Looking Ahead

Developing New Products

and

Specification Updates
Specification Review Project

- Establish a timeline for annual research/new product development
- Seek versatile, high volume products that could be offered to both schools and households
- Where are current requirements adding cost but no value?
Information Gathering - AMS

• Stakeholder meetings
  – American Commodity Distribution Association
  – School Nutrition Association, including SNIC
  – Industry Meeting

• Responses to Notice to Trade

• Industry/Vendor feedback

• Production challenges - inspection/grading/line time

• Product complaints – are these attributable to specification or?
Information Gathering- FNS

- Stakeholders: State agencies and school districts
- Forums: conferences, webinars, surveys, State calls, Regional input, school trends, complaints, emails
- Factors to Consider: Nutrition/meal pattern needs, demand (number of sites and volume), versatility
- New Product ideas:

USDAFoods@fns.usda.gov
Align with commercial practices

• Manufacturing efficiencies and limitations
• Packaging and labeling - how these shape perceptions about the products
• Responding to RFI and draft specs is critical!
Decision matrix

Key Factors:

• How would the new product or spec change impact market availability?
• Would this potentially increase or decrease vendor participation?
• How does the product support meal pattern/Dietary Guidelines?
• How would it add value for recipients?
• What contracting challenges might we encounter?
New Product Development Focus Areas

• Support School Meal Pattern Requirements
  – Increase variety within vegetable subgroups
  – Help schools meet sodium targets
  – Help schools implement whole grain-rich requirements
• Support ease of preparation/service in schools
• Support Dietary Guidelines for Americans goals
• Support specific program needs (e.g. Backpack program, traditional foods)
• Support ag markets and expand vendor participation
New products for consideration:

Fruits/Vegetables:
- Sweet potato crinkle cut
- Red and Green Peppers and Onion blend

Meat/Poultry/Fish
- Minimally seasoned cooked shredded pork
- Cooked beef patty – no soy
- Pollock product
- Chicken filet/patty
New products for consideration:

Grains/Nuts/Oils
  Peanut Butter – individual portion

Dairy
  Cheddar Cheese – sliced
  High protein yogurt – other flavors 4 oz;
    larger containers for plain and vanilla
  Bulk fluid milk for processing
Other specifications:

Build truckloads efficiently – cases per truck
Clarify allergens – no soy/gluten/advisory labels
Sodium reductions where possible – 10-15% from current level
  - Pork ham (also increase dice size)
  - Chicken fajita
  - Canned beef stew
More consistent flavor/texture/size
  - Spaghetti sauce and salsa
  - Frozen strawberries – sliced IQF vs pail?
  - Cheddar cheese loaf
Primary packaging/labeling – what are cost implications?
  - Dried fruit, including individual portion dried cranberries
  - Other individual portion products – juice, fruit cups
Timeline

October 2015
- Get additional feedback at industry meeting
- Issue Requests for Information for some products

November 2015
- Post draft specifications for 2 week comment period

December 2015
- Finalize specifications in advance of new purchase cycle
- NSLP Foods Available List

January 2016
- Release WBSCM catalogs
Other key initiatives

• Access to nutrition, allergen and ingredient info
• Updates to Food Buying Guide
• Product Formulation Statement templates
Child Nutrition Database

- Web-based data collection tool currently used by USDA
- Additional USDA Foods information requested by States and school districts
- Upgrades made to tool by USDA Foods
  - USDA Foods material code/material description
  - Nutrition Information
  - Ingredients
  - Allergen information
  - Kosher certifications
- How Information Will be Used
Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs

- Updated in phases
  - Grains section now includes 25 whole grain and whole-grain rich items.
  - 40 additional fruit and vegetable items will be added

- Web-Based Food Buying Guide
  - Allows for easier searching, navigation, and display of content
  - Comparison of foods within food categories (e.g. diced canned carrots vs. diced fresh carrots)


- Develop Mobile App
Manufacturer’s
Product Formulation Statement (PFS)

- PFS Templates
- Checklist for Evaluating a PFS
- Webinar:
  - Manufacturer’s PFS – *providing accurate info to schools*

http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnlabeling/food-manufacturersindustry
Summary

• USDA Foods as a dynamic list of options
  – What value provided to nutrition and feeding programs?
  – What value provided to agriculture industry?
  – Which USDA Foods products most useful in accomplishing dual mission?
Contact

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