North Carolina

School Nutrition Weekly Update

Week of September 1-5, 2014 | **Issue No. 2014.9-1**

In this Issue:

- *NEW* REMINDER… Smart Snacks Options Declaration [1 Attachment]
- *IMPORTANT REMINDER* Waivers for Whole Grain Pasta [1 Attachment]
- *NEW* 2014 Annual Conference for School Nutrition Administrators [3 Attachments]
- *NEW* Flexibility in Effective Date of Free and Reduced Price Meal Eligibility [1 Attachment]
- *NEW* Verification Webinars Scheduled
- *NEW* Allergens and Labeling Variance for Packaged Foods Prepared in the Cafeteria [4 Attachments]
- *NEW* Back-To-School Toolkit
- *NEW* Q&A – Determining Fruit Juice Limits
- *NEW* Recall Notice – Dole Fresh Vegetables
- *NEW* What's New on the Web?
- National School Lunch Week
- Important Dates (formerly Mark Your Calendar)

Have Questions? Need Assistance?

Please remember to always contact your regional consultants first for any questions or assistance unless directed otherwise.

NEW *REMINDER… Smart Snacks Options Declaration*

The originally established due date for submission of the Smart Snacks Options Declaration forms was September 17. However, we have heard from many of you that discussions and decisions have not yet been completed at this time and additional time is needed to make the best decision for the SFA and LEA. For this reason, we are extending the due date until **October 17** which will allow additional time for decision-making.

We have also received questions from SFAs/LEAs as to whether the option initially chosen by the LEA may be changed at any time. It is allowable to change the option at any time as long as the Smart Snacks Options Declaration form is revised and filed in the Raleigh office prior to making the change. The declaration form was included in your 2014-15 Annual Agreement documents and is attached for your convenience.

Please let us know if you have additional questions about the implementation of the Smart Snacks Interim Rule.

declaration form.doc – *Smart Snacks Options Declaration Form*

IMPORTANT REMINDER *Waivers for Whole Grain-Rich Pasta*

In May, 2014, the USDA issued guidance that allows SFAs to request waivers from whole grain pasta for the coming year. The waivers would allow the service of enriched pasta products in the school meals program for the 2014 – 2015 school year in lieu of whole grain-rich pasta products**. PLEASE BE REMINDED…Each SFA <u>must</u> formally request a waiver in order to be eligible to serve enriched pasta products. The policy memo <u>is not</u> the waiver.** If you have not submitted a formal waiver request, please contact the Nutrition Specialist and/or Regional Consultant for your area for specific instructions about applying for a waiver.

sp-47-2014.pdf – ***Flexibility for Whole Grain-Rich Pasta in School Years 2014-2015 and 2015-2016***

NEW *2014 Annual Conference for School Nutrition Administrators*

We are pleased to announce that the Annual Conference for School Nutrition Administrators sponsored by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction is scheduled for October 22-24, 2014 at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel and Convention Center in Research Triangle Park, NC. The continuing education event will begin with a luncheon on Wednesday, October 22 at 12:00 noon and will conclude on Friday, October 24 at 11:30 a.m. Registration will begin at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, October 22. There will be several general session speakers providing relevant information on School Nutrition topics, multiple breakout sessions, and networking sessions during the conference.

REGISTRATION

To register for the conference, please go to: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2014_SchoolNutrition-

AnnualConference. After registration is complete you will receive a confirmation electronically within five (5) business days. **If you do not receive a confirmation, please contact Janice Ezzell at 910-512-6780 or by e-mail at Ezzell.janice@yahoo.com**

RESERVATIONS

Please make your individual hotel reservations by calling the Sheraton Imperial at (919) 941-5050 or Central Reservations at (800) 325-3535. You may also go to the following website to make your reservations: https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/CNAdministrators

The conference hotel rate is $113.00 plus 13.5% tax per night for single or double occupancy. **Reservations must be made prior to September 22, 2014 at the Sheraton to receive these rates**. The rates will increase significantly after September 22.

DIRECTIONS

For directions to the hotel, please go to www.sheratonrtp.com and click on the directions icon on the home page.

MENUS

The menus chosen for the conference are attached. Please review and indicate any special diet requests on the electronic registration form.

ac inv ltr.pdf – *Annual Conference Invitation Letter*
ac agenda.pdf – *Annual Conference Tentative Agenda*
ac menus.pdf – *Annual Conference Menus*

NEW *Flexibility in Effective Date of Free and Reduced Price Meal Eligibility*

USDA Policy Memo, SP 11-2014 (see attached) provides clarification on the flexibility that is available to LEA officials for establishing the effective date of eligibility for children certified for free or reduced price meals in the school lunch and breakfast programs. According to the National School Lunch Act, a child in a household meeting the income limits "at the time the application is submitted…shall be served a free lunch or reduced price lunch." Therefore, the LEA may choose to establish **the date of submission of an application to the school** as the effective date of student eligibility, rather than the date the application is actually processed and approved by the LEA's determining official.

LEAs exercising this flexibility must do so for all students in all participating schools. In addition, LEAs must have a method to document the date the application was submitted, such as a date stamp, and must refund any money paid by or on behalf of the child for a reimbursable meal (or milk in the SMP) prior to the eligibility determination, including forgiving accrued debt.

Use of this flexibility is at the LEA's discretion; however, an LEA implementing this flexibility **must notify the State agency of its intent to use this flexibility.** During the upcoming Policy Updates, each SFA Administrator will be asked to complete a declaration form and select the eligibility processing option to be used by the LEA. This flexibility can assist low income children by allowing them to access free or reduced price school meals during the eligibility determination period. It can also assist LEAs that are experiencing challenges with unpaid debt.

Should you have any questions, please contact your Regional School Nutrition Consultant.

sp-11-2014.pdf – ***Effective Date of Free and Reduced Price Meal Eligibility Determinations***
(rel. December 13, 2013)

NEW *Verification Webinars Scheduled*

Two webinars on Verification have been scheduled. The verification and direct verification webinar is based on federal regulation, 7 CFR 245.6a and the Eligibility Manual for School Meals (2014), Part 9 Verification pages 81-96 and Part 10 Direct Verification pages 98-100.

To register for a webinar:

Webinar Title: VERIFICATION: Guidance for Conducting the Annual Eligibility Verification Process

Tuesday, September 16 (10:00 am – 12:00 pm)
https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/336282913

Wednesday, September 17 (2:00 pm – 4:00 pm)
https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/744460968

Each presentation will cover the verification and direct verification process including:

- selecting the sample pool
- sample size
- standard and alternate sample sizes
- application selection procedures
- deadlines
- verification for cause
- non-response rates
- confirmation reviews

- contacting households selected for verification
- acceptable income and categorically eligibility documentation
- households that reapply
- completing the verification process including appeals rights
- recordkeeping and the verification summary report

NEW *Allergens and Labeling Variance for Packaged Foods Prepared in the Cafeteria*

The Food Code contains requirements about the knowledge of person in charge and their ability to inform consumers about menu items containing allergens. Sources of packaged food must be labeled in accordance with law. Proper labeling of foods allows consumers to make informed decisions about what they eat. Many consumers, as a result of an existing medical condition, may be sensitive to specific foods or food ingredients. This sensitivity may result in dangerous medical consequences should certain foods or ingredients be unknowingly consumed. In addition, consumers have a basic right to be protected from misbranding and fraud.

While the Food Code requires that all foods packaged in the cafeteria and offered for self-service are labeled, the School Nutrition Services Section has applied for and received a variance for this Code requirement based on several extenuating circumstances unique to our school cafeteria environment. One of the conditions of the variance that allows unlabeled packaged foods to be offered for self-service in our cafeteria is to teach all school nutrition employees about responding to consumer questions appropriately. A copy of the variance request and approval letter along with a continuing education lesson for cafeteria staff is attached to help teach this important allergen awareness concept.

If your school(s) chooses to exercise this variance, please follow these steps:

1. Teach the lesson about *Allergens and labeling variance for packaged foods* to employees in the school(s) that will use this variance. The lesson will be posted on the Child Nutrition website.
2. Insert a copy of the variance request and approval in the school HACCP Plan at the end of the *School Description Section*. (See attached documents.)
3. Remind managers to show this variance to the local Environmental Health Inspector if asked.

References:

North Carolina Food Code 3-602.11 Food Labels
Food and Drug Administration Food Code Annex 3
Department of Health and Human Services Food & Facilities Protection Branch, Position Statement: Packaged Foods and Labeling in Food Establishments, June 1, 2014
Department of Health and Human Services Food & Facilities Protection Branch, Variance Application Approval, August 28, 2014.

labeling variance.ppt - *Allergens and Labeling Variance for Packaged Foods (PowerPoint)*

cross contact.pdf - ***How to Avoid Cross-Contact***
allergen labels.pdf - ***Tips for Avoiding Your Allergen***
ce report.pdf - ***Food Safety and HACCP Continuing Education Report***

NEW *Back-To-School Toolkit*

Let's send kids back to school healthy, happy, and read to learn. As teachers, students, and families gear up for a new academic year, it's time for us to gear up to support schools in serving healthy meals to kids. School breakfast and afterschool meals keep kids nourished throughout the day and our Back-to-School toolkit can help you put these programs on the menu at your school. Use our ***Back-to-School*** toolkit to learn how you can help more kids receive these meals all year long. The toolkit is available at: http://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/back-school-toolkit.

NEW Q&A – *Determining Fruit Juice Limits*

QUESTION

How does one determine the amount of 100% fruit or vegetable juice that may be offered over the week?

ANSWER

First, one must distinguish between the number of options/amounts that are available on the serving line and the amount that is "offered" to students. For the purposes of assessing the juice limit, an "offering" of fruits or vegetables is defined as the amount a student is able to select at a given meal, regardless of the number of options/variety of fruits or vegetables set out on the serving line. The total amount of juice offered at meals over the course of the week (separately for lunch and breakfast) is then divided by this total fruit offering to determine the weekly juice offering. No more than half of the total fruit offering may be in the form of juice. The number of portions of fruit/fruit juice on the serving line does not determine compliance; rather it is determined by the number of portions students are "offered" which is the amount they are allowed to take (as indicated by the menu planner and signs near the start of the serving line).

- *Example #1*

A school may place ½ c peaches, ½ c applesauce, ½ c oranges, and ½ c fruit juice on the serving line every day and allows the students to select a total of 1 cup of fruit component (2 out of 4 choices) and limits the student selection to only up to ½ cup of juice daily. In this case, the daily fruit offering is 1 cup, and the weekly fruit offering is 5 cups. Since ½ cup of juice is offered to students every day, the weekly juice offering is 2.5 cups. Since 2.5 cups divided by 5 cups is 50%, this school is within the weekly juice limit.

- *Example #2*

A school may place ½ cup apple juice, ½ cup orange juice, ½ cup grape juice and ½ cup of canned or fresh fruit on the serving line every day and allows the students to select a total of 1 cup of fruit component (2 out of 4 choices) and limits the student selection to only one (½ cup) serving of juice daily. In this case, the daily fruit

component offering is 1 cup, and the weekly fruit component offering is 5 cups. Since ½ cup of juice is offered to students every day, the weekly juice offering is 2.5 cups. Since 2.5 cups divided by 5 cups is 50%, this school is within the weekly juice limit.

- *Example #3*

A school may place ½ cup apple juice, ½ cup orange juice, ½ cup grape juice and ½ cup of canned or fresh fruit on the serving line every day and allows the students to select all four choices if desired. This would be a total of 2 cups of fruit component (4 out of 4 choices) that includes three (½ cup) portions of juice offered to each student daily. In this case, the daily fruit component offering is 2 cups, and the weekly fruit component offering is 10 cups. Since 1 ½ cup of juice is offered to students every day, the weekly juice offering is 7.5 cups. Since 7.5 cups divided by 10 cups is 75%, this school exceeds the weekly juice limit and the meal pattern is not being followed.

In schools with daily juice availability and where students are allowed to select two (1/2 cup) portions of fruit juice with each meal, they must also be allowed to select two (1/2 cup) portions of fruit for a total of 2 cups of fruit component. Signs at or near the beginning of the serving line must clearly indicate the offerings that students may select. In this case, the daily fruit component offering is 2 cups, and the weekly fruit component offering is 10 cups. Since 1 cup of juice is offered to students every day, the weekly juice offering is 5 cups. Since 5 cups divided by 10 cups is 50%, this school is within the weekly juice limit.

There is no separate vegetable component at breakfast; however, any vegetable juice used as a substitute for fruit must comply with the juice limitations and also comply with the vegetable subgroup requirements. At lunch, the vegetable juice limit is assessed independently of the fruit juice limit and both vegetable and fruit juice is limited to 50% of the total component offerings.

Reference: ***USDA Memorandum SP 10-2012 (v.8)***

NEW *Recall Notice – Dole Fresh Vegetables*

We are aware that the recall notifications we receive may or may not pertain to any public or charter schools in North Carolina. However, we strive to keep you as well informed as possible by posting any recalls that could potentially cause problems in your school meal programs. Please be sure to review the official recall notices at the web locations provided. Should a recall apply to items currently in your inventory, please follow the instructions provided in the recall notice.

- **Dole Fresh Vegetables Announces Allergy Alert and Voluntary Limited Recall of DOLE-branded Spinach Due to Possible Contamination by Walnuts**

Although no illnesses or allergic reactions have been reported, Dole Fresh Vegetables is initiating a limited voluntary recall of the following products: This recall is due to possible contamination of these products by walnuts.

For more information and details visit:
http://www.fda.gov/Safety/Recalls/ucm412156.htm?source=govdelivery&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

NEW *What's New on the Web?*

****NEW** Parents/Students Page**

A new page has been developed on the School Nutrition website specifically for Parents and Students. This page will provide information and resources that address the priorities of parents and students where school nutrition programs are concerned. Look for much more information and resources to be added to this page in the coming months at: http://childnutrition.ncpublicschools.gov/parents-students

****NEW** Home Page Update**

The "Mark Your Calendar" section on the School Nutrition website is titled "Important Dates" to be consistent with the Important Dates page/document and the section found at the end of each School Nutrition Weekly Update. In addition, you will notice that the dates for September and October are now posted on the homepage. View the home page changes at: http://childnutrition.ncpublicschools.gov/

****NEW** Allergen Lesson – Commercial Kitchen**

http://childnutrition.ncpublicschools.gov/information-resources/haccp-food-safety/commercial-kitchen/commercial-kitchen/training-aids

****NEW** HACCP – Transported Meals (Catered)**

http://childnutrition.ncpublicschools.gov/information-resources/haccp-food-safety/transported-meals-catered/transported-meals-catered

National School Lunch Week

National School Lunch Week (NSLW) will be observed **October 13-17, 2014**. The theme is *"Get in the Game with School Lunch"*. The School Nutrition Association has provided information and a host of free tools and resources on the SNA website to help with planning NSLW celebrations in your schools. Visit the SNA National School Lunch Week webpage at: http://www.schoolnutrition.org/nslw/.

Important Dates

September 9 ..... Region 7 Policy Update

September 10 (Wednesday) ..... Deadline for Submitting Claim for Reimbursement (for August 2014)

September 10 ..... Region 3 Policy Update for Charter Schools/RCCIs

September 11 ..... Region 2 Policy Update

September 12 ..... Region 5 Policy Update

September 12 ..... Region 6 Policy Update

September 15 (Monday) ..... Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Claim for Reimbursement Deadline (for August 2014)

September 18 ..... Region 3 Policy Update for LEAs

September 18 ..... Region 4 Policy Update

September 19 ..... Region 8 Policy Update

October 1 ..... Verification process begins. SFAs pull F&R apps for Verification

October 10 ..... Deadline for Submitting Claim for Reimbursement (for September 2014)

October 13-17 ..... National School Lunch Week

October 15 ..... Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Claim for Reimbursement Deadline (for September 2014)

October 22-24 ..... Annual Conference for School Nutrition Administrators

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