



The Lunch Line

a newsletter
of
The Bureau of Food & Nutrition
The Iowa Department of Education

Please route to:

☐ Food Service Director
☐ Kitchen Staff

☐ Record Keeper
☐ Principal

☐ Superintendent
☐ _____

Published in September, November, January, March and May

January, 2004

Commonly Asked Review Questions

Often consultants visiting schools find many of the same issues arising. The following is an accumulation of common questions and concerns that often come up during a review.

What types of cost can be charged to the lunch fund?

- Utilities: If a school charges for electricity and the kitchen is not metered separately, then a formula must be used to calculate the cost. Calculate the percentage of space occupied by the kitchen and dining area in relation to the total area of the school building and prorate the bill. There is no allowance for higher energy use by oven, etc. Prorating must correspond with the actual usage for space and time of use. For example, if the food service department uses the cafeteria six hours of the day, the school food service account should only be charged for six hours of the day. Remember the account can not be charged during vacation times including the summer months.
- New equipment: If equipment such as tables are purchased for the dining area and are also being used by the school for study hall, the cost of the tables would be split proportionately. The school would need to calculate the percentage of time the tables are used for meal service and the time they are used for other purposes. This amount would then be prorated.
- Wages for non-food service employees: If wages of personnel that are not food service workers (such as custodians and secretaries) are charged to the school meal programs, a separate time sheet should document the amount of time spent in the food service area.
- Parish rental charges for meal programs: Federal regulations require justification for rent paid the parish for use of the kitchen by the school food service program. The basis for arriving at the allowable amount is to be calculated as follows: the original cost of the building, in which the kitchen is housed, is to be multiplied by a factor which is that proportion of space the kitchen occupies of the total size of the building. Two percent of this amount is allowed as an annual rental charge.

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How much should adults pay for meals?

Adults should always pay at least the full cost of preparing and serving the meal including the value of the commodities used. Reimbursement is received only for student meals and consequently the adult price should be significantly higher. In schools where adults eat at the student charge or slightly higher, students are subsidizing adult meals. Meals may be served at no charge only to those adults who are directly involved in the preparation and service of the meals. This could include food service staff, meal service/dining supervisory staff, collection/count personnel or custodians who help with cleaning, unloading of commodities, etc.

How long should financial and other records be retained by the school?

The Bureau of Food and Nutrition requires all records including menus, production records, daily participation sheets, monthly claim reports, financial documentation and free and reduced applications to be kept on file for three years plus the current operating year. Some school auditors require that records of major equipment purchases be retained until the item is no longer used. Check with your school auditor before destroying old records.

Why does USDA require a “medium of exchange”?

While most districts feel they are getting an accurate meal count, frequent violations are cited because the system does not provide an appropriate medium of exchange. “Medium of exchange” is defined as cash or any type of ticket, token, ID, name or number which eligible students exchange to obtain a meal. A “medium of exchange” is necessary also for all counting system, even those using checklists. In this situation, it would simply be the child giving his or her name.

While computerized counting systems are frequently recommended to provide quick accurate counts, they can be problematic. Many schools are taking short cuts to reduce costs by eliminating the coded ID cards to increase line speed, but are failing to meet Federal guidelines. A computerized meal count based on visual identification of students with no “medium of exchange” is not acceptable. The student must provide the cashier with his/her name and account number, the medium of exchange. Per FNS-270 Meal Counting and Claiming Manual, page 29, when students carry no tickets, “Students would need some form of verbal identifier or other identification.”

The school’s counting system must be a method authorized and approved by the State Agency in the Policy Statement. The counting system, as implemented must yield the actual number of reimbursable free, reduced

price, and paid lunches served each day. In addition, it should provide accurate counts of ala carte sales, second lunches and adult meals, all of which are non-reimbursable. All counts must be verifiable.

Why do we need to have a meal count at the “point of service” and how do we insure that reimbursable meals are taken?

Meals must be counted at the point of service where it can be determined that a reimbursable meal is served to each student counted. Before students leave the service area, trays must be examined to be sure the student has the required meal components on the tray. If the point of service is at the beginning of the line, the last person serving or another monitor should observe all trays. If the school has a food bar and students are obtaining all or part of a reimbursable meal at the bar, someone must monitor the trays at the food bar.

It is essential that the person monitoring the meals for components be adequately trained on how to recognize a reimbursable meal based on the menu items and the school’s selected menu planning method. Teachers or principals who are not trained and are often distracted with discipline problems should not be responsible for monitoring meals.

Each SFA must declare their counting system on the Policy Statement. Schools should regularly check to see that this system provides an accurate count and that the method they are using to obtain the count is the same method authorized by the State Agency. SFA’s are required to complete the Self Monitoring Form for On-Site Reviews by February 1 each year. Completed forms are to be kept on file by the SFA. For additional information about counting systems, refer to Program Aid FNS-270 Meal Counting and Claiming Manual.

If you can answer yes to any of the following questions, your counting system is not acceptable and must be revised.

- Are claims based only on meal counts taken in the morning in the classroom, or at any other location outside the cafeteria before the meal is served?
- Are claims based on attendance records?
- Are meal counts based on the number of tickets/tokens sold and distributed, or the number of meals paid for in advance?
- Is the number of free and reduced price meals claimed based on the number of students eligible to receive such meals?
- Are meal counts by category taken at the beginning of the serving line without checking that the meals served are reimbursable?

- Are meal counts by category based on visual identification of students with no backup system available for persons not familiar with students' benefit level?
- Are meal counts based on tray or plate counts?
- Are back-out systems used which subtract one number (e.g. number of free and reduced meals) from the total count to get another number (e.g. number of paid meals?)
- Are the identities of students eligible for meal benefits NOT protected?
- Is this a system that does NOT yield a reliable, accurate count of meals served by category?

What does Offer vs. Serve mean for those schools using the Food Based Menu Planning System?

Offer vs. Serve refers to the fact that the children may select which components they will take. The component groups refer to the food groups: meat/meat alternate, milk, bread/grain, fruit and vegetable. For lunch, children must select three components from the five components offered. For breakfast, children must select at least three food components from the four food components offered.

In Offer vs. Serve, can I make students take the milk or main dish?

No. The child gets to select which three components he/she will take. Sometimes others within the school make a rule that children must take certain components. This is not acceptable. While teachers may teach the children the value of drinking milk, in Offer vs. Serve, the children choose whether or not they will select the milk.

Item for Sale

**2/3 Jacketed Steam Kettle
40 Gallon Vulcan
Model VDMT 40
Direct Connect
Stainless Steel**

Like New!! Hardly Used!!

**Contact: Nancy McLaughlin
Food Service Director
Mediapolis Community School
(319) 394-3101 Ext. 435
7:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

2004 Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

Since winter is still here (Brrrrr), it's fun to dream pleasant thoughts about summer, such as sunshine, lazy days, picnics, warm evenings, more free time and so forth. Those summer thoughts make winter seem less dreary for many people as they look forward to the perceived relaxation of summer-time living.

But all is not well for everyone during the summer, especially for needy children. For them, summer means school is out (they may like that idea), but summer also means regular meals through the school food service are not available to them. Their lives are more uncertain and more stressed, because many of them are hungry.

Childhood hunger during the summer is unfair and immoral, but it is easily preventable through feeding programs such as the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). Your school food service has most or all of the qualities needed to be a successful and effective SFSP Sponsor, or be a support for other SFSP Sponsors in your area. We need your involvement in SFSP.

To learn more about becoming a new 2004 SFSP Sponsor, plan to attend an SFSP Type 2 (new sponsors) Workshop or SFSP Type 3 (returning sponsors) Workshop conducted by the Bureau of Food and Nutrition on the Iowa Communication Network (ICN).

SFSP Type 2 Workshops (March 4, 2004 and March 10, 2004) and SFSP Type 3 Workshops (January 8, 2004 and April 12, 2004) will show you how to complete and submit your application for being a 2004 SFSP Sponsor.

For additional information visit the USDA web site <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Summer/default.htm>, or contact Rod Bakken, SFSP Consultant at 515-281-4760 or rod.bakken@ed.state.ia.us.

Workshops are free but pre-registration is required so workshop material can be sent to you prior to the workshop. To register, contact Janelle Loney at 515-281-5356 or Janelle.Loney@ed.state.ia.us.

Kids and Messages in the Media

Many of you may have watched ABC News anchor Peter Jennings' report, "How to Get Fat Without Trying" which aired on December 8, 2003. In his report, Mr. Jennings indicated that he felt that the media has much work to do in ethically advertising food to young children. A responsible "age" target for children was discussed by some of the major food company executives. Many acknowledged that children as young as 5 are marketed to. How do these food advertisements affect children's eating habits? Young children do not understand the nature of advertising; that product benefits are often exaggerated, that the food items are made especially appealing through enhancing their appearance and showing their use as a "popular" choice among other kids, and that as a young consumer, you will be left out of the fun if you don't also use the product.

On November 12, Iowa Public Television and the Iowa Department of Education through a TEAM Nutrition Grant co-sponsored an ICN teleconference directed at upper elementary and middle school teachers and school health professionals. The major aim of this teleconference was to provide skills and resources to help students become critical consumers of mass media messages regarding nutrition. Susan Borra of the International Food Information Council (IFIC) presented research regarding the types of nutrition issues the media covers and how the information is portrayed by the news media, tips to increase student's awareness of the variety of media messages, and strategies teachers can use to encourage students to critically examine media messages, to promote informed student decisions, and to motivate kids to make healthy choices. She also shared some good resources for further information – websites for parents as well as teachers. www.kidnetic.com emphasizes healthy eating and active living for kids and parents. In January 2004, www.ific.org will be releasing a new study named "Food for Thought" that will discuss obesity as a lens to other disease, functional foods, biotechnology in the food industry, and the latest on dietary fats. An organization operating under the auspices of the Better Business Bureau www.caru.org reviews children's advertising and has guidelines for parents to use in helping kids make informed choices.

Media Messages About Physical Activity

A second session focusing on the media messages about physical activity will be held over the ICN on January 28, 2004, 3:30-5:00 PM. Even if you did not attend the first session, you are welcome to attend the second. Although it is targeted to upper elementary middle school teachers, all of us who influence the lives of children each day can benefit from the information shared. To register for this free workshop, go to http://www3.iptv.org/iowa_database/cal-default.cfm and click on January 28, 2004. (In the IPTV address above, there is an underscore between "iowa" and "database".)

Reminder Verification 2003-2004

Verification is confirmation of eligibility for free and reduced price meals under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. Verification must include either confirmation of income eligibility or confirmation that the child(ren) is included in a household currently certified to receive Food Stamps or TANF benefits, and may include confirmation of any other information required on the application.

A copy of the "Random Sample Procedure-Reporting Form or the Focused Sample Procedure-Reporting Form" that summarizes verification results was due in the State Agency by December 31, 2003. If the SFA has not sent or faxed in the verification summary reporting form for Round 1, please do so by January 13, 2004. If a copy of Round 1 is not received by January 13, 2004, December reimbursement and all future reimbursement will be withheld. The SFA was to return Round 1 by December 31, 2003, even if it was required to complete Round 2 of verification.

If Round 2 of verification was required, it must be completed by January 30, 2004 and the results sent to the State Agency by February 13, 2004. Information on verification and the reporting forms are on the Bureau of food and Nutrition web site at: http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/fn/school_lunch/vi.html.

Please direct questions to Patti Harding at 515-281-4754.

The Power of Choice

Helping Youth Make Healthy Eating and Fitness Decisions

“The Power of Choice” is a Leader's Guide for afterschool activities designed to guide young adolescents toward a healthier lifestyle. “The Power of Choice” helps build decision-making skills that promote healthier eating and activity choices in real-life settings. A key goal is to empower preteens (ages 11-13) to make smarter choices for weight management and being more active. Using an approach that encourages fun, preteens get involved in activities that let them explore healthy eating, food safety and fitness.

“The Power of Choice” offers kids practice in learning-by-doing. Examples include making different drinks then looking at their nutrient content with Nutrition Facts labels and scooping fat (shortening) into a plastic bag and comparing how much of it is in a favorite food. The Leader's Guide is full of quick, simple things to do, including easy recipes, and dancing to salsa music, most of which requires little or no pre-planning.

In all, the Leader's Guide has:

- 10 interactive, sequenced sessions
- Four posters (an educational Nutrition Facts label, the Food Guide Pyramid, Fight Bac, and a Move-It Pyramid)
- Easy snack recipes and a recipe booklet
- A parent letter
- 170 Nutrition Facts Label cards
- A computer disk that contains all the information in the Leader's Guide
- A self-training video for the adult leader
- Supplemental hands-on activities
- Tips for improved communication with adolescents
- Support for community involvement.

“The Power of Choice” seeks to motivate both the preteen and the leader by focusing on positive behavioral changes that promote their personal development and improved lifestyles related to food and activity choices.

A copy of “The Power of Choice” has been mailed to the National School Lunch Program authorized representative at each school in Iowa. In addition, all components of “The Power of Choice” are available to download from the web, without charge, at http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/power_of_choice.html.

While supplies last, additional copies can also be ordered online at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/POCform.htm> (one per site.)

The Food and Drug Administration/DHHS and the Food and Nutrition Service/USDA jointly developed this resource.

Diabetes Resource

Looking for a great resource to help you understand the needs of diabetic students? The American Diabetes Association (ADA) website provides a wealth of information on diabetes to individuals, families, schools and others. A brochure from the ADA, “Children with Diabetes: Information for School and Child Care Providers” covers diabetes basics for people who don’t live with it every day including topics on: What is Diabetes, Treating Diabetes, Meals and Snacks, Teamwork and more. This is a resource that can also be shared with others on the educational team. It can be downloaded from the ADA website at http://www.diabetes.org/wizdom/download/school_parent.asp or call 1-800-DIABETES (342-2383) and request a copy.

Today's Portions Are Out of Proportion!

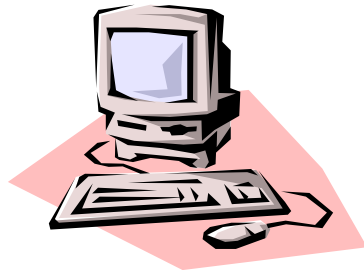
Looking for a simplified way to teach portion sizes? Looking for something a little different for the school lunch or classroom? Back by popular demand is the ‘portion proportion’ placemats from the Iowa State Fair! They are now available for purchase through Iowa State University Extension [Portion Proportion Placemat Ordering Information](#).

The portion proportion placemat is 11 x 14 inches, full color, with information on both sides. It is available in laminated or coated paper and is appropriate for home use, as well as with child care programs, school programs, and business wellness programs. The placemat can be used as part of the school breakfast or lunch program in conjunction with National School Breakfast or Lunch Week or National Nutrition Month, or in the health/family and consumer sciences classroom. Note that the portion sizes depicted on the placemat reflect the current Food Guide Pyramid recommendations that may or may not correspond directly with the USDA meal pattern guidelines.

Claim Submission and Commodity Ordering Session

The training is for those currently not utilizing the web-based system. A Claim Submission Manual and Commodity Ordering Manual will be mailed to participants who register for the workshop by January 21, 2004.

Utilizing the web-based system will maximize technology, reduce paper and the handling of paper, and reduce the costs associated with bulk mailings and facsimiles. Private school districts/ institutions that do not have web access within the organization are encouraged to locate public Internet access via the public library or special arrangements with the local public school district.



An advantage to filing electronically is that districts/organizations have until the 15th of each month to submit the claims compared to the 5th of the month for paper claims. Filing electronically reduces the expenses incurred by the Bureau for the printing and mailing of the CNP-1 claim forms, sorting the claims, manually entering the data into the system, and conducting follow-up calls on errors.

Districts currently faxing in commodity requests are to complete the ordering process via the web-based system. Both the State agency and the program participant can realize reductions in costs for the fax machine when the web is used.

The ICN session “Claim Submission and Commodity Ordering” is scheduled for January 26, 2004 from 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. The ICN session will provide training on how to submit a claim for reimbursement and how to place a commodity order. For the locations of the ICN sessions and to register, contact Janelle Loney at 515-281-5356 or Janelle.Loney@ed.state.ia.us

Tidbits from Julia

- **Did you know** a revised and expanded web based school program system is under development? It is anticipated this will be completed in time for schools to complete the annual renewal process on line and begin submitting claims into the new system starting with the 2004 school program year.
- **Did you know** that the NFSMI in conjunction with USDA has developed and /or distributed a number of new resources in the past year and more are under development? One of these is called the “Power of Choice” refer to the article in this issue for more information. Check the BFN web site for a new posting giving a brief summary of additional resources as well as other activities under way by the NFSMI.
- **Did you know** you could win a USDA Regional Award for the work you do in your school district? Refer to the enclosed article in this issue to learn more about the categories and how to apply! BFN hopes to submit at least one application in each category to the Regional Office. Remember, “You can't win if you don't enter!” A brief summary of the activities done by the Regional winners from last year is posted on the BFN web site <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/fn/index.html> . We know many of you are doing things just as great as last year's winners - you just didn't apply! So take advantage of this opportunity to tell your story!
- **Did you know** the Bureau of Food and Nutrition in collaboration with the Partners for Healthy Kids and the Iowa School Food Service Association as one of those Partners is sponsoring Team Nutrition Regional Workshops in five (5) areas of the state this spring? Registration information and program details are included in this issue of the Lunch Line register now!
- **Did you know** attendance at TN workshops makes your school eligible to apply for a Team Nutrition mini-grant?
- **Did you know** plans for the 2004 Summer Short Courses are in the process of being finalized? Ideas and suggestions for course offerings should be communicated to your area consultant or e-mailed to Sandra.Fiegen@ed.state.ia.us as soon as possible.
- **Did you know** the Child Nutrition Program reauthorization process was delayed at least 6 months? Hopefully in the spring Congress will begin addressing numerous issues related to the Child Nutrition Programs. It is important that each of you continue or begin conversations with your respective Representative and the Iowa Senators about needed or desired changes and how these would impact the children you serve.

2004 Best Practices Awards

The United State Department of Agriculture is pleased to announce the 2004 “Best Practices Awards” in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). In order to encourage and reward outstanding practices in school food service, the Department will recognize outstanding practices in four categories in schools and School Food Authorities (SFAs) participating in the NSLP and/or SBP.

Nominations for USDA’s Best Practices Award are due into the State Agency by **Monday, March 24, 2004**. This year, schools and institutions may submit nominations in the following areas:

- ◆ Reaching Needy Children in the Summertime
- ◆ School Breakfast Program Access
- ◆ Increasing Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables by Participants
- ◆ Healthy School Nutrition Environment

A nomination should consist of:

- ❖ A complete and accurate description of the practice (at least 250 but not to exceed 300 words);
- ❖ Appropriate numbers, such as: dollars saved or increased participation;
- ❖ Relevant history, impact, and/or cost effectiveness;
- ❖ Documenting photographs or newspaper articles;
- ❖ One copy of any coloring books, posters or videos that have been developed;
- ❖ Name and telephone number of a contact person (these should be printed or typewritten to alleviate any question of spelling);
- ❖ Mailing address;
- ❖ Size or average daily participation of school or SFA; and
- ❖ The category for the nomination.

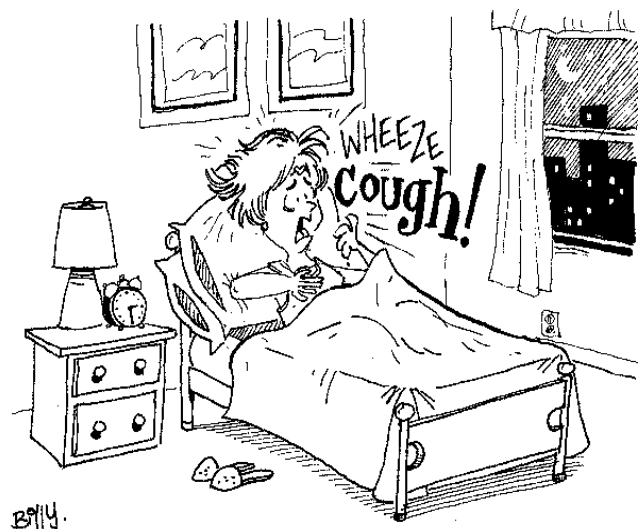
Further details, including evaluation criteria and a nomination form can be found at http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/fn/school-lunch/res_food_service or call Janelle Loney at (515) 281-5356 for a copy if you do not have access to the Internet.

Preventing “The Flu” in Your School

Do all of your students wash their hands before eating? Schools can do a great deal towards preventing influenza in their districts. The Iowa Department of Public Health has a fact sheet with Recommendations for Schools. These recommendations include:

- Washing hands several times a day using soap and warm water for 15-20 seconds. This is generally around the time it takes to sing the ABC’s. Dry hands with paper towels or automatic hand dryers if possible. In school, allow regular breaks for the students and teachers to wash hands.
- Any employee, student, teacher, or staff suspected of having the flu should not attend school.
- The flu can be spread from coughs or sneezes. Make sure tissues are available in all classrooms. Students and staff should cover their mouths when coughing and use a tissue when sneezing or blowing their noses. Tissues should be thrown away immediately following proper hand washing. Alcohol hand gels may be used in the classrooms to minimize disruption, but do not take the place of proper hand washing.
- In the school, clean commonly used surfaces such as door handles, handrails, eating surfaces, desks, etc. frequently with disinfectant. Bleach solutions or commercial disinfectants are appropriate.

Additional recommendations can be found on the web at: <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/eedo/flu.asp>



Commodity News

Food Irradiation: The Facts and The Fears

The September 2003 issue of School Foodservice and Nutrition contains an excellent article on food irradiation, a hot topic these days. The article contains information about the process USDA went through to allow irradiated ground beef into the commodity system. The process for irradiation of food is discussed and the power sources for irradiation are identified. Each of us is encouraged to know more about how irradiation works, and some of the controversies surrounding food irradiation.

While Iowa has no plans to purchase irradiated ground beef for the 2003-2004 school year, the Bureau hopes you will stay informed. As a school food service professional, you should understand the issue so that you can take part in a reasoned and thoughtful assessment of the potential risks and rewards for your local district. You will also want to do your part to keep others in your community informed. There are many educational materials available from USDA to help you become more knowledgeable.

The following questions and answers come from USDA and a variety of other government sources.

Questions and Answers About Food Irradiation

What is food irradiation?

Food irradiation, a promising new food safety technology that can eliminate disease-causing germs from foods, is a process where food products are exposed to a controlled amount of radiant energy to kill harmful bacteria such as E. coli O157:H7, Campylobacter, and Salmonella. The process also can control insects and parasites, reduce spoilage, and inhibit ripening and sprouting.

Is irradiated food safe?

Yes, the Food and Drug Administration has evaluated the safety of this technology over the last 40 years and has found irradiation to be safe under a variety of conditions and has approved its use for many foods. Scientific studies have shown that irradiation does not significantly reduce nutritional quality or significantly change food taste, texture or appearance. Irradiated foods do not become radioactive. Irradiation can produce changes in food, similar to changes caused by cooking, but in smaller amounts.

How does irradiation work?

Food is packed in containers and moved by conveyor belt into a shielded room. There the food is exposed briefly to

a radiant-energy source. The amount of energy depends on the food. Energy waves passing through the food break molecular bonds in the DNA of bacteria, other pathogens, and insects. These organisms die or, unable to reproduce, their numbers do not increase. Food is left virtually unchanged, but the number of harmful bacteria, parasites and fungi is reduced and may even be eliminated.

What are the health benefits of irradiated foods?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 5,000 Americans die every year of food borne illnesses; Robert Tauxe, a CDC food borne diseases expert, calculates the benefits if food manufacturers and processors irradiated just 50 percent of their poultry, ground beef, pork and processed meats. Using numbers from CDC records, he predicts that food irradiation would prevent nearly 900,000 cases of infection, 8,500 hospitalizations and more than 6,000 catastrophic illnesses every year.” (School Foodservice and Nutrition, September 2003.)

How do I know if food has been irradiated?

FDA requires that irradiated foods include labeling with the statement “treated with radiation” or “treated by irradiation” and the international symbol, the radura. FSIS requires that irradiated meat and poultry be labeled. If irradiated meat is used in a meat product such as pork sausage, the ingredient statement must list “irradiated pork” as an ingredient.

If a product uses the word “irradiated” in the product name, it is not necessary for the producer to place the phrase “treated by irradiation (or with radiation)” on the label. The “radura” logo (shown below) must be on the label. Also according to the USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service, foods labeled “organic” may not be irradiated.



Is irradiated food safe to eat?

Yes, irradiated food is safe to eat. Food irradiation has been approved in 37 countries for more than 40 food products. The UN’s World Health Organization, American Medical Association, and many others have endorsed the process.

Are irradiated foods available now?

Not widely in the United States yet. Some stores have sold irradiated fruits and vegetables since the early 1990's. Irradiated poultry is available in some grocery stores, mostly small independent markets and on menus for a few restaurants. Irradiated ground beef is available in some Hy-Vee stores in Iowa. Some spices sold wholesale in this country are irradiated, which eliminates the need for chemical fumigation to control pests. American astronauts have eaten irradiated foods in space since the early 1970's. Patients with weakened immune systems are sometimes fed irradiated foods to reduce the chance of a life-threatening infection.

Which meat and poultry products may be irradiated?

Only refrigerated or frozen raw meat and poultry products, meat by-products, and certain other meat food products may be irradiated. Examples of meat and poultry that may be irradiated are whole or cut-up poultry, skinless poultry, pork chops, roasts, stew meat, liver, hamburger, and ground meat. Cooked meats and poultry products such as luncheon meats and hot dogs may not be irradiated.

Do you still need to cook irradiated meat?

Yes. Irradiation does not cook the meat or make it safe to eat raw. Eating raw meat or poultry is not safe. Irradiation reduces the harmful bacteria, however, it does not make the meat or poultry product sterile. The process does not replace proper cooking or food handling practices by producers, retailers, and consumers. Since irradiated meat is still raw and requires cooking, it is not safe to leave it out of the refrigerator more than 2 hours because any harmful bacteria that survive irradiation could multiply. Also bacteria from anything raw, including irradiated meat, can recontaminate ready-to-eat food such as raw salad ingredients and cooked foods.

Would irradiation replace other food-borne diseases prevention efforts?

Experts emphasize that though food irradiation can reduce food-borne illness risk, the process complements, but does not replace, proper food handling practices by producers, processors and consumers. Consumers should continue to follow standard food safety precautions: (1) Wash hands in hot soapy water; (2) Wash cutting boards, knives and surfaces with hot soapy water; (3) Avoid cross contamination; (4) Cook food to the proper temperature; (5) Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared foods, and leftovers within two hours; and (6) Defrost and marinate foods appropriately.

Are nutrients affected in irradiated foods?

Some nutrient losses occur whenever foods are processed. Irradiated foods are wholesome and nutritious because

irradiation does not significantly change the nutrient content of food. Irradiation changes the nutrient value of food about the same as cooking or freezing does. Heating foods, such as in cooking or canning, causes nutrient changes and destroys certain vitamins sensitive to heat. Drying foods with heat causes the most nutrient loss of any food processing method. Treating food with irradiation only slightly raises the temperature of food, so nutrient losses are less than with other methods of food processing.

What chemical changes are caused when food is irradiated?

All food processing causes chemical changes in foods. Research indicates that compounds formed during food irradiation are generally the same as those that form during traditional processing and cooking methods, such as steaming, roasting, baking and canning.

Are food irradiation facilities safe for workers and surrounding communities?

Yes. The transport and handling of radioactive material is strictly regulated, and irradiation facilities are made to withstand natural disasters such as earthquakes. The radioactive cobalt commonly used is made especially to serve as a safe radiation source for hospitals and irradiation facilities. Thick walls surrounding the radiation source protect workers in irradiation plants. If workers need to enter the irradiating room, the energy source is lowered into a pool of water that absorbs the radiation and protects the workers from any exposure. In electron beam facilities, the energy source is turned off. There are about 30 licensed facilities in the United States, used mainly to sterilize medical equipment, many consumer products, and in some cases, food.

Sources of Information on Irradiation

There are a number of organizations that have information and perspectives on this issue, some of which may argue against irradiation. A variety of sources are listed for further information, however, this is not an exhaustive list.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/foodirradiation.htm>

Gateway to Government Food Safety Information

<http://www.foodsafety.gov/~fsg/irradiat.html>

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

<http://www.fda.gov/opacom/catalog/irradbro.html>

USDA Food Safety Inspection Service

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/topics/irrmenu.htm>

USDA Food and Nutrition Service

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/foodsafety/irradiation.htm>

United States Government Accounting Office

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/rc00217.pdf>

American Council on Science and Health

<http://www.acsh.org/press/releases/lunches060203.html>

<http://www.acsh.org/publications/booklets/irradiated2003.html>

Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy, University of Minnesota

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/fs/irradiation/index.html>

Kansas State University Extension

<http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/foodsafety/irradiation.htm#top>

Iowa State University Extension

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsafety/irradiation/index.cfm?parent=3>

Minnesota Department of Agriculture

<http://www.mda.state.mn.us/dairyfood/irradiation.pdf>

Food and Nutrition Service of the Minnesota Department of Education

<https://fns.state.mn.us/StrategicPlan/Goal2/G2Out3.htm>

Healthy School Meals Resource System

<http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov:8001/Safety/FNSFoodSafetyvir.htm>

UW Food Irradiation Education Group

<http://www.citizen.org>

We are surveying school districts in Iowa to discover their irradiated hamburger preferences. You will find the survey form at the Bureau of Food and Nutrition's web site at <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/fn/index.html>

Commodity Delivery Updates

Deletions for 4D (January, 2004):

1. Canned chicken (#0323)
2. Chicken Fajita's (#0328)
3. Strawberry X-Coolers (#2610) and Smoothies (#2595)
4. Cherry X-Coolers (#2606) and Smoothies (#2593)

Remaining Commodity Delivery Schedule 2003-2004

4D= January 5, 2004 (estimated start of delivery)
4E= February 16, 2004 (estimated start of delivery)
4F= March 29, 2004 (estimated start of delivery)

Are You Willing to Combat Childhood Obesity?

Everyone is increasingly aware that childhood obesity has become a national focus. Your involvement can help reverse this trend in your school and community. The Bureau of Food and Nutrition, Iowa Department of Education, is offering school and community partners an opportunity to participate in area workshops to learn what they can do on a local level. The goal of the workshop is to help community partners, health leaders, food service directors, and school staff to identify resources and ideas that work to provide healthier options for our children. There will be two tracks offered at each workshop. One track will offer 5 hours of Healthy Cuisine training for food service workers. This will be taught by Iowa State University staff and will offer simple ideas to enhance school meals. Credit will be available for ISFSA members.

In the second track the partners, including food service directors, will have a work session to identify local goals and resources to use in their schools and communities. School nurses and dietitians can receive credit for attending. **Teams attending with 3 or more members from different backgrounds will be eligible for bonus resources to support healthy eating and being active.**

There is no charge for this workshop, but pre-registration is needed. A \$10 meal fee will be charged to those registered that don't attend. The workshops are being offered at five locations throughout Iowa during February, March and April. Find one that fits your schedule and make it a weekend getaway or attend the one nearest you. All workshops will start at 8:30 AM and end promptly at 2:30 PM. Registration will begin at 8:00 AM. Snacks and lunch will be provided for all workshop participants. Directions for each workshop location will be mailed upon confirmation of your registration. A separate registration flyer is enclosed with this newsletter.

Locations and Dates

February 21	Council Bluffs
March 6	Pella
March 13	Davenport
April 3	Oelwein
April 17	Cherokee

Register by:

February 6
February 20
February 27
March 19
April 2

These opportunities are made available through the Iowa Department of Education with support and guidance from the Partners for Healthy Kids. The Iowa Department of Education is covering conference costs with funds from a U.S. Department of Agriculture Team Nutrition training grant, by Iowa School Food Service Association and sponsoring vendors.

If you are unable to attend any of these workshops, but would like to have information about becoming a Team Nutrition school, please contact Janet Wendland at janet.wendland@ed.state.ia.us.

Partners for Healthy Kids/Team Nutrition Spring 2004 Workshop

REGISTRATION FORM

Team Members**	Session (circle one)	School/Organization Address	Phone and email	Subject area or Partner Group Represented
	Food Service or Partner Session			
	Food Service or Partner Session			
	Food Service or Partner Session			
	Food Service or Partner Session			
	Food Service or Partner Session			

****Please designate main contact person above with an asterisk.**

NOTE: If any member of your team attended the 2003 Team Nutrition workshop, please circle their name. Consider the following people for team members from your school and community: School Administrator, School Board member, Family and Consumer Science teacher, Physical Education teacher, Health teacher, Food Service Director or Manager, School Nurse, Parents, Health professionals, and Business Partners.

Please check the workshop your team plans to attend:

____February 21	Council Bluffs-Wilson Junior High 715 North 21 st St.	Registration Due: February 6
____March 6	Pella High School 212 E. University	Registration Due: February 20
____March 13	Davenport-Central High School 1120 Main St.	Registration Due: February 27
____April 3	Oelwein Middle School 300 12 th Ave. SE	Registration Due: March 19
____April 17	Cherokee-Washington HS 600 West Bluff St.	Registration Due: April 2

RETURN THIS FORM TO:

Janelle Loney Bureau of Food & Nutrition Grimes State Office Building Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146	OR FAX 515-281-6548 Voice 515-281-5356
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