Tips for Accepting Processed Product Documentation

A child nutrition (CN) label and a manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement (PFS) are documents that provide a way for a manufacturer to demonstrate how a processed food product may contribute toward the meal pattern requirements in child nutrition programs. Below are tips for reviewing and accepting manufacturer's documentation:

CN Labeled Products

- A CN label is approved by USDA and provides a warranty of a product's meal pattern contribution when the product is used according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Acceptable documentation for the CN label includes:
  - the original CN label from the product carton;
  - a photocopy of the CN label shown attached to the original product carton;
  - a photograph of the CN label shown attached to the original product carton; or
  - a copied or electronic CN label with a watermark displaying the product name and CN number, provided by the vendor, along with the Bill of Lading (invoice) that also includes the product name.
- The CN Label Verification Report is available to assist program operators and state reviewers in verifying the status of a CN label as well as the crediting information.
- When a valid CN label is provided, state reviewers **must not** request a PFS.

Product Formulation Statements

- When purchasing a processed product without a CN label, a program operator may request a signed PFS on the manufacturer's letterhead that demonstrates how the processed product contributes toward the meal pattern requirements.
- Creditable ingredients listed in the PFS must match a description in the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs.

- Templates for documenting the meats/meat alternates (M/MA), grains, fruits, and vegetables components are available.
- A PFS may include crediting information for multiple meal components. For example, a cheese pizza may credit toward the M/MA, grains, and the red/orange vegetable subgroup. The manufacturer must clearly specify how each component contributes toward the meal pattern requirements.
- A PFS should verify that the product's contribution toward the meat/meat alternate component does not exceed the product's serving size (i.e., a 2.15-ounce beef patty may not credit more than 2.00 oz. eq M/MA).
- Program operators are responsible for verifying that the calculations and contribution statement on a manufacturer's PFS are accurate.

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