



FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE DEPARTMENT

Brownsville Food & Nutrition Services

Brownsville ISD FNS, Los Fresnos CISD FNS, and other school district food services located in areas with low per capita income participate in USDA's Child Nutrition Program and Commodity Food Program. Specific nutrition guidelines are adhered to in order to maintain the Federal funding that sustains our participation in these programs.

USDA Commodity Food Program

- School food services that qualify are encouraged to participate.
- Qualifying food services are given “Entitlement Dollars” (Based on enrollment) to purchase USDA Commodity Foods.
- These dollars are used to purchase commodity beef, chicken, cheese, bread products, flour, fruits, vegetables, etc.
- Purchased Commodity Foods in specified # of pounds are diverted to food manufacturers to be processed into foods that meet guidelines, and are ready to be served to students.

Processing of Commodities

- Processing is simply taking raw product and converting it to edible, healthy, ready-to-cook and eat food.
- When this food is received by food services it already meets all Child Nutrition Guidelines for nutrition and food safety.
- Processed foods are wholesome, nutritious, and safe for feeding school-age children or others.
- Public generally has poor perception of food processing that can be changed through education.

Significant Money Savings

- Finished products are purchased from manufacturers minus a Commodity Discount = to cost of the USDA Commodity Foods.
- The percentage of discount differs between \$ values of commodity food. The C.D. for meat is higher than C.D. for grains.
- Because of these discounts FNS is able to keep its cost per entrée (most expensive of the 5 menu items) below \$1.00.
- Reimbursement rate from USDA for each complete lunch and/or supper served is \$3.31. Breakfast reimbursement is \$1.79.

Menus Planned with Commodity Foods

- School FS plans its menus according to student preference, Guidelines, cafeteria observations, & commodity balances.
- Diverted commodity levels vary between products but each must be depleted by November 30 of each year, or they will be removed from FNS commodity account by the State.
- Diversions done every February: Address student popularity, expected rate of commodity food depletion, and cost.
- Each manufacturer participating in commodity processing has numerous choices of finished food products available to FNS.