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THE FOOD STAMP PURCHASE REQUIREMENT

ON MARCH 5, the Food and Nutrition Service revised food stamp regulations to rescind previously-announced amendments that would have set food stamp purchase requirements at a uniform 30 percent of adjusted monthly income, effective March 1, 1975.

The action came after President Ford announced on Feb. 13 that he would allow H.R. 1589 to become law without his signature. This law continues the current method of determining food stamp purchase requirements through 1975. Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz rescinded the earlier announcement immediately after the President's decision.

Full text of the rescission appeared in the Federal Register of March 5.

AMENDMENT PROPOSED TO INCREASE FOOD STAMP OUTREACH

UNDER A PROPOSED amendment to food stamp program regulations, State agencies would be required to take effective "outreach" action, using a full-time State outreach coordinator.

States now have outreach programs, and submit annual outreach plans. But court suits have been filed against 19 States and USDA, alleging that programs in those States are ineffective.

Judge Miles Lord of the U.S. District

Court of Minnesota ordered the Department to review all State outreach plans, assess their implementation, and provide remedial action where necessary. USDA's review and assessment of the State's plans demonstrate the desirability of having a State outreach coordinator who spends most of his or her time on outreach efforts.

QUALITY CONTROL RESULTS

ON MARCH 1, FNS reported the results, from January through June 1974, of the "quality control" campaign to improve the accuracy of the certification of applicants for the food stamp program.

Under quality control, State agencies which cooperate in the administration of the food stamp program are required to draw a valid sample of participating households in which at least one person is not receiving public assistance. The States make a careful analysis of the certification of those cases, determining if any errors were made, and then report the results to FNS.

For the January-June 1974 period, 46 States submitted data on 25,585 participating households. In the 6-month period, these households received \$1,763,201 in bonus food stamps.

Commenting on the report, FNS Administrator Edward J. Hekman said he is "heartened by the improvements that it demonstrates over the limited statistics

that have previously been available." Mr. Hekman pointed out that quality control is proving to be an effective tool in program administration, and States are using it to take corrective action to improve the food stamp program.

FOOD STAMP STUDY UNDERWAY

FNS IS CURRENTLY working on a study of the food stamp program, called for by Senate Resolution 58, passed on Feb. 5. The resolution directs USDA to provide Congress with recommendations for legislative changes which will:

- Disqualify families who have adequate incomes.
- Reduce administrative complexities which make joint operation with other Federal assistance programs difficult.
- Tighten accountability for procuring, shipping, and handling food stamps at all levels.
- Increase penalties for those who abuse the program.

The resolution calls for the study to be completed by June 30, 1975.

ADMINISTRATOR HEKMAN MEETS WITH GOVERNORS

ON MARCH 26, FNS Administrator Hekman met with Governor Andrus of Idaho for a thorough review of the food assistance programs and Federal-State relations in administering them.

This was the fourth in a series of meetings the Administrator has scheduled with State Governors. The first was with Governor Reagan of California last May. He met with Governor Askew of Florida on Feb. 28, and Governor Grasso of Connecticut on March 7. And he will meet with Governor Milliken of Michigan on April 1, and Governor Pryor of Arkansas on April 7.

BUDGET HEARINGS TO BE HELD

CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS on USDA's budget for fiscal year 1976 began March 14 before the Subcommittee on Agriculture of the House Appropriations Committee. FNS Administrator Hekman appeared before the committee on March 20 to support the budget for food programs.

The Senate Appropriations Committee will hold hearings on the Food and Nutrition Service budget on April 9.

PROPOSAL OFFERS GOVERNORS COMMENT PERIOD

FNS HAS PROPOSED that State governors be allowed a period of 45 days to comment on plans and amendments that are submitted by States participating in the food stamp program.

The new regulation would provide a 45-day opportunity for each State governor or his delegated agency to review the relationship of food stamp plans and amendments to other State plans and programs. The governors would then send their comments to FNS along with the State plans and amendments when they are submitted for approval.

The proposed regulation was published in the Federal Register on March 6. Comments should be sent to P. Royal Shipp, Director, Food Stamp Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Comments must be received by FNS by April 7.

NUTRITION EDUCATION PROJECTS WILL INVOLVE STUDENTS AND PARENTS

NUTRITION EDUCATION PROJECTS will be getting underway in five States, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia, as a result of grants totaling \$250,000 from FNS.

The grants will be used to carry out programs developed by schools to en-

courage parents and students to eat nutritious, well-balanced meals. In Minnesota, grant money will be used to develop a "nutrition center" which will involve students and their parents in learning activities. In New Mexico, grant money will be used to explore telecasting by satellite to rural mountain areas. Massachusetts' project will bring nutrition education into Spanish and Portuguese-speaking communities. Pennsylvania and Louisiana also received FNS grants. In selecting grant recipients, FNS focused on projects which, if proven successful, could be adapted for regional or national use.

USDA MEETS DONATED FOODS REQUIREMENT

EACH FISCAL YEAR, according to the provisions of the National School Lunch Act, USDA agrees to deliver a specific amount of commodities to schools for use in child nutrition programs. If it does not reach this goal, the Department makes a cash payment in lieu of commodities to the States, which administer these programs.

USDA announced on March 18 that its estimates for commodity deliveries this year are over \$417 million, while the goal was \$407 million. Thus, no cash payment in lieu of commodities to States will be made.

NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS CHOSEN

SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE Earl L. Butz has appointed five new members to the National Advisory Council on Child Nutrition, which provides a continuing study of the Federal-State-local food programs for children.

The new members, appointed for 3-year terms, are: Robert D. Benton, Iowa State superintendent of public instruction, Des Moines; John Carbonell, president, food service products division,

Campbell Soup Company, Gladwyne, Pa.; James Carter, M.D., project director, Maternal and Child Health--Family Planning, Meharry Medical College, Nashville, Tenn.; Dennis M. Doyle, Food and Nutrition Service regional administrator for the Midwest, Chicago; and John C. Stalker, Massachusetts State school lunch director, Boston.

The next meeting of the council will be held in Washington, D.C., April 14-15.

NEW RELEASES

- "FNS Facts: Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children" (FNS-131). This fact sheet answers questions on program evaluation, supplemental foods available to recipients, eligibility criteria for local agencies and individual participants, and gives the legislative history of the program.

Available from the Special Supplemental Food Unit, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

- "Una Guia Diaria Para Comer Bien" (FNS-13-S) is a two-page Spanish flyer which illustrates the four basic food groups and lists daily recommended servings from each group for children and adults. Copies available for 25¢ from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

- "Food Stamps Make the Difference" (FNS-128), the English version of the food stamp Spanish poster (FNS-111) is specially suited for display in buses, trains or subways. It includes space for the addresses and phone numbers of local groups providing food stamp information.

- "Food Stamp Facts--Allotments and Purchase Requirements" (FNS-70). New

January 1975 allotments and purchase requirements are included in this updated fact sheet.

- "Food Stamp Facts--Eligibility Requirements" (FNS-72) is a revised fact sheet reflecting January 1975 income eligibility standards.

- "Changemaking Procedures for the Food Stamp Program" (FNS-112), a fact sheet for grocers who accept food stamps, has been revised to reflect new coupon denominations.

- "New Food Coupons are Coming" (FNS-130), a poster announcing the March 1 change in food stamp denominations, shows what the new coupons look like.

- "Food Stamps Make the Difference--Now There's a Difference in Food Stamps" (Picture Story 286) gives details on the new food stamp denominations and includes photos of the food stamp printing process.

- "Shopping with Food Stamps" (PA-1109) is a convenient pocketsize book-

let designed to help food stamp recipients make the most of their food dollars. It explains how to take part in the food stamp program, and offers suggestions on how to shop, store and use foods.

The 16-page booklet includes special hints on planning ahead. It tells how to plan menus a week at a time, using the daily food guide to include foods from each of the four basic food groups in each day's meals.

A section on shopping wisely advises food stamp customers to buy foods in season, watch for "specials," and buy only what they can use. It also reminds them to read food labels and check their purchases carefully.

"Shopping with Food Stamps" supercedes "You're in Good Company" (PA-922).

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

