

Food and
Nutrition
Service

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DATE: February 26, 2021

SUBJECT: Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP): Guidance on Temporary Food Package Issuance with Modified Quantities of Vegetables

TO: Regional Directors
Special Nutrition Programs
MARO, MPRO, MWRO,
NERO, SERO, SWRO, and
WRO

State Directors
CSFP State Agencies
All Current and New States

Issuing Agency/Office:	Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)
Title of Document:	Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP): Guidance on Temporary Food Package Issuance with Modified Quantities of Vegetables
Document ID:	
Z-RIN:	N/A
Date of Issuance:	February 26, 2021
Replaces:	N/A
Summary:	This memorandum provides temporary issuance of Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) food packages with less or no vegetables due to issues with vendors' ability to supply canned vegetables.
Disclaimer:	The contents of this guidance document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.
<i>Body of guidance document follows.</i>	

Temporary Guide Rate Change

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) is currently experiencing a vegetable product shortage due to ongoing issues with vendors' ability to supply canned vegetables. To address this issue, **FNS is temporarily reducing the quantity of vegetables offered in the CSFP Maximum Monthly Distribution Rates, or Guide Rates, from 8 cans to 4 cans effective immediately until inventories can be replenished. Attachment A provides the current Guide Rate for CSFP.**

This temporary reduction will assist FNS and State agencies with rebuilding vegetable inventories and will help ensure that CSFP participants receive some vegetables in the monthly

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food package. FNS will lift this temporary reduction once CSFP vegetable inventories are sufficiently replenished to meet national program demand for the full 8 cans of vegetables per month.

To minimize program burden, any food packages that have already been pre-packed per the previous Guide Rate (effective October 22, 2020), may be distributed to CSFP participants without modification. However, food packages packed after the issuance of this memorandum must be packed according to the Distribution Rates in Attachment A.

Issuing Food Packages with Less Than Full Quantities of Vegetables

In accordance with FNS Instruction 835-1, Revision 2, “Authorized Supplemental Foods and Distribution Rates of Foods for CSFP,” items in the food package can be impacted by changing agricultural market conditions and some of the individual USDA Foods listed may be periodically unavailable. State tailoring of the CSFP food package to issue quantities of USDA Foods that are below the prescribed rates is permitted in very limited circumstances with prior FNS approval.

Even with the temporary reduction in the vegetable Guide Rate, some States may still have insufficient vegetable inventory to provide full food packages. Accordingly, FNS is allowing affected States and local agencies to issue CSFP food packages with less than the prescribed quantity of vegetables in Attachment A. **However, State agencies must obtain FNS approval prior to food package issuance to exercise this option.** States should closely monitor their vegetable inventories and contact FNS Regional Offices as soon as they foresee an issue with making full food packages with the modified vegetable allotments. FNS Regional Offices must in turn notify the FNS National Office for State approval to issue modified food packages.

States that have already received FNS approval to issue less than the full amount of vegetables may continue to do so until inventories are replenished.

Additional CSFP Vegetable Purchases

To alleviate the vegetable shortage, FNS has been purchasing a variety of vegetable products not currently available in the CSFP package. In addition to the vegetable products normally offered in CSFP, there will temporarily be different vegetable products available and vegetables available in different pack sizes. **Attachment B includes guidance on how to distribute these temporary vegetable products.**

State agencies may begin seeing some vegetable products available for order from the National Multi-Food Warehouses in March 2021. However, FNS does not guarantee that all of these new options will be available to all States. In order to ensure that State agencies can order fairly, all State requests for vegetables must be submitted to FNS for fulfillment. Detailed instructions on placing orders will be issued prior to the materials becoming available.

We also request that local agencies communicate to clients that this shortage is expected to be short-term and that USDA is working with industry to return vegetables to their food packages as soon as possible. We appreciate your understanding of this issue and your work to ensure CSFP participants continue to receive the needed food assistance during this time. We will be sure to keep you apprised as we receive new information on the availability of vegetables.

/s/ Original Signature on File

Laura Castro
Director
Food Distribution Division

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Attachment A

**COMMODITY SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAM TEMPORARY¹
MAXIMUM MONTHLY DISTRIBUTION RATES**

Effective February 26, 2021 until Further Notice

Food Package Category	Food Item	Amount Each Month
Fruits and Juice	Canned Fruit (15.5 oz) Juice (64 oz) Raisins (15 oz)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 juice and 3 cans fruit; or • 2 juices and 2 cans fruit; or • 1 package raisins, 1 juice, and 2 cans fruit; or • 1 package raisins, 2 juices and 1 can fruit.
Vegetables	Canned Vegetables or Soup (10.5 to 15.5 oz) Dehydrated Potatoes (1 lb)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>4 cans</u> vegetables or soup; or • <u>3 cans</u> vegetables or soup, and <u>1 package</u> dehydrated potatoes.
Cheese	Cheese (2 lb)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 package cheese.
Milk	UHT Fluid Milk 1% (32 oz) Instant Nonfat Dry Milk (12.8 oz)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 UHT milk; or • 1 UHT milk and 1 (12.8 oz) Nonfat Dry Milk
Meat, Poultry, and Fish	Beef, Beef Stew, or Chili* (24 oz) Chicken (10 to 15 oz) Beef Chili with Beans (15 oz) Tuna (12 oz) Salmon (14.75 oz)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 (24 oz) shelf-stable package meat and 1 (10 to 15 oz) shelf-stable package beef, poultry or fish; or • 3 (10 to 15 oz) shelf-stable packages beef, poultry and/or fish of any combination.
Plant-Based Protein	Canned Beans (15.5 oz) Dry Beans or Lentils (1 to 2* lb) Peanut Butter (16 to 18* oz)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 units of any combination of canned beans, (1 lb) dry beans or lentils, and peanut butter; or • 1 (2* lb) unit dry beans or lentils, and 1 unit of canned beans, peanut butter, or (1 lb) dry beans or lentils.
Cereals	Cereal, Dry Ready-to-Eat, (12 to 18 oz) Farina (18 oz) Rolled Oats (18 to 48* oz) Grits (2 to 5* lb)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 units of any combination of cereal, farina, (18 oz) rolled oats, and (2 lb) grits; or • 1 (42* to 48* oz) unit rolled oats; or • 1 (5* lb) unit grits (every other month).
Pasta and Rice	Pasta (1 lb) Rice (1 to 2* lb)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 units of any combination of pasta and (1 lb) rice; or • 1 (2* lb) unit rice

¹This temporary Distribution Rates will remain in effect until FNS determines that national vegetable inventories are sufficient to support the full issuance rate of 8 units across all programs.

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Temporary Food Options

The following tables provide details on how to incorporate the temporary CSFP vegetable products and sizes into the Temporary Distribution Rates.

For the following temporary vegetable products, one product unit should be issued as one can of vegetables under the Distribution Rates.

Temporary Products 1 can = 1 can of Vegetables	
Product	Material Code
Peas W/O Salt Can 12/15 Oz	111376
Tomatoes/Okra & Corn Can 12/15 Oz	111396
Okra Cut Can 12/14.5 Oz	111395
Beans Green Cut Can 24/14.5 Oz	111391
Beans Green French Can 24/14.5 Oz	111392
Corn Fresh Cut Kernel Can 24/15.25 Oz	111394
Collard Greens NSA Can 12/14 Oz	111425
Cut Green Beans 12/14.4 Oz	111426

For the following temporary vegetable products, one product unit should be issued as two cans of vegetables under the Distribution Rates.

Temporary Products 1 can/pouch = 2 cans of Vegetables	
Product	Material Code
Beans Green Cut & Potatoes Can 12/38 Oz	111398
Sweet Potatoes Can 12/40 Oz	111399
Sweet Potatoes Can 29 Oz	111400
Mixed Vegetables Can 12/29 Oz	111401
Spaghetti Sauce Pouch 20/28 Oz	111402
Beans Green Can 12/38 Oz	111397

¹Updated Attachment B as of June 1, 2021