DHS/COMMODITY DISTRIBUTION UNIT

Volume 1, Issue 1

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# COMMODITY EXPRESS

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## *MEET THE STAFF!!!!*

Commodity Distribution is a unit within the Division of County Operations, with the Department of Human Services (DHS). CDU is pleased to be sending you our first edition of the ***Commodity Express,*** a newsletter which will be printed quarterly to keep you informed on what's new with commodities and the programs within our Unit!!

Our staff includes: Lynn Jackson—Manager, Donna Henderson—NSLP Coordinator, Mike Lewis — Coordinator TEAFAP Program, Gary Stockton — Senior Program Analyst — Charlene Williams — Accounting Coordinator, Rosalind Reams — Coordinator of Processing and Supervisor of Commodity Field Reps, Marilyn Credit — Commodity Field Rep Central Arkansas Region, Shirley Nicholson — Commodity Field Rep North Arkansas Region, Jim Ponzini — Commodity Field Rep South Arkansas Region, Linda Gramling — Assistant to the Manager, Carrie Coley — Administrative Assistant.

**From left to right sitting: Rosalind Reams, Shirley Nicholson, Carrie Coley. Standing from left to right: Gary Stockton, Lynn Jackson, Marilyn Credit, Donna Henderson, Charlene Williams, Linda Gramling, Jim Ponzini. Not pictured, Mike Lewis.**

### SPOTLIGHT: Lynn Jackson

Lynn Jackson is the manager for the Commodity Distribution Unit. Ms. Jackson is responsible for the program operations and fiscal management of the Commodity Unit. Ms. Jackson acquired over 20 years of customer service experience while in the private sector. She has been with the State of Arkansas for 12 years in various positions including: Asst. Personnel Administrator, Program Specialist for the Governors Cabinet on Career Management Assistance and Manager in the DHS/DCO Office of Program Support.

Ms. Jackson received her B.A. in Sociology with a minor in Business Administration from Philander Smith College in Little Rock. Her Post Graduate work is in Developmental Education from Grambling State University, Grambling, Louisiana.

# MISSION:

TO ENSURE THE DELIVERY OF QUALITY HUMAN SERVICES THAT STRENGTHEN THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF ARKANSAS' CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND ADULTS.

# COMMODITY DISTRIBUTION UNIT

The Arkansas DHS Division of County Operations provides leadership and support for 86 county offices in 75 counties. The Division employs approximately 1800 Arkansans and has an annual operating budget of more than $210 million dollars.

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable stand.

Commodity Distribution is a unit within DHS Division of County Operations and operates in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the United States Department of Defense (DOD). The CDU administers the distribution of USDA Donated Foods and the DOD Fruits and Vegetables program. These donated foods are eligible to various agencies and programs statewide. Foods are currently available to the following programs:

- National School Lunch Program (NSLP)
- Summer Food Service Program
- Emergency Food Assistance Program
- Soup Kitchen—Food Bank Program
- Disaster Feeding
- Commodity Processing Program

Read on to learn more about these Programs and the Commodity Distribution Unit!!

***Mission:***

*To ensure the delivery of quality human services that strengthen the health and well-being of Arkansas' children, families and adults.*

## CDU: OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS

The Commodity Distribution Unit is a distributor for USDA Commodities and DOD fresh fruit and vegetables. All foods allocated to Arkansas are received and stored in a commercial storage warehouse for these programs. Recipient agencies, other than schools, pick up their allocation of foods. School foods are delivered by commercial trucking, operating under a state contract. Monitoring, reviews, and inspections are completed on all programs to assure that federal storage, usage, and health standards are observed.

The **National School Lunch Program (NSLP)** provides USDA and DOD donated foods for meal preparation in public and private schools, residential child-care institutions, and child-care centers.

**Summer Food Service Program** provides USDA and donated foods to DHS Child Nutrition approved sites for the summer feeding of school-age children.

**Emergency Food Assistance Program** makes surplus and purchased agricultural commodities available to low income households. The commodities are intended to supplement other foods and not serve as a household's sole or main food source.

**Soup Kitchen—Food Bank Program:** Under TEFAP, commodity foods are made available by the USDA to provide food to local nonprofit, IRS tax-exempt agencies, which in turn, distributes the food to food banks, pantries, and soup kitchens for congregate feeding or distribution to homeless or needy persons/families.

**Disaster Feeding** provides USDA donated foods for meal preparation at approved congregate feeding sites established due to natural or manmade disasters and emergencies.

**Commodity Processing Program:** USDA donated foods are made available to commercial food processing companies for further processing of foods into a more acceptable end-product for recipient agencies. The value of the USDA commodity is passed through to the recipient agency under a discount or rebate system.

# REPORTING A FOOD LOSS

A Commodity Food Loss must be reported to our office. There are several documents needed to complete the food loss process. First, on all losses except for theft, contact the Health Department to do a Destruction Report. This must be attached to the USDA Food Loss Report, Form DCO-1840. If you do not have a form, contact your Commodity Field Rep for a copy. Also include with the report the circumstances surrounding the loss: the condition of the food when you received it, temperature of food upon receipt, and description of storage. List all preventative measures taken to avoid future losses, temperature logs (current plus 2 previous months), Police report if applicable and insect/rodent control reports. Once the paperwork is received, your commodity field rep will prepare an on-site report of your loss.

If you have any questions about reporting a Food Loss, please contact your Commodity Field Rep or call our office at 501-371-1400.

# FOOD TRANSFERS

The Commodity Distribution Office requires pre-approval to transfer commodities from one school district to another. A copy of form DCO-1816, Food Transfer Form, must be maintained in both the transferring agency and recipient agency's files for auditing purposes. The original with both signatures must be mailed to the Commodity Office.

The Commodity Office will seek approval from the USDA Regional FNS Office prior to the transfer of any commodities to an unlike agency (an agency outside your program). To request this type of transfer please contact the Commodity Distribution Office at 501-371-1400.

Don't forget, if you find you are not using commodities at the rate you anticipated, don't wait until you have a food loss. Transfer your commodities to an institution who can use them.

*Remember, always document your food loss and call the Commodity Distribution office immediately.*

*501-371-1400*

# NSLP: REVIEWER'S CORNER

In order to insure that federal guidelines are being met, an institution must undergo a review by a Commodity Field Rep. Each quarter, we will look at a different area from a reviewer's perspective, giving you tips and guidelines to make sure you successfully pass your review.

This quarter we will look at temperatures in storage areas.

The storage of commodities involves two major areas, storage conditions and storage practices. Storage conditions are those factors that must be considered in order to prevent the premature deterioration of commodities. Each case should be dated by the institution on the day the foods are received to insure proper inventory rotation (FIFO, First-In/First-Out). To maintain quality, food must be stored at proper temperatures. Temperatures in freezers and refrigerator/coolers should be checked every other day at a minimum and temperatures recorded. This practice must be continued during summer vacation, or any other vacation period. If the school personnel is not able to make freezer/cooler checks on the weekends, then the checks should be made late Friday afternoons and early Monday mornings.

Recommended temperatures:

Frozen: 0 degrees or below.

Cooler: 32 to 40 degrees.

Dry Storage: 36 to 70 degrees.

**DHS/COMMODITY DISTRIBUTION UNIT**

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**Don't forget to enter your inventory at: https://acs.arkansas.gov**

*This Newsletter is sponsored by:*

# *COMMODITY RECIPE*

## TRAIL MIX BONNIES

50 servings

| Ingredients | Weight | Measure |
|---|---|---|
| Margarine, Melted | 1lb. | ..... |
| Sugar | 1lb 10.5 oz | 4 cups |
| **Eggs, Frozen, Whole, thawed**** | 8 oz | 4 each |
| ***Trail Mix, chopped** | 1lb 3 oz | 3.5 cups |
| Vanilla | ..... | 4 tsp |
| Rice Crisp Cereal | 6 oz | 3 quarts |
| Coconut, shredded | 1lb 9.5 oz | ..... |

Directions:

1. In a pot or steam kettle, blend the margarine, sugar, eggs, trail mix and vanilla.
2. Simmer on low heat for 15 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, measure rice crisps cereal into a large mixing bowl.
4. Pour heated mixture over cereal and mix thoroughly.
5. Allow to cool until #40 dipper will hold together to make a ball.
6. Roll balls in coconut with both hands and lay out onto wax-lined sheet trays to cool.

* Commodities are in **Bold.**

** All thawing should be done in the refrigerator.

# COMMODITY FIELD REPS

## NORTHERN REGION

CONTACT: SHIRLEY NICHOLSON
OFFICE: 501-371-1406

## CENTRAL REGION

CONTACT: MARILYN CREDIT
OFFICE: 501-371-1413

## SOUTHERN REGION

CONTACT: JIM PONZINI
OFFICE: 501-683-6964