, supplemental feeding programs, disaster relief operations, summer camps for children, and needy families on Indian reservations not requesting a food stamp program.

- Use price-support and surplus-removal funds to buy commodities in this fiscal year 1975 and, in the following 2 years, buy commodities with funds appropriated from the general fund of the treasury.

- Authorize USDA to pay State agencies 50 percent of all food stamp program administrative costs.

- Establish a minimum reimbursement rate of 5 cents per half-pint of milk served under the Special Milk Program, with an annual escalator clause to take effect in the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1975.

The Food and Nutrition Service is developing regulations to implement these amendments.

PUBLIC LAW 93-324, signed by President Nixon on June 30, continues USDA appropriations for 90 days (until September 30)--while work on the Agriculture

Appropriations Bill continues in Congress.

NEW FOOD STAMP REGULATIONS ANNOUNCED

ON JULY 12 the Food and Nutrition Service issued new regulations for the food stamp program.

The regulations implement amendments to the Food Stamp Act contained in the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-86). They also include revisions resulting from the Supreme Court decision that the "tax dependency" and "relatedness" provisions are unconstitutional.

The new regulations became effective upon publication in the Federal Register July 15. States are to complete implementation of the new provisions which directly relate to the certification of households by Nov. 1, 1974, for all new applications and any subsequent applications, and by March 1, 1975 for all other households.

The new regulations:

- Broaden eligibility categories to include the elderly in federally-sponsored housing, and drug addicts and alcoholics in private nonprofit residential treatment facilities.

- Allow the elderly to use food coupons to purchase meals in specified communal dining situations.

- Require States to give welfare recipients the option to have the costs of their coupons deducted from their grant and the coupons mailed to them. (States must implement this provision by July 1, 1975.)

- Allow recipients affected by the unavoidable breakdown of food stamp equipment to apply for food stamps under emergency eligibility standards.

- Require that income include the actual value of housing received "in kind" from an employer but not in excess of \$25 per month.

- Allow households living in remote areas of Alaska to use food coupons to purchase certain hunting and fishing equipment for procuring food.

- Require that recipients be citizens of the United States or legally permanent residents.

- Ban participation by strikers after a court has determined a strike to be illegal.

- Prohibit the use of personnel or facilities from either side of a strike or lockout to certify households for the food stamp program.

- Reduce from 15 to 10 days the "advance notice" period given households whose benefits are being reduced or terminated.

- Provide for a standard utility allowance unless the recipient can verify his actual costs.

- Require recipients to report changes in their income and deductions within 10 days, if the change is \$25 or more. Similarly, States must act on such changes within 10 days.

- Require that after 30 days from the date of registration for employment all able-bodied food stamp recipients accept jobs outside their major field of experience.

Public comments were invited when the regulations were published in proposed form in the Federal Register on Jan. 28. The Food and Nutrition Service received over 2,000 comments, which were considered in the finalization of the regulations.

OPERATIONS TO BEGIN IN GUAM

BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 1, Guam will operate the food stamp program as a means of providing food assistance to eligible low-income families. Previously, Guam residents were offered food assistance through USDA's food distribution program. The switch in programs is in keeping with the Congressional mandate for a nationwide food stamp program by June 30, 1974.

As of now, all but four counties are in the food stamp program. Those four are: Montgomery County, Indiana; Choctaw County, Mississippi; Madison County, Montana; and Beaver County, Oklahoma.

Changes Proposed in Distribution Of Child Nutrition Funds

FNS HAS PROPOSED changes in distribution of State administrative expenses (SAE) for child nutrition programs. Present regulations would distribute the increased SAE funding requested for fiscal 1975 less equitably than in earlier years when the amounts involved were smaller.

Three basic changes are proposed:

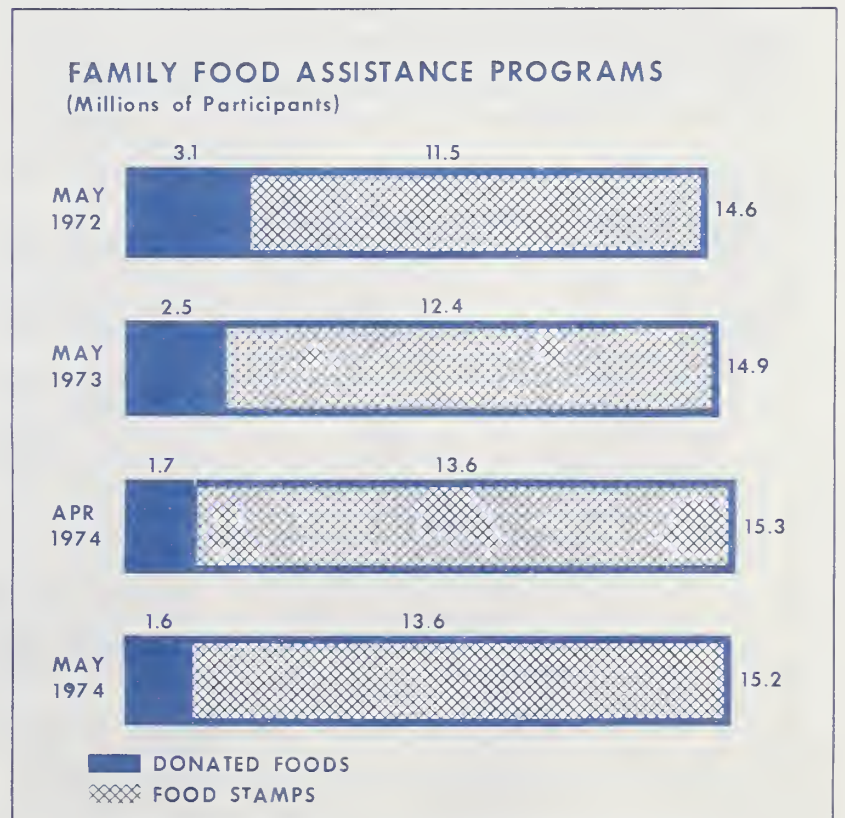
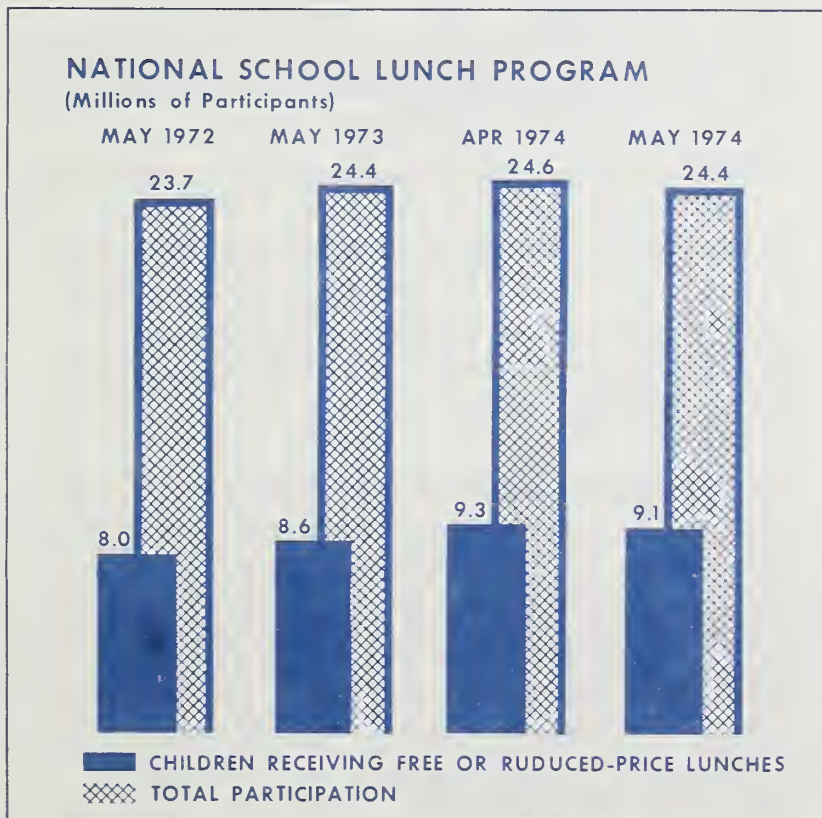
- A State's need for outreach efforts will be a new criterion determining basic funding.

- After basic funding is distributed, 2 percent of the remaining funds (instead of current 3 percent) will go to Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Pacific Trust Territories.

- The other 98 percent of the funds will be divided among the 50 States and the District of Columbia according to the number of children from families with annual incomes below \$6,000 (instead of the current \$4,000).

A State's allocation can still be reduced if the State's program does not require as much administrative funding or if FNS administers some of the child nutrition programs in the State.

The proposal appeared in the Federal Register July 15. Comments should be sent to the Child Nutrition Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. The deadline for comments is Aug. 15.



FNS Adjusts Payments For Lunches and Breakfasts

ON JULY 1, the Food and Nutrition Service made its semi-annual adjustment of average payment rates for school lunches and breakfasts. The upward adjustment reflects the change in the "food away from home" series of the Department of Labor Consumer Price Index.

The average State payment to schools is 11 cents per lunch; however, States may vary a school's reimbursement, based on its need, from zero to 17 cents per lunch. The ceiling previously was 16.50 cents.

The additional guaranteed average payment for lunches served to needy children was raised 2.25 cents--to 39.50 cents for a reduced-price lunch and to 49.50 cents for a free lunch.

The total maximum amount States can pay a school for free lunches is increased 2.75 cents. It can be as high as 65.5 cents for a reduced-price lunch and 75.5 cents for a free lunch.

The average payment for breakfasts is increased one-quarter cent--from 8.50 cents to 8.75 cents. The additional payment for reduced-price breakfasts is increased from 15.75 to 16.50 cents; and for free breakfasts, from 21 to 22 cents. In cases of severe need, the maximum rates of reimbursement remain at 40 cents for reduced-price breakfasts and 45 cents for free breakfasts.

Nutrition Education Contracts Awarded to Five States

SCHOOLCHILDREN IN FIVE States will be learning more about nutrition, as a result of contracts recently awarded.

The contracts will provide \$366,748 to Alabama, California, Montana, Nebraska, and West Virginia. The 18-month projects will involve school food service managers, teachers, students, and

parents in working together to develop nutrition education programs.

New and updated materials and approaches will be used with each group. Two States plan to use cross-over teaching techniques, having high school students work with children in elementary schools. Another State will involve teachers and school food service managers in a team approach to nutrition education.

Special emphasis will be on evaluating the projects' impact on student participation in child feeding programs and their acceptance of food served in these programs.

SUMMER FEEDING UNDERWAY

THIS SUMMER FNS apportioned \$60.4 million for the operation of the Special Summer Food Service Program. The program is operating in 49 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

Approximately 1100 sponsors are operating at over 10,000 local sites, which serve approximately 1.7 million children daily.

Sponsors include public and nonprofit private service institutions such as day care centers and recreation programs. They provide the children with structured on-going recreational activities as well as nutritious food.

ELIGIBILITY LEVELS SET FOR REDUCED-PRICE MEALS

IN ACCORDANCE with P.L. 93-326, the Food and Nutrition Service has amended the regulations that States use in determining which children are eligible for reduced-price lunches and breakfasts. The amended regulations permanently set the maximum eligibility levels at 75 percent above the USDA income poverty guidelines. For example, a State may serve lunch at reduced cost to a child from a family of four as long as the

family's income does not exceed \$7,900. That figure is 75 percent higher than the income poverty guideline of \$4,510 for a family of four.

Maximum eligibility standards for free lunches and breakfasts remain unchanged, at 25 percent above the USDA income poverty guidelines.

FOOD PROGRAM PEOPLE

HERBERT D. ROREX is now serving as Special Assistant to the Administrator, in a new post set up to establish and maintain liaison with the many governmental, professional, advisory and industry groups who have an interest in FNS activities.

Mr. Rorex has had broad experience in food program operation, both in the field and in national headquarters. He has been Director of the FNS Child Nutrition Division for nearly 5 years, and previously was for 5 years Director of the School Lunch Division in the predecessor Consumer and Marketing Service. Earlier he administered all phases of food programs, while serving in Regional and State Offices in the Southeast.

THOMAS J. WILSON, Deputy Administrator of the FNS Southeast Regional Office, is retiring after more than 30 years of service. Before becoming Deputy Administrator, Mr. Wilson worked with the food stamp, child nutrition and food distribution programs.

GEORGE E. RANDALL, the Deputy Administrator of the FNS Western Region, has also retired after a long career of service to USDA food assistance programs.

JAMES H. KOCHER

JAMES H. KOCHER, the Director of the Food Stamp Division, died in Washington, D.C., on June 25th.

His boss, Administrator Edward J.

Hekman, praised Jim as "representing the finest qualities of a true government servant--dedication to the task, an ability to develop and lead a highly professional staff, and most important--compassion for humanity."

"He will be sorely missed," Mr. Hekman said, "both by those who knew and worked with him, and by those outside of the government who never knew him but for whom he worked so well."

Mr. Kocher spent 12 years with the food stamp program, joining USDA when the program was in its earliest stages as a pilot project. He became Director of the Food Stamp Division in 1972.

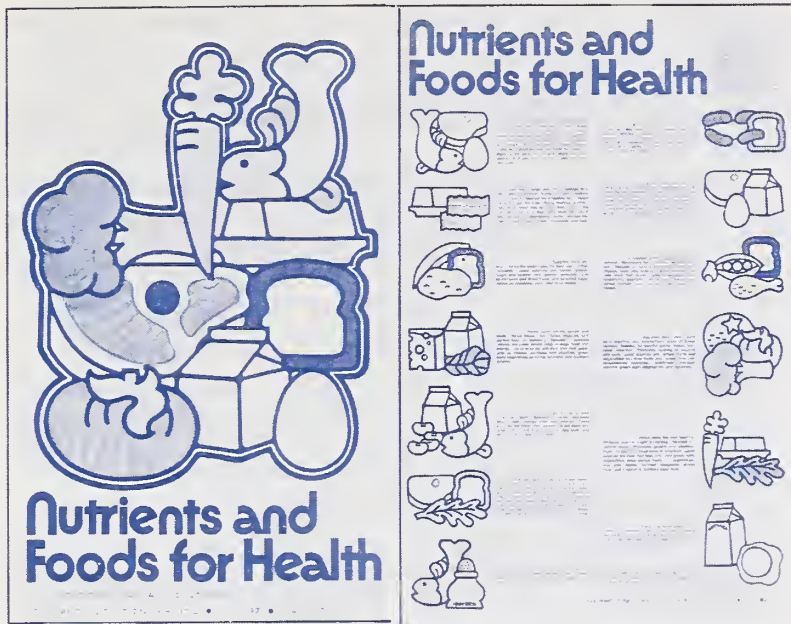
His accomplishments in the effort to improve the diets of low-income families were recognized this spring when Secretary Butz presented him the USDA's Superior Service Award "for enlightened leadership and effectiveness in program administration."

Memorials to the man and his work were paid in the United States Senate by the leaders of the Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs--Senators Charles Percy and George McGovern--and by Jim's home-state Senator, Frank Church.

OFF PRESS

● "Publications of the Food and Nutrition Service" (FNS-11). The revised catalog of FNS publications lists 147 educational flyers, pamphlets and technical handbooks used to explain the child nutrition and family food assistance programs. Many are printed in Spanish and other languages. The covers of principal publications are pictured, accompanied by a description of the contents and the purpose of each.

Copies are available from the Information Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.



● "Nutrients and Foods for Health" (FNS-97) is an 11" X 17" poster in full color, which describes the 13 major nutrients and what they do. Illustrations and text explain which foods contain each nutrient.

Copies are \$7.30 per hundred from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. A larger, 30" X 48" poster (FNS-95) is available for 75 cents per copy.

● "Food Buying Guide for Child Care Centers" (FNS-108) includes meal patterns for young children, descriptions of food components, and other helpful

information for quantity planning and purchasing. Copies: 85 cents, from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

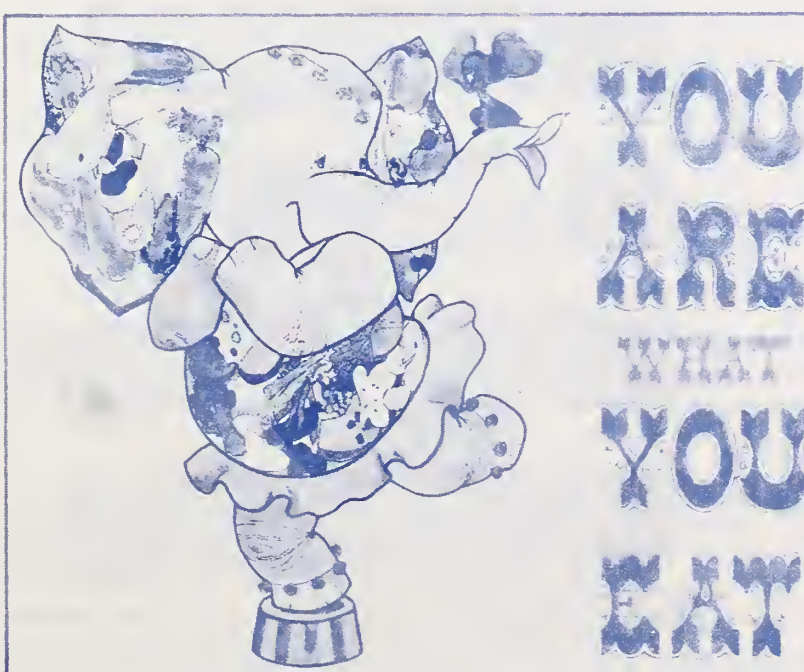
● Two new translations of the "Food Stamp Official Food List" (FNS-110) are now available. One is printed in Chinese (FNS-110-Chinese) to inform Chinese-speaking recipients what foods may be purchased with food stamps.

The second is a special version (FNS-110-Alaska) which includes a section on what hunting and fishing equipment can be bought by food stamp recipients in Alaska.

● "Food Stamp Facts--Allotments and Purchase Requirements" (FNS-70). New July 1974 figures for coupon allotments and purchase requirements are included in this reprint of the fact sheet.

● "Food Stamp Facts--Eligibility Requirements" (FNS-72). The revised fact sheet reflects July 1974 income eligibility standards.

Copies of the official food stamp list and fact sheets are available from the Food Stamp Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture Washington, D.C. 20250.



MEET PEPPY the Mouse and Tiny the Elephant, who will be making their debut at the American School Food Service Association convention in Washington, D.C., August 4-8.

The animated circus performers are this year's "You Are What You Eat" mascots, appearing in a 30-second television spot produced by the Food and Nutrition Service in cooperation with ASFSA. The spot will be shown on television stations throughout the country this fall in support of National School Lunch Week, October 13-19.

