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**Disaster Planning:**

**Congregate Meal Service using USDA Foods**

The following guidance and information concerns meeting the needs of Oregon citizens with regard to disasters requiring group meal service at congregate meal sites as stated in USDA 7 CFR 250.69.

The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) has responsibility for United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Foods used at group/congregate meals sites. Under normal conditions, shipments of USDA Foods are made monthly (except June, July, Dec., Feb.) to eligible recipient agencies in the state. USDA Foods can be used in congregate meal feeding during a presidentially declared disaster or emergency. USDA Foods can also be used in “situation of distress” when a natural catastrophe or other situation has not been declared a disaster or emergency by the President but the rules are more restrictive.

USDA Foods can be made available to disaster organizations in times of need, per USDA guidance. Notification and approval by the Oregon Department of Education is required before food items can be released to disaster organizations under such circumstances. The ODE in turn must notify the Western Regional Office of the USDA.

**The ODE requires the following information regarding the disaster situation:**

1. Description of the disaster situation.

2. Number of people requiring meals and the time of the meal service.

3. Quantity and types of food needed for group meal service.

4. Number and location of sites for group meal service.

5. Method of meal service (organization and facility).

6. Disaster relief organization(s) involved and contact information.

The above information must be provided to the ODE as soon as possible.

Upon approval by the ODE, USDA Foods would be released to authorized disaster organizations. A signed receipt/inventory is required for all items. USDA Foods will be made available based on the information provided by the disaster organizations. There are penalties for the misuse of USDA Foods.

**During or following the disaster:**

1. USDA Foods contained in school district warehouses located close to the disaster should be used first for congregate feeding. ODE has the authority to use this inventory without permission.

2. State warehouse inventories can be used when sufficient food is not available locally. If the Distributing Agency does not have adequate inventories, it may request additional USDA Foods from other States’ inventories, through the FNS regional office and FNS headquarters. FNS may acquire food from other State inventories, redirect shipments en-route, or purchase additional foods to meet long-term disaster needs.

3. The Recipient Agency (school district) and/or disaster organization must report ten days following the end of the meal service the type and number of meals served.

4. The Recipient Agency must report to ODE within ten days following the end of the last meal service:

* Material Code, description of USDA Foods
* Number of cases of USDA Foods used
* Note: USDA Foods include Direct Delivery, USDA DoD Fresh produce and further processed finished end products.

5. The Recipient Agency should maintain records on all equipment, labor, and non-USDA Foods used and may file claims with the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) in instances of presidential declared Federal disasters.

6. Maintain a sign-in log during disaster feeding. A copy of the sign-in log may be requested to verify meal count.

**Personnel involved for authorization, contact guidance, coordination and information:**

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**References: USDA**

7 CFR Chapter II 250.3 Definitions

7 CFR Chapter II 250.69 Disaster Food Assistance

7 CFR Chapter II 250.70 Food Assistance in Situations of Distress

[USDA Food Distribution Program Regulations Link](https://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/regulations)

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