



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)
TRIBAL CONSULTATION ON FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM ON
INDIAN RESERVATIONS
DECEMBER 10, 2025

Hybrid Virtual and In-Person Consultation

FRAMING PAPER

Time and Place.

Wednesday, December 10, 2025
2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Local Time
Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) Annual Conference
4455 Paradise Road
Las Vegas, Nevada 89169
Room Sage 3

Please register using the link **HERE**:

https://www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_i3LEVi2-ReuO-pOHJXV9pQ. Select virtual (Zoom) or in-person attendance.

Consulting Officials.

USDA: Partick A. Penn, Deputy Under Secretary; Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services (FNCS)

Tribal Leaders: Council Representative ReNa Lohnes, Spirit Lake Tribe; Governor James Mountain, Tribal Leaders Consultation Work Group (TLCWG)

Prior FDPIR Consultations.

[Tribal Consultations | USDA](#)

Background.

The Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, or [FDPIR](#), provides food to nearly 60,000 income-eligible participants on tribal reservations and Native American households in approved areas near reservations. FDPIR provides American-grown and produced foods and nutrition education to help reduce food insecurity and support nutritious diets.

FDPIR is administered by 107 Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs) and three State agencies serving approximately 280 federally recognized tribes nationwide. The monthly FDPIR food package provides an important source of nutrition and supports healthy choices and healthy families. Participants receiving the food package may have limited alternatives due to their remote location and/or mobility challenges. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is available as an alternative to FDPIR participants, who may elect to opt in or out of

each program on a monthly basis. While SNAP may be a viable alternative for some FDPIR participants, access to a SNAP vendor remains challenging for extremely rural and remote participants, especially those without reliable access to a working vehicle. The emergency feeding network is also available to FDPIR participants.

Topics for Consultation

I. Contingency Funding

FDPIR administrative and food funding is provided annually by Congress through appropriations bills. While Congress provides funding for a SNAP contingency fund, FDPIR is currently not authorized by statute to maintain a separate contingency fund. FDPIR administrative grants have a two-year period of availability with funds available across two fiscal years (FYs). If not yet expended, these funds may be used to continue normal FDPIR program operations through the end of the following FY. In the FY 2026 lapse, FNS assessed FDPIR administering agency funding levels and provided administrative funding to programs with immediate needs using FY 2025-2026 funding (i.e., carryover funds).

II. Food Supply Chain Disruptions

USDA is committed to timely, accurate and high-quality deliveries and to ensuring a strong and resilient food delivery system for FDPIR. USDA's national warehouses have the majority of FDPIR products available in stock. As a result of unanticipated and sudden increases in demand in October and November, USDA anticipates there may be intermittent outages in the availability of certain products in the coming weeks and potentially into January. USDA is working rapidly to replenish the national warehouses through recent order solicitations. Shipments to the national warehouses are scheduled in the coming weeks that will replenish low inventory. In addition, through our partnership with the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), USDA is working to procure a truckload of cheese for each of our national warehouses to help shore up inventories depleted by the ordering surge that began in October. These actions, however, do not have immediate effects given that procurement timeframes may take several months.

III. Disaster Plan Preparedness

USDA plays a vital role in providing supplemental nutrition assistance when disasters occur by coordinating with states, territories, tribes, and local voluntary organizations to:

- provide food for shelters and other mass feeding sites,
- distribute food packages directly to households in specific situations,
- offer flexibility in nutrition assistance programs' design and administration to continue providing benefits to participants in need, and

- approve eligible states' requests to operate a Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP).

Specifically, USDA Foods may be used for congregate feeding and/or household distribution during Presidentially Declared Disasters or Emergency Situations. USDA does not set aside or pre-position food specifically for disasters. State agencies, ITOs, and/or disaster organizations request USDA Foods through administering agencies. If approved, USDA Foods from current inventories are then supplied by the state/ITO agency to disaster relief organizations to provide meals for those in need.

IV. Waivers for Veteran Participants

Under current FDPIR regulations, Veteran pension payments and Veteran disability payments are both counted as unearned income for purposes of FDPIR eligibility. In past years, Tribal leaders have requested that both types of payments be excluded. Existing regulations do not permit this type of income to be excluded. SNAP counts these payments as income based on Section 5(d) of the Food and Nutrition Act.

V. SNAP Changes/Disruptions Causing Surge in FDPIR Participation

FNS has received anecdotal reports that FDPIR participation may increase due to recent provisions in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. There were also concerns during the lapse in appropriations that if households did not receive SNAP benefits in November, there could be a surge in participation in FDPIR. FDPIR participation data lags roughly 90 days. FDPIR has seen some increases in participation over the summer, and FNS will share updates in participation as data is reported.

FNS did see increases in ordering from tribes in October and November in anticipation of increases in FDPIR participation due to uncertainty around November SNAP benefits. As a result, FNS anticipates potential impacts on inventories over the next month of some products, including varieties of chicken, beef, and juices. This could limit the variety of FDPIR products that USDA typically offers. FNS has asked FDPIR program operators to order only the volume of USDA Foods needed to provide complete food packages to currently certified households while maintaining one to three months of inventory on hand. We are monitoring inventory levels, working to procure USDA Foods for replenishment at the national warehouses, and exploring options with the Defense Logistics Agency to procure cheese through that avenue.

FNS is also increasing food procurements and deliveries into the multifeed warehouses. The latest FDPIR participation data available is for June 2025 and is 59,492 participants, an increase from the previous year, June 2024, when participation averaged 52,346.

VI. National Warehouse Contract Update

In mid-September, USDA finalized the award of two contracts for storage and distribution services to FDPIR and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program or CSFP. The contract awards follow USDA's solicitation for warehousing services published in January 2025, developed with input from the FDPIR and CSFP communities and reflecting USDA's lessons-learned from the national warehouse transition that occurred last year. The contract for USDA's service zone 01 is held by Americold Logistics, servicing sites from a warehouse location in Syracuse, New York. The contract for USDA's zone 02 is held by McLane Group International, serving sites from a warehouse location in Henderson, Colorado. USDA will be working with the FDPIR community and the warehouse contractors to support a smooth transition of operations over the next several months.

FDPIR and CSFP Zone 01 and Zone 02 Program Locations:

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/0019dc83bf2a423c8a37c7522dc55998/>

USDA would like to thank representatives nominated by NAFDPIR for partnering with us on the solicitation for the national multi-food warehouse contract. The input received was invaluable and supported our goal of strengthening future contract operations.

VII. Nutrition Education Funding

USDA-FNS is working to disseminate FY25 administrative funding (\$4M) based on ITOs' requests as part of the FY26 budget process. Once disseminated, ITOs will have until September 30, 2027, to obligate the funds.

The FY26 appropriations bill included \$4M in FDPIR nutrition education administrative funding, which will be disseminated under the normal process, as well as \$998K in discretionary funding for FDPIR nutrition education. FNS is developing a plan to distribute these funds in a way that supports FDPIR programs in delivering nutrition education and will communicate with Tribal leaders about these plans as they progress.