



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food and
Nutrition
Service

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DATE: June 15, 2011

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SUBJECT: Shelf-stable, Dried Snacks Made from Meat, Poultry, or Seafood

TO: Regional Directors
Special Nutrition Programs
All Regions

State Directors
Child Nutrition Programs
All States

This memorandum is intended to remind school food authorities (SFAs) and other program operators that shelf-stable, dry, or semi-dry, meat snacks do not credit in any meal served under the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Child Nutrition (CN) Programs. These dried meat, poultry, and seafood snacks have a variety of fanciful and parenthetical names because the USDA product formulation standards vary widely. Non-creditable meat snacks can include but are not limited to the following products: *smoked snack sticks made with beef and chicken; summer sausage; pepperoni sticks*; meat, poultry, or seafood jerky such as *beef jerky, turkey jerky, and salmon jerky*; and meat or poultry nuggets (shelf-stable, non-breaded, dried meat or poultry snack made similar to jerky) such as *turkey nuggets*.

The shelf-stable, dried meat, poultry, and seafood snacks do not meet the usual and customary function of the meat/meat alternate component as either an entrée or side dish of a meal planned using the Food-based Menu Planning (FBMP) option. It is important to note that dried meat, poultry or seafood snacks do **not** qualify for the CN Labeling Program because they **cannot** contribute to the meat component for the FBMP option; fact sheets or company certified product formulation statements (PFS) should not be accepted for these products.

While the above mentioned snacks cannot contribute credit towards a reimbursable meal, there are some meat stick type products that can be used in a reimbursable meal. The following are examples of meat stick products that may credit in CN Programs with authorized CN Labels or company certified PFS:

- 1) Cooked, cured meat and/or poultry sausages excluding byproducts, cereals, binders or extenders such as Bologna, Frankfurters, Knockwurst, and Vienna Sausage as are listed on pages 1-36 and 1-37 of the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*;

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- 2) Infant finger-food types of shelf-stable sticks, usually packed in water, with a parenthetical product name such as *chicken sticks packed in water*, are creditable when made without byproducts, cereals, binders or extenders, similar to *Vienna Sausages* noted above;
- 3) Extended meat or poultry “pattie-like” products shaped into sticks which are usually breaded and either frozen or refrigerated; and
- 4) Dried pepperoni when used as a topping on a CN Labeled pizza.

Please assist SFAs and other program operators with understanding the difference between creditable entrée and side dish varieties of the standardized sausages, franks, knockwursts, and Vienna sausages and the non-creditable, shelf-stable, dried meat, poultry, and seafood snacks.

State agencies should direct any questions concerning this guidance to the appropriate Food and Nutrition Service - Regional Office. Regional Offices with questions should contact the Child Nutrition Division.

Original Signed

Cynthia Long

Director

Child Nutrition Division