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TO: Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
Center-based Institutions

FROM: Robin Holz, CACFP Lead Consultant - Centers
Bureau of Nutrition and Health Services

SUBJECT: CACFP Crediting Handbook

USDA has published a new CACFP Crediting Handbook available online at:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/crediting-handbook-child-and-adult-care-food-program>

We have revised Chapter 2 of the CACFP Administrative Manual and the Handy Guide to Creditable Foods (included in the chapter) to reflect the updated guidance (attached).

The main change requires most commercial combination entrees to have a Child Nutrition (CN) label or Product Formulation Statement (PFS) from the manufacturer with information on how the product credits for Child Nutrition Programs. The attached manual chapter provides more information on CN labels and PFS. Products with this type of documentation are usually not available in grocery stores but are more commonly available in big box retail centers such as Sam's Club or Costco, or through food distributors that cater to schools.

The new requirements affect many commonly served foods in child care such as commercial pizza; chicken nuggets; canned meat and pasta products; meat products that contain cereal, binders and extenders (including many lunch meats); canned or frozen stew; commercial lasagna, pot pie, and ravioli. If a product is listed specifically in the Food Buying Guide, it can be credited without a CN label or PFS. The Food Buying Guide is available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/foodbuying-guide-child-nutrition-programs>.

Take home messages:

1. Do not serve commercial combination products unless documentation is obtained.
2. Serve fewer processed entrees (we recommend limiting to once per week).
3. Standardized recipes are required to be on file that document how center-made combination dishes credit toward meeting meal pattern component requirements. Standardized recipes decrease the labor time involved in preparing center-made foods and food cost is usually less than purchased processed foods. USDA childcare recipes credited for CACFP are available online at:
<http://www.nfsmi.org/Templates/TemplateDefault.aspx?qs=cEIEPTYzJmlzTWdyPXRydWU=>

We provided training on the new handbook at CACFP Short Course in April. The PowerPoint slides that were presented at Short Course are available at <https://www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/nutrition-programs/quick-links-nutrition/learning-tools-nutrition/spring-cacfp-success-0>. We plan to develop an online Steps to Success training module later this year that covers the information. We will discuss these requirements with centers that are on the review schedule this summer, and start requiring corrective action at the beginning of the fiscal year (10/1/2014).

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