
FLORIDA'S FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN TO STAMP OUT HUNGER

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Florida is creating a comprehensive approach to ending hunger among children and low-income people through an unprecedented partnership between several state agencies and community-based grassroots organizations.

Five state agencies - Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Department of Children & Families, Department of Education, Department of Elder Affairs, and the Department of Health - formed the Food Security Team in September 2000 to begin the development of the "Five-Year Strategic Plan to Stamp Out Hunger in Florida." Acknowledging the importance of collaborative efforts between the public and private sectors, organizations such as Florida Impact, Florida Association of Food Banks, Panhandle Area Migrant Education Center, and Florida Association of Community Action play an active role in the Food Security Team.

The Food Security Team considers its Five-Year Strategic Plan to be a "living document" that continues to evolve as new ideas are incorporated. The plan outlined in this document represents the most current updates as established by the Food Security Team on October 16, 2003. Below is a summary of the goals and objectives included in this plan:

Goal 1. Improve awareness of food insecurity and hunger in Florida and available resources to reduce the problem.

- **Objective 1.1:** Increase public awareness of the problem of food insecurity and hunger in Florida.
- **Objective 1.2:** Increase the use of information about food assistance programs by community-based organizations and clients.

Goal 2. Expand participation of eligible populations in food assistance programs.

- **Objective 2.1:** Increase participation in the Food Stamp program to food insecure populations.
- **Objective 2.2:** Increase participation in National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, Summer Food Program, and Special Milk Program.
- **Objective 2.3:** Increase participation in Child Care Food Program, including After School Snack Program and Homeless Children Nutrition Program.
- **Objective 2.4:** Increase participation in WIC program.
- **Objective 2.5:** Increase Adult Care Food Program participation.
- **Objective 2.6:** Expand participation and availability in the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) sites.
- **Objective 2.7:** Increase the percentage of elderly population with access to nutritious food resources.
- **Objective 2.8:** Increase the amount of food delivered to the agencies that serve the needy.

Goal 3. Encourage healthy eating habits among food assistance program participants.

- **Objective 3.1:** Increase participation in Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program.
- **Objective 3.2:** Strengthen the nutrition education activities of food and nutrition programs.
- **Objective 3.3:** Increase job referrals from community-based organizations providing food assistance.
- **Objective 3.4:** Increase job referrals to food stamp households.

Goal 4. Close the gaps in Food Assistance and Nutrition Education programs.

- **Objective 4.1:** Identify the food insecure population.
- **Objective 4.2:** Reduce administrative barriers.
- **Objective 4.3:** Increase networking and partnerships among public and private food assistance programs.

Florida's Food Security Team and their respective agencies, both public and private, have taken the USDA challenge seriously to become unified to fight hunger in Florida. This 2003 Annual Update records the progress made during the past year as well as since the inception of the Food Security Team. In 2004, the partner agencies will continue their collaborative effort to address the strategies set forth in this document to end hunger in Florida by 2005.

2003 HIGHLIGHTS FACT SHEET

- ➔ **With the approval of the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) DCF has implemented a simplified reporting waiver for most food stamp households to be re-certified every six months. Participants report only household changes that result in their income exceeding 130% of the federal poverty level for that household size.**
- ➔ **Florida Impact has pre-screening software so that individuals can call in and get pre-screened over the phone. Florida Impact also has an on-line Food Resource Directory with over 1400 food assistance programs. As of October, Florida Impact's Food Stamp Helpline had received 7,731 calls for 2003. This is already an increase over the 2002 total of 6,553 calls. 93% of the people prescreened who applied for food stamps received them.**
- ➔ **The Elder Nutrition Pilot, a collaborative effort between Florida Impact and DCF, provided a simplified food stamp application process for seniors in Gadsden and Leon Counties. Florida Impact worked with DCF Secretary Jerry Regier on a public service announcement about the program. In 2003, Impact received 681 calls regarding the program. 85% of those who called then applied for food stamps.**
- ➔ **Average monthly participation for the WIC program from July 2002-June 2003 was 345,000. This is a 16.4% increase over the 2000 baseline of 296,298.**
- ➔ **14 counties issued Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) coupons to over 32,000 WIC clients in 2003. Farmers received payments of over \$324,000. Program participation increased by 17.5% over the 2000 baseline data.**
- ➔ **The Department of Education has exceeded its target goal for 2003 by increasing the number of sites for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) to 2970.**
- ➔ **The Department of Health increased the number of sites using the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) from 5,400 in 2002 to 5,700 in 2003.**
- ➔ **The Department of Education has increased the number of school districts sponsoring SFSP by using the "Seamless Pilot Program" in 27 school districts.**
- ➔ **The Department of Children and Families and the USDA have developed on-line pre-screening tools.**

STAMP OUT HUNGER TEAM MEMBERS

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STAMP OUT HUNGER TEAM MEMBERS (continued)

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STAMP OUT HUNGER
GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS

Grassroots Organization Location	Contact	E-Mail Address
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Farm Share, Inc. 300 N. Krome Ave., #12 Florida City, FL 33034-3414 (305) 246-3276 Fax (305) 246-3589	Patricia Robbins	patricia@farmshare.org
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STAMP OUT HUNGER
GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS

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SHARE 1405 East Second Avenue Tampa FL 33605 (813) 248-3379 Fax (813) 248-1355	Linda Nagle	lnagle@shareflorida.com
American's Second Harvest Food Bank of the Big Bend Area 4016 Northwest Passage Tallahassee, FL (850) 562-3033 ext. 13	Cindy Wagner (representing Florida Association of Food Banks)	cwagner@secondharvest.org
Florida Catholic Conference 313 South Calhoun Street Tallahassee, FL 32301 (850) 222-3803	Sheila Hopkins Mike McCarron	shopkins@flacathconf.org mccarron@flacathconf.org

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

History:

The persistence of hunger, both in Florida and in the United States, continues to trouble advocates as well as the general public. However, Florida state agencies are coordinating their efforts to address the problem to an unprecedented degree. In May 2000, the Region VI Administrator for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) challenged the southeastern states to meet the goal of ending hunger by 2005. He urged the states to form partnerships among all state agencies administering USDA-funded programs as well as community-based organizations providing the direct service to those in need. The USDA outlined three critical components to reaching this goal.

- **Improve access to Food and Nutrition Service assistance programs**
- **Build and strengthen links to other nutrition assistance partners**
- **Join efforts to promote economic security for children and low-income people**

Through the leadership of the Southeast Region's FNS, Florida leaders accepted the challenge. Florida agencies administering USDA-funded programs joined together with community-based organizations providing direct service to form the Food Security Team. The team committed to developing a five-year plan to end hunger in Florida by 2005.

The Partners:

The state agencies involved and the programs they administer:

Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)
National School Lunch Program
Summer Food Service Program
Farmers Market Nutrition
Charitable Institutions
Disaster Feeding Program
Food Recovery Program

Department of Education

School Breakfast Program
Summer Food Service Program
Special Milk Program
National School Lunch Program

Department of Children and Families

The Food Stamp Program

Department of Elder Affairs

Home and Community Services
Adult Care Food Program

Department of Health

Special supplemental nutrition program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)
After School Snack Program
Homeless Children Nutrition Program
Child Care Food Program

Food Security Statistics:

Limited resources and staff present obstacles for the state agency professionals that provide assistance to low-income individuals. Community-based organizations report increasing demands for food and attribute the increase to a variety of reasons, including the dramatic reduction in food stamp applications as well as welfare reform time limits.

USDA State Fact Sheets

The United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service (USDA-ERS) developed State Fact Sheets that contain frequently requested data for each state and for the United States. These include current data on population, per-capita income, earnings per job, poverty rates, employment, among other data pertaining to farm and agricultural-related issues. Two of Florida's State Fact Sheets, one published in May 2002 based on figures for 2001 and one published in November 2003 based on figures for 2002 can be found in Appendix E of this report.

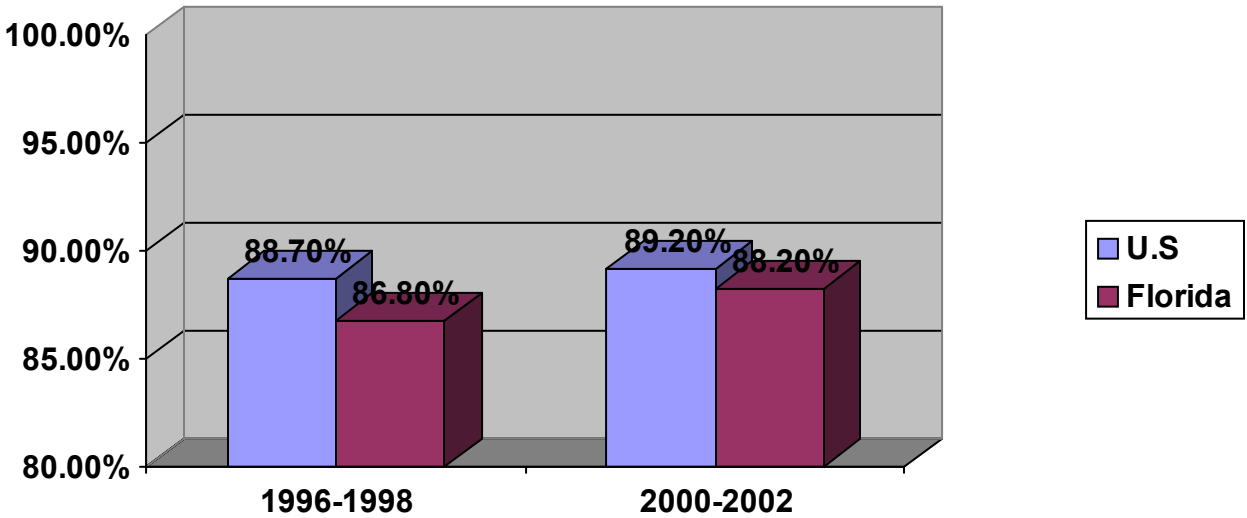
Household Food Security in the U.S, 2000 & 2002

According to the USDA study, *Household Food Security in the United States, 2000*, released in February 2002, food insecurity fell by 11 percent, and hunger fell by 16 percent between 1998 and 2000. Additionally, this study reported that 89.5 percent of American households were food secure for the entire year; the rest were food insecure at least some time during the year. The latest USDA study on food security, *Household Food Security in the United States, 2002*, provides some troubling statistics. According to the study, which was based on the December 2002 food security survey, food insecurity in the United States has increased in this past year from 10.7% in 2001 to 11.1% in 2002.

The chart below compares the average percentages of Food Insecurity in Florida to that in the United States. The average population percentage of food insecurity during the years 2000-2002 mark a decrease over the average level of food insecurity from 1996-1998 on both a state level and a national level. Florida's food insecurity has decreased by 1.4% while the national level decreased by .5%.¹

FOOD SECURITY IN FLORIDA AND THE UNITED STATES

¹ United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service: *Household Food Security in the U.S, 2002*: Table D-1—Changes in prevalence rates of food insecurity and hunger, by State, 1996-98 (average) to 2000-02 (average)



Conclusion:

The Department of Children & Families serves as lead agency for Florida's Food Security Team. In a letter dated December 21, 2001, the USDA-FNS Region VI administrator wrote to the Secretary of the Department of Children & Families:

“I challenge you to set, at a minimum, a goal of having 95 percent of your citizens food secure by 2005. We must continue to marshal the resources of our federal nutrition programs as the first line of defense against hunger. As we add the resources of non-profit and faith communities and implement an economic plan to lift individuals and families from poverty, we can end hunger as we know it, now.”

Hunger is a prevalent challenge that plagues Florida’s future and limits the success of its citizens. The unemployed, the homeless, the growing elderly population, even the working poor and their children struggle with the consequences of food insecurity and malnutrition. The following report outlines the important work that members of Florida’s Food Security Team and cooperating Grassroots organizations have done towards alleviating this daunting problem.

DEVELOPMENT OF FLORIDA'S FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Introduction:

Florida formed a Food Security Team to develop State program goals to combat hunger. This chapter provides an overview of the Food Security Team's efforts since its inception in May 2000. The Department of Children & Families (DCF) contracted with MGT of America, a national management-consulting firm based in Tallahassee, Florida, to assist with the facilitation and coordination of the strategic planning process.

Participating state agencies identified key contacts in community-based organizations serving target populations for inclusion in this strategic planning process. As a result, the following grassroots organizations participated in the planning retreat on October 5, 2000: Florida Impact, ECHO, Panhandle Area Migrant Education Center, Florida Association of Community Action, and Farm Share, Inc.

The first meeting of the Food Security Team was held on September 8, 2000. Representatives from all USDA-funded agencies: Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Department of Children & Families, Department of Education, Department of Elder Affairs, and the Department of Health, as well as representatives from the USDA-FNS Field Office were in attendance. The purpose of the initial meeting was to:

- **Provide a framework for developing Florida's plan**
- **Reach a consensus on guiding principles**
- **Reach a consensus on vision, mission, guiding principles, and target populations**
- **Establish a time frame for the plan development process**
- **Establish roles and responsibilities**

During that meeting, participants adopted the following *Guiding Principles for the Stamp Out Hunger Project*:

- **Inclusive, collaborative partnership specific to Florida's food security and hunger needs**
- **Client-focused plan for children, adults, and elderly at risk of food insecurity as well as providers involved in meeting food security and hunger needs**
- **Emphasis on outcomes and accountability**
- **Identification of specific action steps**

To facilitate discussion of key items, each team member reviewed the USDA-FNS Program Descriptions, found in Appendix A. Participants then submitted corrections and/or additional information about their programs to MGT.

Indicator Data:

The team also addressed the issue indicator data for measuring food security in Florida. Participants sent indicators used by their respective agencies to reflect food security. They also considered the federal survey on food security that is conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau in September/ October of each year. In Florida, several state agencies are currently conducting statewide surveys that may be helpful in developing indicator data. The Department of Health administers the Behavioral Risk Survey, and the Department of Elder Affairs has extrapolated data from several surveys, including the current Population Survey and the Consumer Expenditure Survey. Attaching a food security survey to these existing Florida surveys was an option the team explored but did not pursue within this planning effort.

Definitions:

The Food Security Team adopted the following definitions:

Food security: “Access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. Food security includes at a minimum: (1) the ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, and (2) an assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (e.g., without resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing, or other coping strategies).”

Food insecurity: “Limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways.”

Hunger: “The uneasy or painful sensation caused by a lack of food. The recurrent and involuntary lack of access to food. Hunger may produce malnutrition over time. Hunger is a potential, although not necessary, consequence of food insecurity.”

Vision, Mission and Target Populations:

Vision: All residents of Florida will have access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food for an active healthy life.

Mission: Increase food security and reduce hunger in partnership with cooperating organizations by providing residents of Florida access to food, a healthful diet, and nutrition education in a manner that inspires public confidence and supports American agriculture.

Target Populations: Infants, children, adolescents, elderly, homeless, low income, migrant groups, farm workers, homebound, disabled, pregnant women, refugees, medically indigent, medically at risk.

SWOT Analysis:

The Food Security Team met on October 5, 2000, to initiate the five-year strategic plan. The initial activity was a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis, and development of draft strategic goals and outcomes. The results of the SWOT analysis are provided in the sections that follow. In addition to the representatives from all USDA-funded agencies and representatives from the USDA-FNS Field Office, the previously named grassroots organizations participated in the Planning Retreat. (Appendix B provides descriptions of each of these nonprofit agencies).

In developing the SWOT analysis and five-year plan, the children, families, adults, and elderly of Florida who are at-risk of food insecurity and hunger have been the focus and the beneficiaries of this collaborative and groundbreaking effort. The next chapter presents the ongoing effort by each Food Security Team member and their respective agencies toward meeting the goals, objectives, and strategies set forth.

Strengths of Current Florida System to Meet Food Security and Hunger Needs

- Entitlement Program
- Energy statewide to get a handle on things
- Desire for partnerships
- Tremendous amount going on
- Efforts to inform public/outreach
- Recognition that we still have a problem
- Easy to sell/politically acceptable
- Efforts to expand services
- Consensus that outreach is needed
- Numbers of partners working toward same goal
- Almost unlimited resources (entitlements—e.g., food stamps; child nutrition programs)
- USDA commodities program getting food to grassroots organizations
- Florida is a food growing state
- Food stamp program has bilingual staff and applications in Spanish
- WIC materials available in Spanish, Haitian/Creole, and Vietnamese
- Size of population generates (or can generate) lots of federal dollars; high federal allocations
- Funding goes mostly to local/community levels—small administrative costs at headquarters
- IFAS facilitating cross-agency understanding and Florida Impact

Opportunities: factors that can increase Florida’s current abilities to meet needs

- Increased cooperation, communication, information sharing at all levels
- Partner with grassroots organizations
- Use of technology to help more people
- Pursue waivers to eliminate or reduce barriers to participation
- Increase services to those potentially eligible
- Outreach activities
- Education
- Long-term coordination effort
- Send one detailed plan from Florida to federal levels (Congress, DOE, USDA)
- Secure a memo of support from the Governor for Florida’s plan
- Reduce barriers to services

- Identify agencies involved with hunger and food security—establish database

Weaknesses of Florida’s Current System to Meet Food Security and Hunger Needs

- Regulatory limitations of federal programs
- Confidentiality—sharing of information
- Inefficiencies of programs
- Funding insecurity at local and state level
- Downsizing that limits ability to expand services and produces negative impact on turnover, recruitment, and retention
- Not knowing how all the pieces fit
- Gaps in service
- Competition for limited resources
- Turf issues
- Need to increase communication among agencies that are underutilized (state, nonprofits, local)
- Sharing information/cross referrals among agencies
- Direct service people do not have information they need
- Transportation/storage expenses
- Federal regulations and paperwork
- Different eligibility criteria for different programs
- Transportation to summer programs
- Hours of operation
- Location of offices, transportation, and hours of operation—especially in rural areas
- Migrating populations not counted, or not counted appropriately in census
- Federal red tape—too much paperwork for clients and sponsors; also scares immigrants

Threats: Internal and external factors that need to be considered

- Political will
- Staffing and resources
- Perceptions, assumptions, attitudes
- Reluctance of federal government to change regulations to increase number of services
- Increased paperwork to decrease risk of fraud and abuse
- Adequate staff to monitor
- Budget reductions
- Lack of public awareness of problem; apathy
- Immigrants' fears of INS interception
- Fear that public assistance will interfere with other benefits
- Timidity/no incentive/cynical/demoralized program administration re: making creative use of federal/state funding
- Food Stamp and other assistance programs policy dilemma—increased participation versus administrative infrastructure needed.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN

A LIVING DOCUMENT

With the foundation in place, the Food Security Team met five times over the course of 16 months to further develop and improve the Five-Year Strategic Plan. The meetings were held in Tallahassee on November 27, 2000; February 27, 2001; June 19, 2001; October 23, 2001; and February 19, 2002. A sixth meeting was recently held on October 16, 2003 so that members could share updates from the previous year before the publication of the 2003 annual report. Recruitment of new members to the Food Security Team has led to the inclusion of the Florida School Food Service Association, Florida Catholic Conference, and the Florida Department of Community Affairs.

During each meeting, Food Security Team members provided detailed updates for each Goal, Objective, and Strategy. Members reorganized and revised the Five-Year Strategic Plan as the Team continued to streamline the vision and intent of each Goal, Objective, and Strategy. The following describes the Five-Year Strategic Plan for Florida's Stamp Out Hunger initiative as of December 2003. See Appendix C for Florida's Performance Targets for each USDA-funded program area through fiscal year 2005. Click on the following links for more information and updates on each strategy of the Five Year Strategic Plan.

Goal 1: Increase awareness about food insecurity and hunger in Florida and available resources to reduce them

Objective 1.1: Increase public awareness about food insecurity and hunger in Florida.

Strategy 1: Develop and disseminate copies of report to the general public and to CBO's and agencies.

Strategy 2: Obtain cooperation of community support groups and faith-based organizations in educating the public about food insecurity.

Objective 1.2: Increase the use of information about food assistance programs by CBO's and clients.

Strategy 1: Create a central database concerning food services available to Floridians and publicize how to access it.

Strategy 2: Create referral system for clients to indicate food security availability (geographical/eligibility criteria).

Strategy 3: Publicize toll free referral numbers and Internet sites.

Strategy 4: Develop and distribute statewide a "How To" Guide explaining how to access routinely updated web sites and lists primary food assistance services and resources available, eligibility requirements, access information.

Strategy 5: Each partner agency will agree to provide Florida Impact with regular updates with program/agency liaisons at a district level for each of the primary food assistance programs available to Florida

Strategy 6: Establish and initiate procedures to inform CBO's of food assistance program-related policy changes as they occur, so that appropriate and timely information can be provided to clients and potential clients.

Strategy 7: Conduct regional food stamp outreach trainings in three or four targeted areas.

Strategy 8: Distribute notices with toll-free hotline number.

Goal 2: Increase participation of eligible populations in food assistance programs

Objective 2.1: Increase participation in the food stamp program to food insecure population.

Strategy 1: Determine the number of food insecure eligible households not participating in the food stamp program.

Strategy 2: Increase outreach activities

Strategy 3: Co-locate food stamp offices in one-stop centers, to the extent possible, to facilitate usage.

Strategy 4: Identify food stamp quality control regulations that cause agencies to require short certification periods and differing eligibility requirements.

Strategy 5: Develop a web based food stamp eligibility system.

Strategy 6: Provide for mail in applications for food stamp services.

Strategy 7: Identify agencies to meet the special needs (transportation assistance) of those eligible for services.

Strategy 8: Improve program delivery and program information to existing clients.

Strategy 9: Develop and implement a media strategy to increase food stamp participation for three or four targeted regions, including meetings with editorial boards of daily/weekly newspapers.

Strategy 10: Conduct four public awareness campaigns promoting the food stamp program in locations where food stamp participation demographics and count data on poverty levels indicate a need for outreach.

Objective 2.2: Increase participation for National School Lunch and Breakfast, SFSP and Special Milk Program

Strategy 1: Increase the number of low-income schools providing free school meals under provisions 2 and 3.

Strategy 2: Increase outreach activities and technical assistance for SFSP

Strategy 3: Identify students eligible for free/reduced meals through programs data links.

Strategy 4: Expand the number of sites participating in SFSP.

Objective 2.3: Increase participation in Child Care Food Programs, including the After School Snack Program and Homeless Child Nutrition Program.

Strategy 1: Increase the number of participating sites through outreach activities.

Strategy 2: Improve program delivery through simplification of program procedures, increased training and guidance.

Strategy 3: Identify eligible institutions for Child Care Food Program through program data links.

Objective 2.4: Increase participation in the WIC program

Strategy 1: Increase outreach activities and enhance delivery to existing clients.

Strategy 2: Identify potentially eligible clients through program data links.

Strategy 3: Increase the percentage of prenatal women who enter the program in their first trimester of pregnancy.

Objective 2.5: Increase Adult Care Food Program Participants

Strategy 1: Increase outreach activities

Strategy 2: Increase program administration and program information to existing programs.

Objective 2.6: Increase participation and availability of Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)

Strategy 1: Increase outreach to participating farmers in the WIC and Elder FMNP

Strategy 2: Increase participation of eligible WIC clients in FMNP.

Strategy 3: Increase participation in the Elder FMNP by decreasing individual voucher amounts.

Objective 2.7: Increase the percentage of the elderly population with access to nutritious food resources

Strategy 1: Pilot on-site DCF food stamp certification at select senior congregate meal sites.

Strategy 2: Encourage food stamp offices/programs to be more elder friendly/conducive to elderly needs.

Strategy 3: Develop alternative food stamp eligibility processes for community based organizations serving elderly with transportation problems.

Strategy 4: Expand education about the food stamp program and other food resources to senior centers and other community organizations serving the elderly.

Objective 2.8: Increase the amount of food delivered to agencies that serve the needy

Strategy 1: Establish agreements with additional businesses to donate surplus food.

Strategy 2: Increase methods to recover and transport food

Strategy 3: Increase utilization and management of USDA commodities to reduce waste and increase usage.

Goal 3: Encourage healthy eating habits among food assistance program participants

Objective 3.1: Increase participation in the food stamp nutrition education program

Strategy 1: Amend the food stamp nutrition education state plan to include more counties

Strategy 2: Increase information regarding nutrition education to food stamp service centers

Objective 3.2: Strengthen the nutrition education activities of food and nutrition programs.

Strategy 1: Utilize county extension programs to provide food safety/preparation for participants of USDA-FNS.

Strategy 2: Increase public education about nutrition and food safety through electronic and written media.

Strategy 3: Strengthen DOE sunshine state standards on nutrition and food safety.

Strategy 4: Enhance the nutrition education and breastfeeding support component of the WIC program

Strategy 5: promote consistent messages in food and nutrition programs

Objective 3.3: Increase job referrals from community-based organizations providing food assistance services.

Strategy 1: Provide job referral information to organizations providing food assistance services.

Objective 3.4: Increase job referrals to food stamp households

Strategy 1: Seek waivers and enact other methods to assist food stamp clients to search and obtain jobs through the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program (FSET)

Goal 4: Close the gaps in the food assistance and nutrition education programs

Objective 4.1: Identify the food insecure population

Strategy 1: Develop questions for a statewide survey to determine the food insecure population in Florida

Objective 4.2: Reduce administrative barriers

Strategy 1: Seek to establish uniform income eligibility criteria that enables participants of any USDA funded program to be automatically eligible for any other USDA funded program.

Strategy 2: Reduce the paperwork to qualify for free/reduced lunch by encouraging schools to use provisions 2 and 3.

Strategy 3: Seek to establish categorical eligibility for special underserved populations.

Strategy 4: Seek waivers/state options and regulations that discourage participation.

Strategy 5: Seek to expand the minimum food stamp allotments

Strategy 6: Seek to automatically certify SSI recipients as eligible for food stamps.

Strategy 7: Seek to extend food stamp eligibility waivers for the working poor.

Objective 4.3: Increase networking and partnerships among public and private food assistance programs

Strategy 1: Maintain the statewide Food Security Team.

Goal 1: Increase awareness about food insecurity and hunger in Florida and available resources to reduce them
Objective 1.1: Increase public awareness about food insecurity and hunger in Florida

1.1
Strategy 1: Develop and disseminate copies of report to the general public and to Community Based Organizations and agencies.

Lead Agency: MGT of America

Performance Indicators:

- At least 125 copies of the report will be disseminated to the general public and community-based organizations and agencies by May 30, 2002.

2002 Update:

- Dissemination of 2002 report was completed by April 30, 2002.
- MGT of America, Inc., disseminated 125 copies of the Annual Report to state agencies, community-based organizations, and other key stakeholders. The report is also available to the general public through print and electronic media as well as MyFlorida.com and MGTofAmerica.com Web site access.
- The plan for dissemination of print copies includes the following:
 - ✓ 7 copies to the Governor and Cabinet (Cabinet member agencies: Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Department of Banking & Finance, Department of Education, Department of Insurance, Department of Legal Affairs, and Department of State)
 - ✓ 4 copies to agency heads not represented on the Cabinet: Department of Children & Families, Department of Health, Department of Elder Affairs, Department of Community Affairs
 - ✓ 8 copies to agency Food Security Team Members
 - ✓ 4 copies, two each to USDA Regional Office and District Office
 - ✓ 30 copies to Florida Impact
 - ✓ 30 copies to Florida's Association of Food Banks
 - ✓ 26 copies, two each to additional Grassroots Members, including: Florida Association for Community Action, Food Research Action Center (FRAC), SHARE, Homeless Coalition of Florida, Florida School Food Service Association, Florida Catholic Conference, Florida Commission on Community Service, Emergency Care Help Organization (ECHO), St. Petersburg Free Clinic, Human Services Coalition of Dade County, Farm Share, Inc., Panhandle Area Education Center-Migrant Education and Redlands Christian Migrant Association.

2003 Update:

- The 2003-2004 Congressional Hunger Fellows, hosted by Florida Impact, are producing this year's annual report.
- The report will be available electronically on www.flimpact.org

1.1
Strategy 2: Obtain cooperation of local community support groups and faith-based organizations in educating the public about food insecurity, hunger, and services available.

Lead Agency: Florida Impact

Partner Agencies: Florida Association for Community Action, The Food Security Team and MGT of America

2002 Update:

- At least 100 organizations participated in Florida Impact’s food stamp outreach trainings in 2001 – 02
- Agencies utilized existing Florida Impact database for outreach trainings and information dissemination.
- Impact did pilot outreach with United Church of Christ, Synagogues, Methodists, Presbyterians, and other Florida Impact Board member churches to utilize Impact handbooks
- Impact spoke at programs and developed a phone tree to accept messages about federal or state legislation for policy in at least five sites.
- Impact published its annual Prepare booklet for citizen advocacy on state and federal anti-hunger issues. This resource is distributed to members of the Florida Impact network across the state—primarily religious leaders, congregations, and individuals of conscience. The 2002 edition focuses on the Children’s Summer Nutrition Act (a summer food mandate), federal Food Stamp Reauthorization, and restoration of food stamps for immigrants.
- Impact published and distributed “When Did We See You Hungry?” a four-part, religious study guide on childhood hunger in Florida. This went out to all Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 16 United Church of Christ congregations, and 11 other Protestant denominations. Many of those using the study guides have formulated phone trees for providing citizen input on anti-hunger priorities during the 2002 legislative session.
- Impact’s Executive Director was invited to speak to the assembly of pastors and lay leaders of the United Methodist Church—Alabama/West Florida Conference in Crestview on February 21st. Two hundred religious leaders attended, representing all of the United Methodist churches of the Florida Panhandle. They requested enough copies of the above resources to provide to all participants. This program is in line with the national UMC Bishops’ Initiative on Children and Poverty.

2003 Update:

- Impact staff delivered presentations across the state to a cumulative total of nearly 500 leaders from a variety of religious and community organizations, including the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, TEAM Florida Partnership, and the Human Services Coalition of Dade County.
- In collaboration with the Florida School Food Service Association, Impact published “Feeding Florida: Responses to Hunger in the Sunshine State.” This is a statewide hunger report featuring each county’s projected household food insecurity and participation rates in federal food and child nutrition programs
- The report was sent to all of Florida’s state and congressional delegates and hand delivered to those on key congressional committees in Washington by Congressional Hunger Fellows, Jenna Churchman and Robert Campbell (who researched and wrote the publication). Hunger reports were also sent out to approximately 200 religious and community leaders across the state concerned about under-nutrition.

Goal 1: Increase awareness about food insecurity and hunger in Florida and available resources to reduce them
Objective 1.2: Increase the use of information about food assistance programs by CBO’s and clients.

1.2

Strategy 1: Create a central database concerning food services available to Floridians and publicize how to access them.

Lead Agency: Florida Impact

Performance Indicators:

- The number of hits on the Internet site and calls to the toll-free number will increase by 10 percent from the initiation in November 22, 2001–March 31, 2002. The number of hits from April 1-30, 2002 was 144.

2002 Update:

- Database established
- If provided by Florida Impact, the annual report prepared by MGT will include the number of clients accessing the referral system and will include applicable demographics as provided by Florida Impact.
- FACA has database of Community Action Agencies with specific information provided to callers. Posters and brochures disseminated in the past, but working on more efforts in that regard. Hunger Hotline collects demographic information. That number will be provided.
- Florida Impact expanded its statewide searchable database of local nonprofit, direct-service providers. Approximately 1,500 providers are now listed in this Web-based database with pertinent information including hours of operation and client eligibility requirements. This resource is called the Florida Food Resource Directory and is now available on the Web at www.flimpact.org.
- Department of Elder Affairs wants to provide information to Florida Impact for the database. Florida Impact will follow up on the offer.
- The Department of Community Affairs is not yet a member of the Food Security Team, and they receive funding from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services for food and nutrition programs. They have been funding the FACA-operated database.

2003 Update:

- Florida Food Resource Directory at www.flimpact.org. All 1400+ food providers on this directory are told about it when updated each year.

1.2

Strategy 2: Create referral system for clients to indicate food security availability (geographical/eligibility criteria)

Lead Agency: Florida Impact

2002 Update:

- Use of database to establish a referral system for food insecure clients.
- 300 Second Harvest direct service providers on-line, www.secondharvest.org
- Florida Impact staff are presently collecting and sifting through the lists of food bank recipient organizations to determine which entries offer a standing facility for food distribution; e.g., a soup kitchen or food pantry with consistent operating hours. Those organizations not already in the database will be incorporated into the Florida Food Resource Directory.

2003 Update:

- New questions were incorporated into the Florida Food Stamp Helpline (maintained by Impact) as of July 1, 2003.

1.2

Strategy 3: Publicize toll free referral numbers and Internet sites.

Lead Agency: Florida Impact and each partner agency

2002 Update:

- Toll-free number established
- Internet site established
- Toll-free numbers and Internet sites published
- Brochures, flyers, community outreach

- In 2001, Florida Impact Helpline staff prescreened 6,181 calls and distributed 38,610 flyers advertising the toll-free number. The flyers are in Spanish and English, as well as one in Creole. Working with school food service directors, we arranged for the insertion of the Helpline number in send-home materials of children eligible for free and reduced-price school meals in several targeted school districts. Thus far, about a dozen school districts have participated, including Brevard, Hendry, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Levy, Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Seminole, and Sumter. Collier County even printed the toll-free number onto their Family Application for Free and Reduced Price Meals. We will arrange for one school district a month to do likewise in 2002.
- Food stamp outreach trainings were held in Brevard County, Ft. Myers, and Daytona Beach. Public and private nonprofit organizations were represented at each; e.g., Salvation Army, Childcare Associations, Job Links, County Health Departments, Legal Aid, Boys and Girls Clubs, WIC, youth services, Catholic Charities, and homeless service groups. An outreach training was held in Wildwood on February 27th. At the end of that training, nearly 100 community leaders from four areas of the state will have attended one of the trainings hosted by Impact and DCF.
- Additionally, checklists of all emergency food services in each of 14 local communities have been generated for counties in the four outreach training districts. These were distributed during each training for duplication and used as a handout for low-income clients.
- Each agency will provide MGT with 30 copies for distribution to partners.

2003 Update:

- Impact continues to publicize information on the Food Stamp Helpline and continues its publicity efforts in Florida schools.

1.2

Strategy 4: Develop and distribute statewide a “How To” Guide on how to access routinely updated web resources. Web pages to be included: Florida Impact, Department of Children & Families, Food Research Action Center, Florida Association of Food Banks, Department of Health, Department of Education, Department of Elder Affairs, and Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services.

Lead Agency: MGT of America

Partner Agency: Department of Elder Affairs

2002 Update:

- Example of a guide created in South Carolina was provided to MGT during February 19, 2002, meeting
- Brochure with each potential program with toll-free numbers as well as Web sites designed with printer friendly and user friendly language.
- Recommend that this be on Internet, not as printed manual.
- MGT recommended that training and materials should be available for Community Based Organizations (CBO) as well as for potential clients.
- All agencies should have links to other agencies with food resource information.
- Needs to be available in as many forms as possible. Some clients don’t have access to the Web so printed materials would need to be accessible. USDA routinely replaces computers that may be available for donating to CBOs – USDA Tallahassee Field office staff will check into this. Toll-free numbers need to be marketed and listed under “Food Resources.” General layout of document should be saved in PDF format and provided electronically statewide.
- Recommend all programs provide contacts to Florida Impact for database and update yearly at time of annual report. Florida Impact Statewide Database: See [Objective 1.2, Strategy #2](#) above.
- Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Affairs has a database of resources.
- USDA Web site www.fns.usda.gov
- FRAC – www.frac.org

2003 Update:

- Penny Walker Bos at MGT of America has expressed interest in continuing to help out with this.
- Fred Seamon has already approved Penny's time for this project.

1.2

Strategy 5: Each partner agency will agree to provide Florida Impact with regular updates and program/agency liaisons at a district level for each of the primary food assistance programs available to Florida.

Lead Agency: Florida Impact

Partner Agency: All Partner Agencies

Status Indicators:

- Agency liaisons designated
- Liaison contact information such as services, hours, and location, included in Florida Impact Database and Web site

2002 Update:

- Florida Impact volunteered, during the February 19, 2002, meeting, to expand the food stamp listserv to include all food service programs within the current operating budget, if agencies agreed to a procedure by which Florida Impact could collect this information regularly. Current listserv has 200+ organizations and will soon include all listed in Florida Food Resource Directory developed by Florida Impact.
- Agency liaison contact information will include services provided, hours of operation, and location.
- DOACS – Five field representatives work with food banks and soup kitchens and attend DBPR training with restaurant managers and owners.
- DOH-WIC – No district staff; however, there are 45 local WIC agencies that serve all 67 counties in Florida. Complete mail list of contact information available on request.
- DOH-CNP – no district staff but area consultants.
- DOEA – 11 planning and service areas; agency has a statewide Elder Help Line available for constituents to call directly (1-800-963-5337) to address any elder issue, including hunger.
- DCF – Food Stamp program administrators are point of contact.
- DOE – has one toll-free number for all school food service programs 1-800-504-6609; and one for summer food service programs: 1-800-622-5985 (May 15–September 1).
- DCF – work with district administrators to delegate responsibilities.

2003 Update:

- This has not been initiated; staffing and funding resources have not yet been identified.

1.2

Strategy 6: Establish and initiate procedures to inform CBO's of food assistance program-related policy changes as they occur, so that appropriate and timely information can be provided to clients and potential clients.

Lead Agency: Florida Impact

Partner Agencies: All partner agencies

2002 Update:

- Food Security Team members need to identify the appropriate policy person to update Florida Impact as policy's change. An agreed upon procedure will need to be developed and implemented.

- DOH-WIC – Fellow Floridian Information Letter and Survey is sent to community-based organizations each year to provide them with WIC policy changes and an opportunity to provide input, including the 1-800 number if they need further information. Local WIC agencies do ongoing outreach to community-based organizations.
- DCF – incorporates policy changes on-line for staff and informs Florida Impact for dissemination to CBOs.
- Florida Impact generates monthly (or more often as necessary) an e-mail to a listserv of approximately 220 organizations statewide. Topics since last November include: the Telephone Lifeline and Link-up Programs; reminder of food stamp regulation changes effective July 1, 2001 (i.e., (a) increased vehicle allowance, (b) homeless shelter deduction, and (c) waiver of time limits for able-bodied workers without dependents); the food stamp Helpline; availability of translation services at public assistance offices; update on Farm Bills in Congress; release of new Florida hunger numbers; and outreach trainings.
- ASHBB - Web-based updates would be most ideal for CBOs around the state.
- Each agency to post changes on www.MyFlorida.com

2003 Update:

- This is provided routinely on the Impact website: www.flimpact.org

1.2

Strategy 7: Conduct regional food stamp outreach trainings in three or four targeted areas.

Lead Agency: Florida Impact

Partner Agency: Department of Children and Families

Status Indicators:

- Training conducted in at least 3 regions

2002 Update:

- The first outreach training was held at the Florida Solar Energy Center in Cocoa on June 12. Thirty-four local organizations were represented, including Association for Retarded Citizens, Salvation Army, Childcare Association of Brevard County, Brevard Job Link, Brevard County Health Department, Legal Aid Society of Orange County, Coalition for the Hungry and Homeless of Brevard County, North Brevard Charities, Center for Independent Living, Boys and Girls Clubs, Brevard County Housing Authority, Brevard County WIC Project, Brevard County Legal Aid, Help Now of Osceola, Crosswinds Youth Services, and Harbor House.
- The DCF trainer was a Senior Human Services Program Specialist from the District 7 (Orlando) office. She gave an overview of the food stamp program and then answered questions from the audience about food stamps and other public assistance programs. The Florida Impact Food Stamp Coordinator led the group in a discussion of methods to break down barriers to receiving food stamps and ways in which prospective food stamp clients can be encouraged to apply for food stamps.
- The second food stamp outreach training was held in Ft. Myers (DCF District 8 – Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Lee counties) on September 11, 2001, at the regional service center of the Department of Children & Families. Seventeen people attended the training, representing the following organizations: Redlands Christian Migrant Association, Senior Friendship Centers, Catholic Charities, Hispanic Services of Catholic Charities, St. Matthew’s House, Lee County Department of Human Services, Florida Rural Legal Services, Charlotte County Human Services, Shelter for Abused Women, and Age Link of Lee County.

- The third food stamp outreach training was held in Daytona Beach (DCF District 12 – Flagler and Volusia counties) on October 23rd at the district administrative office of the Department of Children & Families. DCF trainers were the Program Director of the Division of Economic Self-Sufficiency, and a Senior Human Services Program Specialist. Fourteen people attended the training, representing the following organizations: Domestic Abuse Council, the ACT Corporation (a private, nonprofit mental health organization), Salvation Army, Child Care Resource Network, Central Florida Legal Services, Community Outreach Services, Safety Shelter of St. Johns County, Serenity House of Volusia, Catholic Charities, and Betty Griffin House.
- The fourth and final food stamp outreach training was held in Wildwood at the DCF District 13 office on February 27, 2002. Thirty-two people represented the following organizations: Marion County Health Dept./Healthy Start, Christian Action Resource Exchange (CARE), Citrus County Support Services, Citrus County Abuse Shelter Association, Salvare, Inc. (d/b/a Dawn Center) (abuse shelter), Agency for Workforce Innovation (from Ocala, Lecanto, and Inverness offices), Department of Health/WIC, Soul Harvest Ministries (Ocala organization that works with the homeless and AIDS victims, and runs day care center), Lake County Health Department, Creative Services, Inc., Salvation Army, Haven of Lake and Sumter Counties (abuse shelter), We Care Nursing Center (nonprofit nursing home for the elderly), Lake County Community Action Agency, BETA House of Orlando (counseling, home for unwed mothers)

2003 Update:

- No DCF funding available for this.

1.2

Strategy 8: Distribute notices with toll-free hotline number

Lead Agency: Florida Impact

Partner Agencies: DCF

Status Indicators:

- Notices distributed according to plan

2002 Update:

- Notices with Food Stamp Toll-Free Hotline number distributed
 - ✓ To all local emergency-food distribution centers within the Florida Association of Food Banks network
 - ✓ To the 380 SHARE sites
 - ✓ In send-home materials of some of Florida's school districts, targeting families eligible for free and reduced-cost school meals.
- Posters and cards disseminated during the one-year project totaled 55,380. Another 15,000 copies of the handout cards have been ordered, and there are approximately 9,100 posters and 3,400 cards still available from earlier printings.
- Helpline calls and advertising summaries -

Initially Florida Impact advertised the 800 number in these counties: Orange, Brevard, Osceola, Hernando, Sumter, Highlands, Charlotte, Collier, Hillsborough, Palm Beach, and Seminole. Immediately following this effort, we received approximately 2,500 calls in one month—up from our then monthly average of 400 calls. Realizing this to be a successful and well-targeted strategy, Florida Impact decided to secure the cooperation of one or two school districts each month in 2002 to advertise the 800 number. Two rural counties will be coupled during one month while urban counties will be scheduled for their own month to ensure staff can meet the resulting influx of calls.

2003 Update:

- Over 25,000 Food Stamp Helpline flyers in nine targeted formats have been distributed since this time last year. Additionally school food service directors have publicized the number 21 times in their school meal calendars and applications for free and reduced-price meals over the last year.
- See chart below for number of calls in 2002 and up to October of this year.

Demographic Summaries:

The total number of callers prescreened from the first announcement of the Food Stamp Hotline in October 2000 was 2,606; the total calls received into the Helpline during the same period is approximately 9,000. That means that, at best, one out of three callers goes through the prescreening. The rest call for other information, because of misinformation, to complain about their food stamp case, or just to get the address and phone number of the nearest food stamp office. Though data collection improved with time, the 2,606 number is a good sampling to gauge who accessed the Helpline and what the best sources of referral were.

The vast majority of those prescreened were women (80%); non-Hispanic whites approached nearly half (41%) of those prescreened. Black non-Hispanics were the next highest (27%), followed by Hispanics (24%). Two out of every three households prescreened contained one to three persons. Over half of those prescreened were from callers in one of five communities: Orange (27%); Broward (10%); Miami-Dade (7%); Leon (6%); and Hillsborough (4%). The most impressive source of referral reflected the effective strategies through the public school districts; nearly one out of every four calls was referred by a school. The only other source even approaching this was the news media, combining newspaper and television sources (13%).

# Calls to 800 number	2001	2002	2003
January	307	547	735
February	294	430	620
March	320	517	599
April	339	410	650
May	398	440	637
June	401	506	812
July	401	593	754
August	397	983	1,270
September	2,542	736	893
October	782	486	761
November	359	527	not yet calculated
December	343	377	not yet calculated
Total	7,019	6,552	7,731

Goal 2: Expand participation of eligible populations in food assistance programs
Objective 2.1: Increase participation in the Food Stamp program to food insecure populations.

2.1

Strategy 1: Take actions to determine the number of food insecure eligible households not participating in the food stamp program.

Lead Agency: DCF Food Stamp

Partner Agencies: USDA and MGT of America, Inc.

Performance Indicators:

- By December 2002, the number of food insecure eligible households participating in the Food Stamp program will increase by 2 percent over the 2000 baseline of 10.5 percent.

2002 Update:

- DCF has not directly measured the number of food insecure households and relies on data provided by USDA. However, USDA statistics for baseline are not current.
- South Carolina may be conducting independent research on food insecurity, which could be a model for Florida. USDA Regional staff will follow up.
- MGT of America has pursued the possibility of adding questions related to food insecurity onto other statewide surveys. This would be an inexpensive method for providing the number of food insecure eligible households not participating in the food stamp program.
- 55 percent eligible are participating in the Food Stamp (FS) program
- America's Second Harvest study addressing food insecurity and involvement in the FS program on a national level was released in November 2001.
- The DCF state office has not measured the number of food insecure households. DCF continues to use data provided by USDA.

2003 Update:

- See 2003 report entitled Feeding Florida: Responses to Hunger in the Sunshine State. Florida Impact in partnership with the Florida School Food Service Foundation and DCF prepared this report. The report shows the percent of food insecurity by county.

2.1

Strategy 2: Increase outreach activities (specific tasks will be outlined at each meeting by each Partner Agency).

Lead Agency: DCF Food Stamp

Partner Agencies: Florida Impact and their partner organizations, Human Services Coalition of Dade County, and FRAC

2002 Update:

- The outreach activities have expanded through DCF contracting services with Florida Impact. The current outreach plan expired on March 31, 2002. Plans are to continue outreach efforts in 2002–2003 with appropriate funding.
- Distributed 30,000 flyers in the first half of 2001. Regional training, brochures, flyers, and the food stamp hotline were other outreach activities.
- Florida Impact's listserv with 250 grassroots organizations is updated routinely; [See Objective 1.2, Strategy #8.](#)
- Florida Impact conducted 12 regional trainings in Brevard, Lee, and Volusia Counties. Districts 8, 12, and 13 had one-day training for nonprofit CBOs about regulations and outreach ideas. [See Objective 1.2, Strategy #4.](#)
- Working with Florida School Food Service Association to reach all counties targeted and had great response. [See Objective 1.2, Strategy #4.](#)
- Florida Association of Food Banks heads up Kids Café, which provides after school meals and some tutoring.
- DOEA – Sends Food Stamps posters to all ACFP participation sites and to Area Agencies on Aging to disseminate to local service providers.
- Florida Impact–Distributed 300 flyers to Redlands Christian Migrant Ministries.

- After Stamp Out Hunger Press Conference in October 2000, the number of food stamp prescreenings through Florida Impact's food stamp Helpline jumped up 5,000 calls.
- One-Stop Development sites would like more flyers, but there is no budget. Work needs to be done with AWI for funding. One-Stops in Ocala and Broward have ordered and paid for sets of the food stamp outreach flyer for use with clients. This was in response to an ad sent to all AWI sites offering a special package price for reprints.
- Media coverage of regional food stamp outreach training.
- Cable TV and Web ads have not been successful.
- Big Bend Workforce Development site added "a button" to job support computers for clients to access supports that are available.
- DCF will continue to conduct outreach activities as budget allows. Current contract with Florida Impact expires March 31, 2002. Will need to submit new outreach plan to USDA for approval.
- DOH-CNP – Placed an advertisement for the Child Care Food Program in the 2001–2002 Child Care Directory, which is distributed to eight large areas within Florida.
- DOE – Summer Food Program PSA's Food Service Program targeting summer food service for needy children.
- DOE – Toll-free number for Summer Food Program to advise caller of the closest feeding program by physical address.
- DOE– Summer Food Program developed video for parents informing them about the availability of meals at the various locations. This video will be shown at the food stamp offices.
- DOE – Quarterly newsletter to all food service personnel, family and consumer science teachers, health and physical education coordinators, and cooperative extension faculty.
- DOEA – Toll-free Elder Help Line, (1-800-963-5337), provides Food Stamp Prescreening, 1-800 number information, and local anti-hunger organizations information.
- Florida Impact religious supplement to educate churches and synagogues: [See Objective 1.2, Strategy 2](#)
- DOACS – Web site has categorical qualifying criteria for commodities on-line and how to contact local resources. (<http://www.fl-ag.com/food/index.htm>)
- America Second Harvest – Web site, fightinghunger.org has food stamp changes and other relevant information available on-line.
- Ad Council – working with America's Second Harvest National Office to create billboard, print, radio, and television commercials.

2003 Update:

- A new contract was signed with Florida Impact, to provide continued Food Stamp Outreach activities, including operation of the food stamp toll-free help-line, for the Federal Fiscal year of 7/1/03 to 9/30/04.
- Florida Impact's work with DCF, Human Services Coalition of Dade County, and FRAC:
 - ✓ In 2001 Florida Impact Education Fund began piloting outreach strategies to address under-participation of Florida's eligible seniors, immigrants, and working poor in the Food Stamp Program (FSP).
 - ✓ Primary strategy: provide full-time, in-person food stamp outreach staff to 4 CBO's serving targeted populations. The project's Outreach Assistants used automated software developed by the Education Fund, to prescreen clients for food stamp eligibility and their projected monthly benefit level. (97% accuracy)
 - ✓ July 2001-Dec 2002 served over 8,000 individuals in various areas of the state. 34% followed through with an application for the FSP
- There was also the [Elder Nutrition Pilot: Dec. 2001-2003](#)
 - ✓ Targeting Gadsden and Leon, this project studies the effects of a simplified application and benefit determination process, large-print food stamp applications, no paper documentation other than immigration status, and over-the-phone application process.

- ✓ Jerry Regier, the DCF Secretary, taped a 30-second PSA on the pilot program. It aired March 24, 2003 - May 11, 2003, generated 200 inquiries, to which we sent the simplified application and envelopes addressed to their local DCF offices. Second airing July 28th- August 28th, we had 276 calls during this period.
- ✓ Florida Impact followed-up on past callers to see if they had received the application and/or if they had any questions. 100 percent received the application, 85 percent completed it. Reasons given as to why not: they already received food stamps, didn't feel they would be entitled to benefits, lost the application or didn't have time.

2.1

Strategy 3: Co-locate food stamp program offices in One-Stop Centers, to the extent possible, to facilitate program usage.

Lead Agency: DCF Food Stamp

Partner Agencies: Agency for Workforce Innovation

2002 Update:

- Number of co-located offices are identified.

2003 Update:

- Continues to occur at the county level based on District needs. Districts were contacted and reported the number of one-stop centers in their area by county. Districts were expected to report any increase in the number of centers in their area. There has been no report of an increase in the number of One Stop Centers throughout the state however, the number of One Stop Centers in Dade County was reduced by nine.

2.1

Strategy 4: Identify food stamp quality control regulations that cause agencies to require short certification periods and differing eligibility requirements.

Lead Agency: DCF Food Stamp

Partner Agencies: FRAC and Office of the Inspector General (Quality Control)

2002 Update:

- Food Stamp Regulations and eligibility requirements that create barriers have been identified and waivers are applied for when possible and feasible.
- Ongoing communication with Florida Impact to disseminate changes through the Food Stamp listserv.
- New Federal regulations increase the state's criteria eligibility, including vehicle exclusion policy, application process, and non-citizen, has been accomplished.
- Modified existing income status reporting requirements for Food Stamp households with fluctuating earned income. This policy change will allow certification periods up to 6 months to be assigned to households with earned income. These households are required to report a change in the:
 - ✓ Source of earned income
 - ✓ Hourly rate or salary rate
 - ✓ Employment status (i.e., part-time/full-time status)
 - ✓ Amount of gross unearned income of more than \$25
 - ✓ Members of the assistance group
 - ✓ Place of residence and related changes in shelter costs
 - ✓ Ownership of licensed vehicle

- ✓ Amount of assets that exceed \$2,000, or for assistance groups including members age 60 or over, \$3,000
- ✓ Legal obligation to pay child support
- President Bush signed the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 on May 13, 2002. The Sections in [Appendix F](#) apply directly to the quality control issues referred to in this strategy.

2003 Update:

- DCF is seeking a food stamp option to exclude certain types of income from the food stamp budget that are excluded in the Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) or Medicaid program.
- DCF received approval from the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to implement a simplified reporting waiver for most food stamp households who meet requirements to be re-certified every 6 months. Participants report only household changes that result in their income exceeding 130% of the Federal Poverty Level for the household size.
- DCF has a pending waiver request with FNS to allow the agency to disregard reported changes in deductions during the certification period (excluding new residence or earned income.)
- New Federal regulations increased the state's eligibility criteria to include the vehicle exclusion policy, the application process, and non-citizenship status.
- Ongoing communication with Florida Impact to disseminate the changes in policy to recipients and the public.

2.1

Strategy 5: Develop a Web-based Food Stamp eligibility system

Lead Agency: DCF Food Stamp

Partner Agencies: Florida Impact and Human Services Coalitions (prescreening tools)

2002 Update:

- Ongoing – moving toward everything being Web-based.
- Florida Impact has a prescreening tool for food stamps that might also assist local CBOs with eligibility. Florida Impact is further testing the food stamp prescreening tool it developed with a federal USDA grant. As one of 14 organizations nationwide to receive this federal grant, Impact has placed four laptop computers loaded with the food stamp prescreening software in four community-based organizations (CBO) serving low-income clients. These CBOs are Daystar Life Center (St. Pete); Catholic Charities (Jacksonville); Emergency Care Help Organization (Tallahassee); and Daytona Beach Housing Authority. A fifth laptop has been placed with the Florida Christian Migrant Association to circulate among their storefronts, largely in the Palm Beach and Indian River counties. This 18-month pilot will test the prescreening tool's usefulness and capacity with CBOs with an aim towards making it available to other in-state organizations and adaptable in other states as well.
- Interactive eligibility prescreening on-line.
- Planning to have PA demonstration of Web-based program during quarterly meeting.

2003 Update:

- The United States Department of Agriculture has a web-based pre-screening tool. The website address is www.fns.usda.gov/fsp.
- Impact continues to address this with DCF via USDA technology grants that have been awarded twice in the last year or so; the state has yet to agree to partner.
- Florida Impact has a pre-screening tool for food stamps eligibility that has had over a 90% accuracy rate. Applicants simply call their office and answer a series of questions.

- Future plans are to make provisions for applicants to apply at local kiosks set up for receipt of applications.
- There currently exists a DCF website to be used as a pre-screening tool for food stamp eligibility as well as a pre-screening tool for other services provided by DCF. It is entitled the Public Assistance Screening Survey. The website address is: www5.myflorida.com/cf_web/myflorida2/healthhuman/ess

2.1

Strategy 6: Provide for mail-in applications for Food Stamp services.

Lead Agency: DCF Food Stamp

Partner Agencies: USDA

2002 Update:

- Already providing for mail-in applications, but requires personal interviews. DCF will address individual problems with this process. Face-to-face interviews will still be required at some point.
- Now expanding to apply via on-line application and fax in to office.
- Mail-in procedures are ongoing. Training of DCF staff has begun in preparation of Elder Nutrition Grant pilot study.

2003 Update:

- A waiver was received for a pilot program targeting the elderly applicant (60+) for use of a simplified large print food stamp eligibility form. Interviews are completed by phone. DOEA and ASHBB volunteered to assist with outreach. This pilot project will expire 12/31/03. Additional funding to continue the project was not approved by FNS.
- Applicants may already apply for food stamp services by mailing in an application, but personal interviews are required. Federal Regulations currently require face-to face interviews at initial application and at least annually for subsequent reviews.

2.1

Strategy 7: Identify agencies to provide transportation assistance and/or to meet needs of those eligible for services.

Lead Agency: DCF Food Stamp

Partner Agencies: Transportation Disadvantaged, Local Workforce Development Boards, and Food Security Team

2002 Update:

- FACA Database for resources.
- Florida Association of Information and Referral Services (FLAIRS) for resources.
- Local DCF offices refer FS clients to agencies that provide transportation. Food stamp client is responsible for contacting the agency to arrange transportation.

2003 Update:

- There is no known provider of transportation service for the disadvantaged however, Medicaid recipients are provided transportation service when they are applying/re-applying for services including Medicaid, Food Stamps, and Temporary Cash Assistance.

2.1

Strategy 8: Improve program delivery and program information to existing clients.

Lead Agency: DCF Food Stamp

Partner Agencies: DCF Mission Support and Planning Team

2002 Update:

- Client Satisfaction Survey, March 2001, didn't have questions about Food Stamps, but will be revised to include for future survey.
- Performance measure established by Legislature

2003 Update:

- Ongoing efforts to improve the delivery of services and information to clients through DCF web-based information sites, printed materials/applications in other languages (i.e. Spanish, Creole) and access to information through various offices (Social Security Office, Healthy Start, etc.) about DCF Food Stamp Services.

2.1

Strategy 9: Develop and implement a media strategy to increase food stamp participation for three or four of the targeted regions, including meetings with editorial boards of both daily and weekly newspapers.

Lead Agency: Florida Impact

2002 Update:

- The Florida Impact Food Stamp Outreach Coordinator (FSO) sent out a news release to the media outlets in each targeted area and followed up with personal calls before the training as a way of stimulating interest. These mailings included local and statewide food stamp and hunger statistics and information on the new vehicle allowance and other regulatory changes. Additionally, a selection of public service announcements were faxed to local newspapers, TV, and radio stations. Florida Impact will explore with the DCF Public Information Office the possibility of sending out that news release on their letterhead. Follow-up calls were made by the FSO Coordinator to a targeted number of these to set up personal appointments, where Impact spoke with media representatives about the food stamp program, the upcoming training, and the outreach project. Impact worked to include the DCF Public Information Officer from each targeted area District office in these meetings, as well as a representative from a local CBO that serves food-stamp-eligible populations.
- Prior to the food stamp outreach training held in Cocoa, Florida Impact mailed and/or faxed a news release about the upcoming training, the availability of food stamps, and the food stamp helpline to all newspaper, radio, and television media in Brevard, Orange, Osceola, and Seminole counties. Follow-up calls were made to the major media outlets from that list in order to see how the media would use our information and to set up meetings in those counties. Below are the responses to these calls:
 - ✓ *Space Coast Press*, a weekly tabloid newspaper agreed to continue to publish periodic community service clips about helpline.
 - ✓ *El Playero*, the Spanish language paper agreed to place community announcements in this paper and requested that we send announcements already translated into Spanish.
 - ✓ Verbal commitments to periodically print the food stamp helpline number were made by the following: *Kissimmee News-Gazette*, *Oviedo Voice*, *Florida Catholic*, and *Orlando Times*. Most of the radio stations and some TV stations were also very amenable to putting in periodic public service announcements. Follow-up calls will be made in the third quarter to spot check whether the announcements were placed and, if possible, when and how frequently.

- ✓ In-person meetings by the Food Stamp Outreach coordinator were made to *Space Coast Press* and *El Playero*. The former published a small article announcing the food stamp project and training in the June 7th edition.
- ✓ The Lee County event was held on Tuesday morning, September 11th—the day of the national tragedy. Needless to say, all media plans were swept aside as the news broke throughout the day. The Public Relations Coordinator for the Department of Children & Families lined up a couple of news photographers to photograph the training as well as prepared to take pictures of the training for an article in the DCF district newsletter. The Coordinator had identified for us a reporter who had done good stories for her about the food stamp project.
- ✓ In Daytona Beach, the Food Stamp Outreach (FSO) Coordinator met with a reporter with the *Daytona Beach News Journal*. Florida Impact’s Coordinator is still working with DCF regional staff to secure food stamp clients interested in being interviewed for an article in that paper. A meeting was also held with the editor of the *Daytona Times*, which ran two public service announcement ads for the Helpline on Nov. 7th and 14th. He also agreed to do a more extensive article on the Food Stamp Program before the end of the year. Additional phone contacts were made with two reporters, each with different local editions of the *Orlando Sentinel*.
 - On October 23rd, the FSO Coordinator appeared on a radio call-in show on WPUL in Daytona Beach. As a result of the segment, several people called the 1-800 Helpline for information.
 - The editor of the *Sumter County Times* printed an article about the food stamp outreach project.
 - Article in the “Florida Spotlight on Child Nutrition,” a statewide publication of Florida Department of Education’s Food and Nutrition program.

2003 Update:

- Florida Impact successfully advertised the Food Stamp Helpline number as follows: City Link Newspaper (Broward County), Florida Today (Melbourne newspaper), Panama City News Herald, Pensacola News Journal; Florida SHARE Newspaper.

2.1

Strategy 10: Conduct four public awareness campaigns promoting the food stamp program in locations where food stamp participation demographics and count data on poverty levels demonstrate a need for outreach efforts (targeted regions).

Lead Agency: Florida Impact

2002 Update:

- Public awareness campaigns: **Complete**

2003 Update:

- Florida Impact successfully advertised the Food Stamp Helpline number as follows: City Link Newspaper (Broward County), Florida Today (Melbourne newspaper), Panama City News Herald, Pensacola News Journal; Florida SHARE Newspaper.

Goal 2: Expand participation of eligible populations in food assistance programs
Objective 2.2: Increase participation in National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, Summer Food Program, and Special Milk Program.

Performance Indicators:

- By July 1, 2003, the average number of children participating daily in the School Lunch Program will increase by 5 percent over the 2000 baseline of 222,790,128.
- By July 1, 2003, the average number of children participating daily in the School Breakfast Program will increase by 5 percent over the 2000 baseline of 70,736,833.
- By December 31, 2003, the average number of meals provided daily in the Summer Food Program will increase by 10 percent over the 2000 baseline of 76,812.
- By July 1, 2003, the average number of children participating daily in the Special Milk Program will decrease* by 60 percent over the 2000 baseline of 1,017,211.

*DOE reports: “ We are encouraging schools and summer camps to participate in meal programs rather than just a milk program whenever possible. Some of our sponsors have moved from milk to school meal programs and some summer camps have moved from milk to summer feeding programs thus causing the numbers to drop.”

2.2

Strategy 1: Expand the numbers of low-income schools providing free school meals under Provisions 2 and 3.

Lead Agency: DOE

Partner Agencies: FRAC and Florida Impact

2002 Update:

- DOE: Every child attending a public school in Florida has access to a lunch program. It is their choice whether or not they participate.
- Need to look at other states for best practices in implementing Provisions 2 and 3.
- All public and charter schools are required to provide food service operations or an acceptable alternative.
- Florida Impact, with the money they received for the Victory Against Hunger Award (\$1,000), wants to develop a tool for principals to use to determine possible eligibility.
- Florida Impact – Promotional Provision 2 guidebook.
- DOE has completed a technical guidebook, "Florida School Food Service Reference Manual."
- Provision 2 training has been provided for school district staff. Due to complexity of determining base year participation factors, many districts have opted to forgo adopting Provision 2 because of the negative financial impact on districts that may occur if the categorical determinations are not accurate. Initial programs in small school systems were very successful; however, large districts experienced more problems in obtaining correct categorical determinations. These are “hurdles” only – not insurmountable. Marketing is critical for implementation and drawing majority free and reduced schools onto the provisional programs.
- Priority from the USDA Under Secretary is the expansion of the Summer Food Service Program for Children. The DOE Summer Food Service Program offers a “Seamless Pilot Program” to school districts to encourage more participation by reducing the administrative burden. Three school districts participated in 2001 and eighteen school districts participated in 2002.
- Florida Impact submitted a proposal to FSFSA to plenary FRAC, DOE, etc. at the Annual meeting in Tampa in May 2002 to plan a follow-up meeting. FSFSA has agreed to include this format for a plenary session attended by all their school food service directors. The keynote speaker is with the federal breakfast pilot program in Ohio. Florida Impact will use the Victory Against Hunger money to underwrite that speaker’s travel costs. Working with FRAC, Impact discovered that USDA was planning to release comprehensive Provision 2 and 3 guidebooks, like the one we were planning to publish. In light of that, Impact will hold off and review that resource, so as not to duplicate that activity. A decision about the calculating tool will wait as well until after the May conference to determine a need and review what already exists in this area.

2003 Update:

- Continued negotiations with Dairy Council of Florida and their grant program for Breakfast in the Classroom models. Two staff turnovers have caused a delay. More than half of the 8 targeted school districts have responded favorably to the offer of \$750 per school district for 3 schools willing to offer BIC for 3 months.

2.2

Strategy 2: Increase outreach activities and technical assistance for Summer Food Service Program

Lead Agency: DOE

Partner Agencies: FRAC, Florida Impact, and USDA Field Office

2002 Update:

- Regional Representatives have been designated to:
 - ✓ Seek sponsors throughout the state
 - ✓ Make contact with grassroots and faith-based organizations to encourage participation
 - ✓ Attend Florida Association of School Superintendents conferences;
 - ✓ Attend and conduct workshops at national migrant conferences in June 2002; and
 - ✓ Attend and conduct workshops at the parks and recreation conferences.
- DOE Summer Food Service Program has developed PSAs with Regional targeted promotions coordinated with athletes from institutions of higher learning in Florida, including UF, UM, FSU, and FAMU Marching 100.
- DOE-Summer Food Service Program developed a video to be utilized in statewide WIC and Food Stamp offices to inform parents of the availability of meals at the various locations.
- DOE continues to increase in sponsors and sites throughout the state with a focus on those counties with no program.
- DOE continues to encourage sponsors to expand their program in size and number of days of operation.
- Florida's outreach strategies for the Summer Food Service Program has served as a national model. Although the program has been around for 34 years, there are still 12 North Florida counties that currently do not operate a Summer Food Service Program. There are approximately 20,000 kids in these counties alone. Of these 12 counties, 9 did not offer the National School Breakfast Program in their schools until that program was finally mandated in 1989. In response, Florida Impact drafted the Children's Summer Nutrition Act, which would have required all Florida elementary schools with 50 percent or more free or reduced-price eligibility for school meals to participate in the summer food program during periods when area schools are closed for summer vacation. The mandate language was removed from the bill and replaced with a requirement for each school district superintendent to report to the DOE any activity or initiative to provide access to food service programs during summer vacation to children who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. This report will include plans for how the school district will sponsor, host, or vend the federal Summer Food Service Program. After reporting this information to the district school board, the report will be sent to the DOE, which will compile and report this information to the Senate President, Speaker of the House, and the chairs of the respective education committees. The United Way, Catholic Conference, and the Florida Association of Jewish Federations have joined Impact's network of mainstream religious organizations in supporting this legislation.

2003 Update:

- Florida Impact drafted the Children's Summer Nutrition Act. The mandate language was removed and replaced with a requirement for each school district superintendent to report to the DOE any activity or

initiative to provide access to food service programs during summer vacation to children who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

- After reporting this information to the district school board, the report will be sent to the DOE, which will compile and report this information to the Senate President, Speaker of the House, and the chairs of the respective education committees by March 1, 2004.
- DOE - Summer Food Service Program has established a partnership with magazines such as Tallahassee Family Forum, to provide information awareness of the child nutrition program.
- Regional Representatives have been designated to seek sponsors; make contact with grassroots and faith-based organizations, attend Florida Police Athletic League conference; attend community meeting with Florida Impact and community leaders; attend and conduct workshops at the parks and recreation conferences.
- Summer Food Program will develop a guide/brouchure to starting the Summer Food Service Program.
- Toll-free number for Summer Food Program to advise caller of the closest feeding program by physical address.
- Summer Food Program PSA's Food Service Program targeting summer food service for needy children.

2.2

Strategy 3: Identify students eligible for free/reduced meals through program data links

Lead Agency: DOE

Partner Agencies: DCF

2002 Update:

- DCF Food Stamp list by county
- Data links have been developed in the past to identify eligible clients and DOE is continuing to do that.

2003 Update:

- Needy School Printout gives number of students receiving free/reduced school meals for every school in the state.

2.2

Strategy 4: Expand the number of sites participating in the Summer Food Services Program

Lead Agency: DOE

Partner Agencies: DOACS-Food Distribution

2002 Update:

- DOE Regional Representatives have been named to:
 - ✓ Seek sites in three regions
 - ✓ Make contact with grassroots and faith-based organizations to encourage participation
 - ✓ Attend school board association meetings
 - ✓ Network at the national migrant conference in June 2001
 - ✓ Network at the parks and recreation conferences
 - ✓ Offer Seamless Summer Feeding Waiver to schools to encourage more participation by reducing the paperwork.

2003 Update:

- Congressional Hunger Fellows (Heather Axford and Corina Bullock) at Florida Impact are working to schedule meetings in six counties that do not have SFSP sites.

- ✓ Liberty and Calhoun: Joint meeting on Oct 24
- ✓ Lafayette: Oct 27
- ✓ Baker: Oct 27
- ✓ Holmes: Nov 6
- ✓ Union: Nov 18
- DOE has exceeded it's target goal for increased SFSP sites: 2970 sites
2004 target = 2995
2005 target = 3020

Goal 2: Expand participation of eligible populations in food assistance programs
Objective 2.3: Increase participation in Child Care Food Program, including After-School Snack Program and Homeless Children Nutrition Program

2.3

Strategy 1: Increase the number of participating sites through outreach activities

Lead Agency: DOH-CNP

Partner Agencies: childcare organizations, Kid Care, WIC, DOE, and FRAC

Performance Indicators:

- By September 30, 2002, the average number of children participating daily in the Child Care Food Program will increase by 5 percent over the 2001 baseline 119,000.

2002 Update:

- DOE-Summer Food Service conducts outreach through attendance at Parks & Recreation association meetings, Migrant association conferences, state educational association meetings, and homeless association meetings.
- DOH-CNP has conducted outreach through health fairs, meetings, and conferences and through advertisements in childcare resource materials. However, they are not aggressively pursuing outreach activities due to continuing significant growth and staff limitations.
- DOH-CNP is focusing on making the program less cumbersome by reducing paperwork and utilizing a Web-based program.

2003 Update:

- Increase in sites from 5,400 to 5,700

2.3

Strategy 2: Improve program delivery and information through simplification of program procedures and improved training and guidance

Lead Agency: DOH

Partner Agencies: Food Security Team and MGT of America, Inc.

2002 Update:

- DOH-CNP disseminated a proposal that would significantly decrease paperwork in the CACFP to USDA and other state agencies nationwide responsible for administering CACFP. DOH-CNP is now obtaining comments from recipients.
- Working under constraints of staffing and unnecessary regulations.

- Availability of training and technical assistance has increased and program materials are being translated into Spanish.
- Developed procedure manuals for participating institutions.

2003 Update:

- DOH provided contractors with access to on-line forms and documents.

2.3

Strategy 3: Identify eligible institutions for Child Care Food Programs through program data links

Lead Agency: DOH

Partner Agencies: DCF and childcare organizations

2002 Update:

- Child care resource and referral agencies
- Facilitating discussions with DCF child care folks to establish data links

2003 Update:

- DOH has access to DCF's licensing database and is currently using it to verify childcare licensing information. Plans are to use it electronically in the future to match our data with that of DCF's and to use GIS mapping software to locate licensed homes not currently receiving the benefits of the CCFP.

Goal 2: Expand participation of eligible populations in food assistance programs
Objective 2.4: Increase participation in the WIC program

Performance Indicators:

- By 2003, the monthly average of women, infants, and children participating in the WIC program will increase by 7.16 percent over the 2000 baseline of 296,298.
- By 2003, the percentage of prenatal women who enter WIC in the first trimester of pregnancy will increase to 43 percent. The 2000 baseline is 39 percent.

Overall 2003 Update:

- Average monthly participation from July 2002 to June 2003 was 345,000, which is a 16.4% percent increase over the 2000 baseline of 296,298

2.4

Strategy 1: Increase outreach activities and enhance program delivery to existing clients.

Lead Agency: DOH-WIC

Partner Agencies: WIC staff, County health departments, Kid Care, Child Nutrition Programs, Medicaid, Food Stamp Program, and Health care providers

2002 Update:

- WIC staff at local and state level conducts extensive outreach activities.
- WIC State Office produces a bi-monthly newsletter, distributed via e-mail that highlights outreach activities that are being done by the local agencies.
- Participation has grown from a low of 285,000 monthly, to a recent high of at least 325,000 per month.

- Increase in caseloads due to: extensive outreach efforts; familiarity with welfare reform rules; familiarity of WIC's new documentation requirements including documentation of income; and continued economic decline and increased worker layoffs.
- WIC continues to identify better ways to serve clients with particular attention paid to improving customer service and hours of access, and decreasing unnecessary administrative tasks.

2003 Update:

- Many plans are underway to help reduce the burden of administrative tasks at the local level. WIC is in the planning process to develop "Crystal Reports," an on-line reporting system that provides the local WIC agencies with easier access to data, which will assist them with their program planning and outreach activities. Also, WIC is planning to automate the VOC/ID card, which is an ID card given to each WIC client (currently, information on the VOC/ID card is completed manually).
- Strategies to increase participation include the following: increasing local outreach activities especially to families of deployed service personnel as well as to prenatal; decreasing "no-show rates; and improving operational issues to decrease time delays in getting WIC appointments.
- During 2003, a number of local WIC agencies have conducted extensive outreach campaigns, using billboards, van wraps, bus signs (inside and outside the bus), radio interviews, and TV ads to spread the good news about WIC. In addition, during the Fall 2003, a national TV and radio WIC campaign was launched throughout the U. S., sponsored by the National WIC Association, in conjunction with the Ad Council, with the theme: "Your child has you. And you have WIC
- Three of the media markets being targeted by the campaign are in Florida and include the Miami, Orlando and Tallahassee areas.

2.4

Strategy 2: Identify potentially eligible clients for WIC program through program data links

Lead Agency: DOH-WIC

Partner Agencies: DCF

2002 Update:

- Program data links have been established between the FLORIDA Data system and the WIC data system, which involved data matching for prenatal and infants in Bay and Lee Counties (pilot project). A file of current Medicaid and Food Stamp clients was matched with a file of current WIC clients. Prenatal and infant clients living in Bay and Lee Counties who are enrolled in Medicaid or Food Stamps, but not currently receiving WIC benefits, were contacted (via mail) for possible WIC enrollment. This was a pilot project that will be expanded, depending on the outcome.

2003 Update:

- The Census Bureau released the official poverty rate for 2002, the latest year which data are available. The poverty rate rose from 11.7 percent in 2001 to 12.1 percent in 2002. In addition, the median household income declined 1.1 percent in real terms from 2001 to \$42,409 in 2002. The overall median household income declines were due mainly to falling incomes for black (a 2.5 percent decline to \$29,026) and Hispanic (a 2.9 percent decline to \$33,103) households.

2.4

Strategy 3: Improve the percentage of prenatal women who enter WIC in the first trimester of pregnancy.

Lead Agency: DOH-WIC

Partner Agencies: Health care providers—Medicaid and County health departments—Healthy Start

2002 Update:

- Participation has improved from 39-41%. We anticipate continued improvements based on a newly approved Medicaid waiver that makes WIC a wraparound service for Medicaid-eligible prenatal clients (i.e., the Medicaid program must refer its new prenatal Medicaid clients to WIC) and provides additional funding for enhanced Healthy Start services (including nutrition and breastfeeding services) through the State.

2003 Update:

- Developed an outreach flyer targeted specifically to pregnant women for distribution and use by MomCare workers, Healthy Start Coalitions, Medicaid offices and other community providers who are potential referral sources.
- Surveyed all local agencies to obtain baseline data on specific factors impacting early entry into WIC. Results were shared with the local WIC agencies and the data is being used to direct future efforts.
- Surveyed four higher-ranking counties to identify successful practices to enrolling prenatal women into WIC in their first trimester. Successful practices include: Same day service-Clients are seen for PEPW and enrolled in WIC on the same day; coordination with Healthy Start; outreach to private physicians.
- Increased collaboration with Healthy Start and MomCare staff to improve communications by participating in regular conference calls and meetings to share information and identify problems in order to increase referrals.
- Developed report to assist local agencies and community partners in more timely evaluation of the impact of early prenatal entry initiatives in each county. Promoted successful practices statewide in the WIC Outreach Newsletter, on conference calls with local agencies, and by showcasing one county's efforts at the state WIC meeting and the Sharing Solutions conference.
- Data for April 2003-June 2003 show that the state total percentage of prenatal women who entered WIC in the first trimester of pregnancy was 45% (which is 2% higher than the projected goal). WIC's new goal for 2004-05 for "percent of WIC prenatal clients who enroll in WIC in the first trimester" has been adjusted upward to 50%.
- Additional strategies for the next two years:
 - ✓ Continue initiatives with AHCA to ensure that health care providers are referring Medicaid prenatals to WIC.
 - ✓ Complete the re-evaluation of data-sharing agreements between WIC and other programs and agencies in light of new HIPAA regulations and federal confidentiality regulations.
 - ✓ Expand automated data linkages between WIC and other programs to identify WIC eligible prenatals not receiving WIC services. Promote the positive association between prenatal WIC enrollment and improved birth outcomes among health care professionals.
 - ✓ Continue to promote the coordination of prenatal certification appointments with presumptive eligibility determinations.

<p>Goal 2: Expand participation of eligible populations in food assistance programs Objective 2.5: Increase Adult Care Food Program participants.</p>

Performance Indicators:

- Annually, the daily average attendance in Adult Care Food Program will increase by 10 percent over the September 2000 baseline of 3,162. September 2001 daily average attendance: 3,603. September 2002 (estimated) daily average attendance: 3,963.

2.5

Strategy 1: Increase outreach activities

Lead Agency: DOEA

Partner Agencies: Area Agencies on Aging and Florida Adult Day Care Association

2002 Update:

- DOEA added objective to each Area Agency on Aging's Area Plan and the Monitoring Tool.
- Florida Adult Day Care Association
- State agency mail-outs to all eligible institutions
- DOEA attended Florida Adult Day Care Association meeting in June; will be recurring effort
- 190 participants trained at Annual training in August and September. All licensed adult day care centers were invited.

No 2003 Update Reported

2.5

Strategy 2: Improve program administration and program information to existing institutions

Lead Agency: DOEA

Partner Agencies: Licensed Adult Day Care Centers

2002 Update:

- Number of participating institutions: Fiscal Year 2000: 97 institutions. Fiscal Year 2001: 103 institutions. Fiscal Year 2002 (estimated) 113 institutions
- Work groups conducted in 1998 with Adult Day Care Centers
- Streamlining of paperwork is ongoing and will be promoted in upcoming training

No 2003 Update Reported

Goal 2: Expand participation of eligible populations in food assistance programs
Objective 2.6: Expand participation and availability in the Farmers Market Nutrition Programs (FMNP) sites

Performance Indicators:

- DOEA applied for program and is pending federal funding. By July 2002, the number of farmers participating in the Elder Farmers' Market Nutrition Pilot Program will increase by 10 percent over the 2001 baseline 63 farmers. DOEA estimated number of farmers to participate in the Elder Farmers' Market Nutrition Pilot Program for 2002 will be 70 farmers.
- By July 2002, the number of clients participating in Elder Farmers' Market Nutrition Pilot Program will increase by 10 percent over the 2001 baseline of 1,440 clients. By July 2003, the number of clients participating in Elder Farmers' Market Nutrition Pilot Program will be 2,490 clients.
- Pending federal funding by 2003, the number of clients participating in WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program will increase by 3 percent over the 2000 baseline of 27,235.

2.6

Strategy 1: Increase outreach activities to participating farmers in the Women Infants and Children (WIC) FMNP and Elder Affairs FMNP.

Lead Agency: DOACS for WIC and DOEA for Elder Farmers Market Nutrition Pilot Project

Partner Agencies: County extension offices, Community Farmers Markets, Elder Care of Alachua County, Mid-Florida Agency on Aging, and Department of Health

2002 Update:

- DOH-WIC - Operates April 1-July 31 at local farmers' markets.
- DOACS wants to expand to one more county next year, but is pending funding, as this is a 70/30 match program.
- Both DOH-WIC and DOEA – Good news: the drought has subsided with recent rains and crops are improved, which increases availability of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- DOH-WIC – Local WIC agencies are promoting the program through a variety of outreach measures.
- DOH and DOACS – 150 farmers participating; 100 percent report that they would participate again. 54 percent redemption rate this year
- DOEA — Elder Farmer's Market Nutrition Program Elder Farmers market currently provides \$20 monthly to those eligible with 200 on the waiting list with a 80 percent redemption rate. Program ended December 31, 2001. Sixty-four farmers participated; 1,400 unduplicated participants.

No 2003 Update Reported

2.6

Strategy 2: Increase participation in the WIC FMNP of eligible WIC clients.

Lead Agency: DOH-WIC and DOACS

Partner Agencies: County Health Departments and Local WIC agencies

2002 Update:

- Local WIC agencies are promoting the program through a variety of outreach measures.
- Word of mouth is the best avenue to spread the word about the program; also, clients are encouraged to redeem their coupons at the farmers' market after they receive them at the WIC local agency.
- 2 percent of WIC/FMNP Administrative funds can be used for advertising and will be used in rural areas to promote the program
- Federal funding for WIC/FMNP was cut by over 48 percent for FY 2002; services are being maintained at a reduced benefit level to existing counties of Alachua, Bay, Escambia, Gadsden, Holmes, Jackson, Leon, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, St. Johns, Suwannee, Wakulla, and Washington Counties
- DOACS wants to expand to one more county next year, but is pending funding as this is a 70/30 match program
- DOH-WIC served over 27,000 clients
- DOACS applied for \$25,000 matching grant
- DOACS received \$100,000 from Legislature for 2001-02; however, this item is on the table for budget cuts

2003 Update:

- During the 2003 season, 14 counties issued coupons to over 32,000 WIC clients, and the farmers received payments of over \$324,000. The number of clients participating in the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program increased by 17.5% over the 2000 baseline data, which was well above the projected goal for the 2003 season.
- FMNP completed its sixth successful year of operation. Counties continuing to participate in this program this year were: Alachua, Suwannee, Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Bay, Jackson, Washington, Holmes, Gadsden, Leon, and St. Johns. In addition, the program was introduced in Sumter and Volusia counties this year.

2.6

Strategy 3: Expand participation in the Elder Farmers Market Nutrition Pilot Project by reducing individual voucher amounts.

Lead Agency: DOEA

Partner Agencies: Elder Care of Alachua County and Mid-FL Agency on Aging

2002 Update:

- Pilot program ended December 31, 2001, with over \$175,000 worth of coupons redeemed by 1,400 unduplicated recipients. Sixty-four farmers participated.
- DOES submitted a \$260,000 grant application for 2002. Proposed four counties (Alachua, Bay, Jackson, and Suwannee) and will decrease issuance amount per recipient from \$20 to \$16 monthly and will serve at least 2,459 unduplicated recipients.
- Already have a waiting list for Elder Farmers Market.

No 2003 Update Reported

Goal 2: Expand participation of eligible populations in food assistance programs
Objective 2.7: Increase the percentage of the elderly population with access to nutritious food resources.

2.7

Strategy 1: Pilot on-site DCF Food Stamp certification at select Senior Congregate Meal Sites.

Lead Agency: DOEA, DCF, and Florida Impact

Partner Agencies: USDA

2002 Update:

- Florida Impact is working in this area on two fronts. The first USDA grant devotes a segment to offering on-site certification for seniors at four congregate meal sites in the state. An initial meeting with the Program Administrator of the Self-Sufficiency Unit revealed some hurdles to address due to the FLORIDA System and budget cuts. However, another meeting will take place soon to determine ways to accommodate the goals outlined in the USDA grant pertaining to seniors and food stamp outreach.
- Florida Impact has begun the public awareness component of Florida's [Elder Nutrition Pilot](#) with the Florida Department of Children & Families—another USDA research pilot. Targeting four North Florida counties, this project studies the effects of a simplified application and benefit determination process, including large-print food stamp applications, less documentation of eligibility criteria, and an over-the-phone application/certification process. The new Request for Assistance forms and outreach posters and cards are ready for distribution.

2003 Update:

- Florida Impact and DCF made arrangements to discuss plans to accomplish these strategies; however, lack of funds did not allow them to continue. There is hope for a funding source so that these strategies may be addressed in the near future.
- Refer back to work on the [Elder Nutrition Pilot](#).

2.7

Strategy 2: Encourage Food Stamp offices/programs to become more elder friendly by making the waiting areas conducive to the needs of the elderly.

Lead Agency: DCF

Partner Agencies: DOEA

2002 Update:

- DOEA Elder-friendly business criteria has been shared with DCF District Administrators
- DCF has an ongoing courtesy campaign but not specifically elderly friendly

2003 Update:

- Florida Impact and DCF made arrangements to discuss plans to accomplish these strategies; however, lack of funds did not allow them to continue. There is hope for a funding source so that these strategies may be addressed in the near future.
- Refer back to work on the [Elder Nutrition Pilot](#).

2.7

Strategy 3: Develop alternative food stamp eligibility processes for community-based sites serving elderly with transportation problems.

Lead Agency: DCF-FS

Partner Agencies: USDA and DCF District Administrators

2002 Update:

- DCF Received approval for the [Elder Nutrition Pilot](#) grant. This is a two-year study on a simplified alternative food stamp eligibility application process for seniors (> age 60). Large print application has been developed and streamlined for food stamp eligibility. DCF will be accepting the client statement (except for citizenship) rather than the verification process and face-to-face interview process. DCF, however, will be verifying within data exchange match (e.g., SSI). The certification will be for 12 months with a simplified application sent for recertification. Four sites in pilot: Gadsden and Leon (simplified eligibility determination) and Jackson and Alachua. Florida Impact is providing outreach with brochures attached to applications. Florida is the only state in the nation to get this pilot, and if it is successful, USDA-FNS may take it nationwide.
- Moving toward the Web-based information
- Coordination of appointments to make more elder-friendly

2003 Update:

- Florida Impact and DCF made arrangements to discuss plans to accomplish these strategies; however, lack of funds did not allow them to continue. There is hope for a funding source so that these strategies may be addressed in the near future.
- Refer back to work on the [Elder Nutrition Pilot](#).

2.7

Strategy 4: Expand educational programs about food stamp program and food resources into senior centers and other community groups serving the elderly.

Lead Agency: DCF

Partner Agencies: DOEA and Florida Impact

2002 Update:

- Toll-free Elder Help Line (1-800-963-5337) provides the Florida Impact Prescreening number and local anti-hunger resource information.

2003 Update:

- Florida Impact and DCF made arrangements to discuss plans to accomplish these strategies; however, lack of funds did not allow them to continue. There is hope for a funding source so that these strategies may be addressed in the near future.
- Refer back to work on the [Elder Nutrition Pilot](#).

Goal 2: Expand participation of eligible populations in food assistance programs
Objective 2.8: Increase the amount of food delivered to the agencies that serve the needy.

Performance Indicators:

- The amount of food recovered annually and transported to sites within the state will increase by 10 percent over the 2000 baseline of 57 million pounds.
- By 2003, the number of pounds served by Emergency Feeding Organizations will increase by 10 percent over the 2000 baseline of 1,441,660.

2.8

Strategy 1: Establish agreements with additional businesses to donate surplus food.

Lead Agency: Florida Association of Food Banks and Farm Share

Partner Agencies: Schools and Institutions, Food banks, Food recovery and gleaning, Soup kitchens, Food pantries, and Food retailers

2002 Update:

- 486 new agreements were established in calendar year 2001 by Florida Association of Food Banks and Farm Share.
- Florida Association of Food Banks distributed 57,535,000 pounds of food in 2001 to all 67 counties in Florida.
- Local nonprofits are responsible to seek out excess food for distribution.
- 260 percent increase in donor sources
- DOACS conducts monthly monitoring of warehouse inventory. Warehouse will be maxing out storage space
- Encouraging schools to sign contracts with local food banks to donate excess food; however, there are few opportunities with limited budget.
- \$200,000 from Congress, over 18 million pounds of food for 2001
- Over 27½ million pounds distributed this year, and is up for reauthorization this year

2003 Update:

- There has been a decrease in food donated by grocery manufacturers due to an increasing market for damaged foods for dented can stores or discount food stores.

2.8

Strategy 2: Improve methods to recover and transport food.

Lead Agency: Florida Association of Food Banks and Farm Share

Partner Agencies: Farmers, Retailers, South Florida Food Recovery, Farm Share, and Florida Association of Food Banks

2002 Update:

- Increased the number of donors from which food was recovered and the number of distribution sites receiving food.
- Money needs to be earmarked for distribution.
- FY 2000-01, Florida Association of Food Banks distributed 45,946,222 pounds.

No 2003 Update Reported.

2.8

Strategy 3: Improve utilization and management of USDA commodities to reduce waste and increase usage

Lead Agency: DOACS

Partner Agencies: Food banks, Soup kitchens, Food pantries, and Food retailers

2002 Update:

- Ongoing monthly inventory monitoring and quarterly visits to warehouses to ensure that food is moving out to the needy and decrease the losses.
- Reports of lower donations and increase in need for food due to layoffs

No 2003 Update Reported.

Goal 3: Encourage healthy eating habits among food assistance program participants
Objective 3.1: Increase participation in the food stamp nutrition education program

Performance Indicators:

- By December 2003, the number of counties providing food stamp nutrition education will increase by 20 percent over the 2000 baseline of 30 participating counties.

3.1

Strategy 1: Amend the food stamp nutrition education state plan to include more counties

Lead Agency: DCF Food Stamps

Partner Agencies: University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service

2002 Update:

- Filing new state plan, due August 15, but is already written. DCF-FS will now have 37 counties participating, up from 30, and will have a blanket-funding request for other counties.
- The FFY 2001 Nutrition Education Plan was amended. Growth reflected in current FFY 2002 Nutrition Education Plan.

2003 Update:

- Food Stamp Nutrition Education State Plan was amended and is awaiting approval from USDA. In 2002, the number of counties participating in the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program was 37. The number of counties expected to participate in the program for October 1, 2003 – September 30, 2004 is 42.

3.1

Strategy 2: Increase information regarding nutrition education to food stamp service centers

Lead Agency: DCF- Food Stamps

Partner Agencies: University of Florida Cooperative Extension Services, USDA, Florida State University

2002 Update:

- USDA completed a series of six posters (Power Panther materials) and other integrated messages (see [Goal 3, Objective 2, Strategy 5](#)) and distributed to food stamp service centers
- University of Florida/Florida State University materials

2003 Update:

- In cooperation with Big Bend AHEC (Area Health Education Centers), DCF recently completed a mail-out campaign of the 5 A Day Posters to food stamp service centers promoting a healthy diet of 3 vegetables and 2 fruits a day. The campaign slogan for the year 2003-2004 is [5 A Day the Florida Way!](#). This is part of the integrated nutrition message initiative through the USDA encouraging states to promote healthier eating habits by disseminating nutrition education information/materials.

<p>Goal 3: Encourage healthy eating habits among food assistance program participants Objective 3.2: Strengthen the nutrition education activities of food and nutrition programs.</p>
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Performance Indicators:

- By 2005, the Florida Interagency Food and Nutrition Committee implement three nutrition education campaigns that promote consistent nutrition and health messages.

3.2

Strategy 1: Utilize county extension programs to provide food safety/preparation for program participants.

Lead Agency: DCF, UF-IFAS

Partner Agencies: All Partner Agencies

2002 Update:

- UF-IFAS specialists in County Extension offices need to be active participants in the Food Security Team. Need to recruit participation from UF-IFAS headquarters in Gainesville.
- Extension programs are providing this education as budget allows.

2003 Update:

- The Nutrition Education Initiative allows for utilization of the county cooperative extension programs to provide for food safety and food preparation activities. This is ongoing.

3.2

Strategy 2: Increase public education about nutrition and food safety through electronic and written media.

Lead Agency: Food Security Team

2002 Update:

- Each Partner Agency's website should have links to nutrition websites and Florida Impact's website.
- DOE will be expanding on-line training opportunities for sponsors of Child Nutrition programs in the area of nutrition, nutrition education in the classroom, and food safety by utilizing a combination of

interactive classrooms, Web-based continuing education activities, and stand-alone interactive sites. The pilot was well received and plans are being made to expand on-line training strategies.

- Press Conference on August 17, 2001, with U.S. Senator Graham to present Florida Impact the Congressional Hunger Center Victory Against Hunger Award. This did take place as planned, but produced only a small article in the *Tallahassee Democrat* about the food stamp effort. The One-Stop Workforce Center, the venue for the news conference, received local television broadcast coverage and a large article in the *Democrat*.
- DOE-PSA's Press Releases promoting Summer Food Service Programs and other agency programs.
- Florida Impact wants to plan a news conference for World Food Day in October 2002—possibly with FAMU. Florida Impact did present with DCF-Food Stamp Program Coordinator, a session on hunger and statewide solutions at the FAMU-sponsored anti-hunger conference plenary on World Food Day October 2001. There were possibly 50 individuals, largely students and faculty, in attendance.
- DOACS is working with Florida Restaurant Association and partnering with the Department of Business & Professional Regulation to disseminate the Food Recovery Resource Guide. The new guide is available now. Under Florida Statute, 100,000 copies are to be distributed yearly and geared to providers of food (restaurants, grocery stores, etc.) to DOH, Division of Hotels and Restaurants for distribution statewide along with food recovery. Division web site: <http://doacs.state.fl.us/~fs/index.html>
- Chef's Association education and outreach for food recovery
- U.S. Rep. Karen Thurman and former Department of Elder Affairs Secretary Hernandez held a press conference in Gainesville in May 2001 to promote Elder Farmer's Market. Program has been extremely successful and had a waiting list for elder coupons.
- DOE Summer Food Service Program developed promotional video for prospective sponsors.
- DOE Summer Food Service Program attended statewide migrant meetings, homeless conference, parks and recreation associations, or other conferences to target the needy.
- DOE Summer food program advertising campaign utilized athletes and FAMU Marching 100 band from the Florida university system.
- The Food Research and Action Center released its "State of the States" report on February 26th. Florida was among the top ten with large hunger numbers last year.
- The *Sumter County Times* published an article within the last month about the next Food Stamp Outreach training and the Food Stamp Program in general. An article advertising the Food Stamp Outreach Project and the Help line also appeared in the "Florida Spotlight," DOE's quarterly newsletter that goes out to all the state's school food service directors.

2003 Update:

- For 2004, FIFNC is planning to create a master website that would represent both the FIFNC and its nutrition education campaigns; DOACS is taking the lead on this project. Each program represented on the FIFNC will have a link from the master website that would lead to their individual programs, specific nutrition campaigns and information. The Website would possibly run through MyFlorida.com and is in the early planning stages.

3.2

Strategy 3: Strengthen DOE sunshine state standards on nutrition and food safety.

Lead Agency: Department of Education

Partner Agencies: Florida State University, Food and Nutrition Advisory Council, Florida Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, Florida School Food Association

2002 Update:

- The Sunshine State Standards are updated on a rotation and this section is not being updated until 2005.

3.2

Strategy 4: Enhance the nutrition education and breastfeeding support component of the WIC program

Lead Agency: Department of Health- WIC

Partner Agencies: Local WIC agencies, Food Stamp Family Nutrition Program, EFNEP, Florida Interagency Food and Nutrition Program, Department of Health Communications Office

2002 Update:

- Local WIC Staff are always looking for ways to improve the delivery of nutrition education to clients, supported by the state WIC office, which provides local agencies with current and updated nutrition education, programmatic, and breastfeeding pamphlets and other printed materials for client education. Materials are translated into appropriate languages to meet the needs of WIC's culturally diverse clients.
- The Participant Assessment Survey and the WIC Survey (conducted annually) help us determine where we need improvements, what is already working.
- Bright Futures – a new behavioral approach of providing nutrition education to clients – is posted on the Department of Health website.
- Child Nutrition, Chronic Diseases, and WIC partnered together re: promotion of the new Body Mass Index display (interactive and stand-alone).
- Newly revised nutrition training modules to be used to teach nutrition and breastfeeding information to WIC staff so that WIC staff can appropriately counsel and provide consistent messages to the clients.
- National Breastfeeding Week (August 1–8) is promoted with press release and radio interviews. Breastfeeding kits were sent to local agencies to help them prepare for activities during breastfeeding week, August 2001.
- In September 2001, WIC was able to purchase electric breast pumps and personal accessory kits for statewide distribution. These breast pumps will help breastfeeding WIC mothers establish and maintain a milk supply for their high-risk infants, as well as help those who are exclusively breastfeeding and employed or in school full-time to continue breastfeeding.

2003 Updates:

- During FFY 2003, the state WIC office received funds to enhance the “Nutrition Information Center” (NIC), which is a series of 7 web-based interactive nutrition education modules, available in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. Modules will be moved from the original Orange County web server to a “state” web server, which can accommodate all WIC clinics in Florida. Also, the number of modules will expand from 7 to 10; the new modules will be related to breastfeeding promotion and support.
- In April 2003, WIC nutrition staff around the state had the opportunity to obtain up-to-date information about childhood obesity issues during the teleconference, *Fit Kids on the Road to Excellence*, sponsored by the USDA Southwest WIC Region.
- Many training opportunities were offered to state and local WIC office staff to assist them with delivering quality nutrition services to WIC clients. Some of the video teleconferences that were offered and viewed across the state included:
 - ✓ August 29, 2003 - *Gestational Diabetes* co-sponsored by the DOH's WIC & Nutrition Services Program and the Diabetes Prevention and Control Program, over 400 attended.
 - ✓ May 31, 2003 - *Predicting and Preventing Early Breastfeeding Cessation* co-sponsored by the DOH's Obesity Prevention Program and the WIC and Nutrition Services Program, over 400 attended.
- WIC's website includes nutrition information for the public and is continually updated:

www.myflorida.com/family/wic/index.html.

- For World Breastfeeding Week in August 2003, a press release about the benefits of breastfeeding was written and distributed to English and Spanish newspaper throughout Florida.
- During FFY 2004, the following modules of Florida's Nutrition Training Guide will be revised and updated with the most up-to-date nutrition research/information: Prenatal, Preschool, and Infant nutrition modules.

3.2

Strategy 5: Promote consistent messages in food and nutrition programs

Lead Agency: Florida Interagency Food and Nutrition Committee

Partner Agencies: Food Security Team

2002 Update:

- The "Moovve to Lowfat or Fat Free Milk Campaign" will be implemented in March 2002
- Future Campaigns (Five-A-Day and Physical Activity promotion) will be implemented in 2003 and 2004.
- DOE will prepare informational packets for sponsors to utilize in developing Five-A-Day promotions in their school during the 2003 school year. The Food and Nutrition Management section has also applied for a grant to assist schools with high numbers of children living in poverty assess the overall health rating of their school by completing a School Health Index. The grant will also promote the development of infrastructure to support increased physical activity and nutrition education with the ultimate goal of reducing obesity and elevating the nutritional health of children. Many poor children suffer from obesity caused by poor food choices to ward off hunger.
- USDA promoting the Integrated Nutrition Education Initiative in Florida. DOH has been designated as lead agency for this initiative and will use [Objective 3.2](#) of this plan, and this Strategy 5, as the basis for developing activities that will promote consistent nutrition messages in food and nutrition programs.
- Activities already accomplished or started related to the Integrated Nutrition Education Initiative:
 - ✓ "Moovve to Lowfat or Fat Free Milk" pilot test—Coordination with DOH WIC (two displays, one of which is an interactive taste test, and flip chart) and DOH Child Nutrition (stand-alone display with flyer, pens, poster)
 - ✓ "Moovve to Lowfat or Fat Free Milk" nutritional education campaign was launched during National Nutrition Month,[®] March 2002, in response to USDA's challenge to promote consistent nutrition messages. Participating agencies include: Florida Departments: of Health; Education; Elder Affairs; and Children & Families; University of Florida IFAS Extension; Suwannee River Area Health Education Center; and U.S. Food and Drug Administration – Florida District, SE Region. For a list of activities that have been developed (or near completion) for the March 2002 implementation, see [Appendix D](#), entitled: "Florida Interagency Food and Nutrition Committee Report on Nutrition Education Initiative."
- Other Related Activities:
 - ✓ The kid's "Activity Pyramid" handouts were purchased and will be distributed to WIC
 - ✓ local agencies who plan to focus on physical activity messages with their clients.
 - ✓ DOH School Health's adaptation of WIC's "Weight: Maintaining Healthy Balance in Children" pamphlet. The WIC 1-800 outreach number is included on the school health pamphlet.
 - ✓ BMI display—coordination with WIC, Chronic Disease, Child Nutrition.
 - ✓ Four posters with health messages: (5-a-day message; physical activity message; low fat milk message; drink only one serving 100 percent juice/day)—coordination with WIC, chronic disease, child nutrition.
 - ✓ "Health tips" were added to WIC checks (that all WIC clients receive) that corresponded to the above four posters.

- ✓ DOH Child Nutrition has begun development of campaign for 2002, with the 5-a-day fruit and vegetable theme: “Give Me Five!”
- ✓ DCF has received its supply of “Moovve” posters and will distribute to the food stamp service centers in March.

2003 Update:

- On December 3 - 4, 2002, staff from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), USDA/FNS were in Tallahassee for an on-site visit of Florida’s 5-A-Day Program. The agenda included industry and governmental agencies’ efforts to promote 5-A-Day with guests Peter Murano, PhD, Deputy Administrator for the Special Nutrition Programs at USDA/FNS in Washington, and Bill Dietz, MD, PhD, Director of Nutrition and Physical Activity Division at CDC in Atlanta.
- The second phase of FIFNC’s integrated nutrition education initiative was launched, as planned, in March 2003, and promotes the “[5-A-Day](#)” message. The Department of Health’s theme was: 3 vegetables and 2 fruits=5 A Day The Florida Way! The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DOACS) and the Department of Education (DOE) partnered together to promote the theme: Fresh-2-U!

Goal 3: Encourage healthy eating habits among food assistance program participants
Objective 3.3: Increase job referrals from community-based organizations providing food assistance

3.3

Strategy 1: Provide job referral information to organizations providing food assistance services

Lead Agency: Local Workforce Development Boards

Partner Agencies: Agency for Workforce Innovation, Florida Coalition for the Homeless

2002 Update:

- Decision to eliminate this strategy pending.
- Unable thus far to engage participation by the Agency for Workforce Innovation. DCF-FS and USDA Region and Field staff will brainstorm prior to eliminating this strategy from the plan.
- DOE representative noted that Miami-Dade County has a grant to take unemployed, homeless, or underemployed and are combining job training to work in food service industry, and allowing them to search for a food service job.

No 2003 Update Reported.

Goal 3: Encourage healthy eating habits among food assistance program participants
Objective 3.4: Increase job referrals to food stamp households

3.4

Strategy 1: Seek waivers to assist food stamp clients to search and obtain jobs through the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program (FSET)

Lead Agency: DCF

Partner Agencies: USDA, Local Workforce Development Boards, UF-IFAS

2002 Update:

- Through an interagency agreement with the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI), DCF has maximized the number of mandatory referrals to the FSET program. Non-mandatory participants are encouraged to volunteer for the program.
- No mandatory work requirement to receive food stamps, only a requirement to register with the workforce board.

2003 Update:

- This initiative was expanded to include those families in the Florida Healthy Family program, SSI and Temporary Cash Assistance program. Florida Healthy Families was included because it is 100% TANF funded.

<p>Goal 4: Close the gaps in the food assistance and nutrition education programs Objective 4.1: Identify the food insecure population.</p>
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4.1

Strategy 1: Develop questions for statewide survey to identify food insecure population in Florida

Lead Agency: DCF

Partner Agencies: MGT of America, Inc., FRAC, Florida Impact, and Human Services Coalition of Dade County

2002 Update:

- Seek grant to provide funding
- Congressional Hunger Center Fellow (CONTACT: John Morriill or Dr. Ed Cooney)
- Wanted to pursue a Hunger Fellow but didn't have enough time to complete the application process. Florida Impact have received information about the Application process for this year; however, no action has been taken as of March 29, 2002.
- Second Harvest conducted a national survey; however, the sample for Florida was very small.

2003 Update:

- No survey was developed due to cost. See 2003 report entitled Feeding Florida: Responses to Hunger in the Sunshine State. Florida Impact in partnership with the Florida School Food Service Foundation and DCF prepared this report. The report shows the percent of food insecurity by county. The numbers provided were generated based on 1999 county poverty levels as a basis for determining food insecurity. County food insecurity rates were determined in proportion to the ratio of the state poverty level to state food insecurity rates.
- Florida Impact has not decided on 2-3 questions to ask helpline clients that would help assess Food Insecurity in Florida. It welcomes ideas from anyone else.
- Cindy Wagner of the Florida Association of Food Banks will be helping out with America's Second Harvest national survey of Food Bank Clients. Maybe something will emerge from this information that we could use to create effective questions.

<p>Goal 4: Close the gaps in the food assistance and nutrition education programs Objective 4.2: Reduce administrative barriers.</p>

4.2

Strategy 1: Seek to establish uniform income eligibility criteria that allows participants of any USDA-funded program to be automatically eligible for other USDA-funded programs.

Lead Agency: All federally funded state agencies

Partner Agencies: Food Security Team, USDA, Congressional Leadership, and Associations (e.g. Food Stamp State Directors)

2002 Update:

- States do not have direct change options; however, state agencies have the opportunity to provide comments about pending policy changes. Methods to be used to affect existing policy are through active participation at the federal level by partnering with USDA, Congressional leadership, cooperation with Food Stamp State Director, position papers and letters.
- DACS – SSI, Medicaid, Food Stamp, TANF share eligibility criteria.
- DOH – (CNP) Food Stamp and TANF (WIC-Food Stamp, TANF and Medicaid)
- DOE – Food Stamp and TANF recipients are eligible for free meals.
- DCF is expanding categorical eligibility to include transitional services, vehicle assets in line with Medicaid, diversion services, TANF

2003 Update:

- DCF has expanded the categorical eligibility definition to include transitional services (implemented effective October 1, 2002) and vehicle assets (now in line with Medicaid, implemented July 1, 2001).

4.2

Strategy 2: Reduce the paperwork needed in order to qualify for free and reduced lunches by strongly encouraging schools to use Provisions 2 and 3.

Lead Agency: DOE

Partner Agencies: Food Security Team

2002 Update:

- States do not have direct change options; however, state agencies have the opportunity to provide comments about pending policy changes. Methods to be used to affect existing policy are through active participation at the Federal level by partnering with USDA, Congressional leadership, cooperation with the Food Stamp State Director, position papers and letters.
- Schools are reluctant because the initial paperwork is overwhelming and severe penalties are incurred if initial paperwork is incorrect.
- Provision 2 allows a school to feed all students free; however, the reimbursement claim is based on the percentage of participation by students in each category (free, reduced price, and paid) for the base year. If 80–85 percent, or more, of the students ate free during the base year, it could be a viable option. If less than 80 percent ate free during the base year, financial problems might occur.
- Number of total children eating is the measure of success.
- Major numbers of schools utilizing Provision 2 are for breakfast at school to eliminate the paperwork. Population studies can be used to support renewed authorization.
- In Indian River County every school is a Provision 2 school for breakfast and every child in that county eats free. Before Provision 2, 100 breakfasts were being served before Provision 2, now 300 breakfasts are served.

No 2003 Update Reported

4.2

Strategy 3: Seek to establish categorical eligibility for special underserved populations.

Lead Agency: FRAC, Florida Impact, and Florida Coalition for the Homeless

Partner Agencies: Food Security Team

2002 Update:

- States do not have direct change options; however, state agencies have the opportunity to provide comments about pending policy changes.
- Florida Impact has met informally with the Program Administrator of the Self-Sufficiency Unit to discuss the state's adoption of a 3-month transitional food stamp benefit for TANF-leavers. The Program Administrator indicated there was movement in this direction, but that budget cuts would determine staff availability to adjust the Florida System. We have not heard any more since. Florida Impact is also working with FRAC on federal legislation that would extend this to a 6-month transition period, which mirrors the Medicaid time frame for transitional benefits, simplifying state record keeping, increasing state flexibility, and helping TANF families transition to work.
- Increasing the allotment for seniors is still pending before Congress.

2003 Update:

- DCF has taken up the simplified reporting option in which no notice to DCF is required between recertifications for any household change except an increase to household income that would alter the family's food stamp eligibility status. This change will apply to all households EXCEPT those with members who are elderly or disabled, without earnings, and with stable circumstances (defined as those who are not expecting any changes, very little work history, and no management problems).
- There have recently been immigrant reinstatements to food stamp eligibility, including the eligibility for immigrants 18 years and younger.

4.2

Strategy 4: Request waivers/state options or changes of USDA rules and regulations that discourage participation

Lead Agency: Each respective federally funded state agency

2002 Update:

- States do not have direct change options; however, state agencies have the opportunity to provide comments about pending policy changes.
- DOE did this for the summer; funding formula is different. DeSoto dropped out after two years and reinstated program this past summer successfully. There have been a total of three pilot sites.
- DOE received waivers in 2001 for three school districts to operate the "Seamless Pilot Program" for the Summer Food Service Program. DOE Summer Food Service Program offered the "Seamless Pilot Program" waiver to all school districts to encourage participation. Three school districts participated in 2001, and 18 school districts participated in 2002.

2003 Update:

- DOE: In 2003, 27 school districts participated in the "Seamless Pilot Program".

4.2

Strategy 5: Seek to expand the minimum food stamp allotments.

Lead Agency: Florida Impact

- **Partner Agencies:** FRAC and Florida Coalition for the Homeless

2002 Update:

- States do not have direct change options; however, state agencies have the opportunity to provide comments about pending policy changes.
- Florida Impact continues to work closely with FRAC in Washington to promote this objective. Listed in [Appendix F](#) are some provisions included in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 and are effective October 1, 2002.
- Testifying before Congressional Hearings
- Florida Senator Graham is a cosponsor of this legislation

2003 Update:

- This is a congressional matter that will likely not change until the next reauthorization opportunity in a few years.

4.2

Strategy 6: Seek to automatically certify SSI recipients as eligible for food stamps.

Lead Agency: DCF

Partner Agencies: FRAC, DOEA, and Florida Coalition on the Homeless

2002 Update:

- States do not have direct change options; however, state agencies have the opportunity to provide comments about pending policy changes.
- SSA and DCF issue, Florida has not adopted the policy due to the transfer and reliability of data.
- SSA doesn't have access to the FLORIDA systems; however, when SSA certifies that the client is SSI eligible, then DCF-FS uses that certification for authorizing FS.
- SSA cannot certify FS eligibility.

2003 Update:

- DCF has approval for a demonstration project which is scheduled to begin October, 2004. The Social Security Office will include questions on their application for disability to allow for Food Stamp eligibility, and if eligible, Social Security will send a data exchange to the FLORIDA system. Using this method, an individual is eligible to receive \$37 in food stamp benefits, an increase from the \$10 received when applying separately to the two programs. Married couples with no children can benefit from the upcoming system. Approximately 112,000 individuals are now eligible for this service, and may also be certified for a longer period of time.
- Gary Scott at DCF is working on a strategy to automatically enroll SSI recipients in the Food Stamp Program. There is outreach to existing SSI recipients to help facilitate their application process.

4.2

Strategy 7: Seek to extend food stamp eligibility waivers for working poor.

Lead Agency: DCF

Partner Agencies: Agency for Workforce Innovation, FRAC, and Florida Impact

2002 Update:

- States do not have direct change options; however, state agencies have the opportunity to provide comments about pending policy changes.
- FRAC State Gap Report
- Pursuing simplified reporting requirements with households with earnings (not finalized yet)
- TANF-leavers waiver for three month transition that would allow client to continue to receive FS benefits. FL DCF seems open to this but will require staffing and programming FLORIDA system
- Waivers applied for and obtained as USDA guidelines allow. Examples are vehicles asset and SUA/BUA policy.

2003 Update:

- No changes to report.

Goal 4: Close the gaps in the food assistance and nutrition education programs
Objective 4.3: Increase networking and partnership among public and private food assistance programs.

4.3

Strategy 1: Maintain the statewide Food Security Team.

Lead Agency: DCF

Partner Agencies: All state agency partners and grassroots partners

2002 Update:

- DCF contract with MGT of America, Inc., expired on March 31, 2002. With dire financial straits, DCF does not have the funds to accept MGT's proposed contract amendment for continued services to maintain the statewide Food Security Team. MGT noted an alternative funding plan to include each partner agency securing a portion of the needed contract funds to maintain MGT's professional services for 18 months. USDA suggested two possible funding options: USDA Exchange of Ideas Funds and SEA Administrative Matching Funds. USDA Regional Staff will pursue information about both of these options and will provide an update. MGT's proposal will be provided to USDA as well as to each partner agency. USDA notified agency partners that neither SAE nor TEFAP funds could be used.
- New fiscal year will determine continued funding for support of the Food Security Team.
- DCF will host the next meeting of the Food Security Team in June 2002.

2003 Update:

- DCF's plans are to secure funding for a new contract. To keep costs down while allowing team members to meet on a regular basis (perhaps twice or three times yearly), it is recommended that team members (various agencies) take responsibility for hosting a meeting at their location, whenever one is planned. This may also allow for any residual dollars to be spent towards the development of the objectives listed in the strategic plan.
- The Congressional Hunger Fellows hosted by Florida Impact were able to dedicate their time to organizing the meeting on October 16, 2003, as well as make the appropriate updates to the report.
- The meeting for 2004 was tentatively scheduled to take place in March.

Conclusion

The Food Security Team set out to end hunger in Florida by 2005. Within this tremendous endeavor, four goals were defined: Improve awareness of food insecurity and hunger in Florida and available resources to reduce the problem; expand participation of eligible populations in food assistance programs; encourage healthy eating habits among food assistance program participants; and close the gaps in food assistance and nutrition education programs. The Food Security Team focused their efforts on improving the effectiveness of the American safety net provided through the Federal Nutrition Programs in hopes of creating a more tangible approach to an all-pervasive problem.

These clearly established goals have facilitated positive results. The average monthly participation for the WIC program from July 2002 to June 2003 was 345,000, a 16.4% percent increase over the 2000 baseline of 296,298. The Department of Health increased the number of sites using the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) from 5,400 in 2002 to 5,700 in 2003. As of October, Florida Impact's Food Stamp Helpline had received 7,731 an increase from the 6,553 calls during the previous year; and the pre-screening tool maintains a 93% accuracy rate. This is to name only a few of the accomplishments outlined in the strategic plan report.

The Food Security Team's most critical contribution has been to provide a structure for direct inter-agency communication. Agencies and non-profit organizations have limited resources available to them for their work to end hunger, making effective collaboration indispensable; advocates and human service professionals do not have the funding, staff, or other resources to make inefficient program choices. The Food Security Team has done much to address this problem by encouraging agencies to report their work and the resources that they have available. In sharing information, member agencies are developing a more comprehensive conceptualization of hunger in Florida.

Members benefited from this sharing of information at the last Food Security Team meeting when Cindy Wagner of the Florida Association of Food Banks told member agencies about an industrial sized kitchen that had been donated to them. This kitchen could be an important asset for meal preparation for the Summer Food Service Program and the Child Care Food Program, run through the Department of Education and the Department of Health respectively. The Food Security Team was able to maximize the benefits of this resource by bringing together members of these different agencies.

In future work with the Food Security team, several strategies could facilitate an even greater degree of collaboration. First, creating a consistent format for agency updates, specifically a format that highlights statistical progress in each program, would help future annual reports to reflect improvements more accurately. Also, a greater focus on "best practices" reports, such as the work that WIC has done, would not only highlight successful methods in one program, but could be applied to the programs of other member agencies. Finally, a way for agencies to report new resource opportunities efficiently to member agencies could increase sharing of information between meetings. A listserv or other type of e-mail tool could be helpful here.

Over the past year, Florida has decreased its level of food insecurity by 1.4%, whereas the national level of food insecurity has decreased by only .5%. The work done by the Food Security Team has played a role in this effort as it has increased the number of eligible individuals accessing nutritious food through USDA funded food assistance programs. Through this structured inter-agency collaboration, the Food Security Team hopes to further decrease Florida's food insecurity in the years to come.

APPENDIX A

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS BY STATE AGENCY

Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services

The Bureau of Food Distribution administers or provides support to five USDA programs:

- National School Lunch Program
- Disaster Feeding
- Summer Food Service Program
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program
- Charitable Institutions
- Food Recovery Program
- Farmers Market Nutrition Program

The principal role played by DOACS in each of these programs is to supply commodities. Qualified agencies or institutions handle direct food service. The Bureau also oversees the Food Recovery Program and the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (Operated in conjunction with the Women Infants and Children “WIC” program). A brief description of these programs and their current status is provided below:

National School Lunch Program: DOACS provides commodities to each county school district, private schools, residential child care institutions, and others that participate in the National School Lunch Program through DOE. Public schools are required to participate.

Summer Food Service Program: This program supplies meals to summer school students. Non-students who are qualified as needy may come to the school for a meal as opposed to the National School Lunch program, which requires school attendance to participate. Participation by school is optional and two-thirds of Districts participate.

Emergency Food Assistance Program: This program functions directly through DOACS and has two parts. One part supplies commodities to food banks that in turn distribute the food to pantries, soup kitchens, and other emergency feeding organizations for delivery to the needy and homeless. The second part provides commodities directly to households. This effort (The Mass Household Distribution Program) provides mostly canned goods to households in areas deemed needy. Qualified recipients receive distribution monthly, bimonthly or quarterly.

Charitable Institutions: This program has functioned on a limited basis in recent years. Only when bonuses occur are any commodities available to this program.

Disaster Feeding: DOACS releases commodities in disasters such as hurricanes or forest fires to feed displaced people. The commodities come from warehouses used to supply schools. Meals are prepared and food must be consumed on – site. Disaster meals must go to victims and are not available to disaster workers.

Food Recovery Program (Also called “Farm Share”): This state sponsored program seeks to coordinate the recovery of fresh produce and other surplus or unmarketable items and supply these items to qualified organizations that feed the needy.

Farmers Market Nutrition Program: This state sponsored program seeks to provide fresh produce as a supplement to WIC (Women Infants & Children). Once each year, program recipients (28,000 in North Florida) can receive \$16 in coupons redeemable at Farmers markets. In their first year of use 50 percent of the coupons were used.

Department of Children & Families

The Department of Children and Families administers the Food Stamp Program, which ensures that eligible low-income families and individuals have access to a nutritious diet. Food stamp benefits are intended to supplement other household

income and may only be used to purchase food. Other household items such as cleaning supplies, paper goods, clothes, alcohol or tobacco products may not be purchased with Food Stamps.

The legal basis for the Food Stamp Program may be found in the Food Stamp Act of 1977, the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1981, and the Food Security Act of 1965. The federal government pays for the cost of Food Stamp benefits and splits the administrative costs with the states.

Food Stamp recipients purchase their food by using an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card. This card may be used at any retail store authorized by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The amount of benefits received is based on the household size and financial circumstances.

All Individuals who purchase and prepare food together are considered a family group for Food Stamp purposes and must have their eligibility determined together. To be eligible for Food Stamps family groups must have income and assets below the program standards. After adding all the family group's gross income, the case manager will make deductions to the family group's income. These deductions may include, but are not limited to, shelter (rent, mortgage or utilities), childcare or medical expenses.

Other technical factors must be met for a family to be eligible for Food Stamps. These technical factors may include; work registration, having a job or looking for work, cooperation with Child Support Enforcement and citizenship or an eligible non-citizen status with INS, and Florida residency.

Department of Education

The Department of Education operates the following food and nutrition-related programs:

- National School Lunch Program
- School Breakfast Program
- Summer Food Program
- Special Milk Program

Within the DOE, Food and Nutrition Management is responsible for managing funds from the USDA for child nutrition programs in Florida. Schools are required to serve meals at no charge to children whose household income is up to 130% of the Federal poverty guideline. Children are entitled to pay a reduced price (a maximum of 40 cents for lunch, 30 cents for breakfast and 15 cents for a snack) if their household income is above 130% but at or below 185% of these guidelines. Children are automatically eligible for free school meals if their household receives food stamps, benefits under the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations or, in most cases, benefits under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

Programs must be approved by the Food and Nutrition Management Section and are audited on a regular basis to ensure that the funds are appropriated fairly and correctly. Funding level for school food service programs is \$18 million (General Revenue) and \$456 million federal for 2000-01. The federal amount includes a \$60 million increase over the previous year. An overwhelming majority of the schools districts reviewed to date are meeting federal dietary guidelines, or are actively involved in a corrective action plan that will enable compliance within 1 year or less.

Florida is more prescriptive than many states in its requirements for school districts to provide lunch and breakfast. No waivers have ever been granted, including with Charter Schools, to allow a public school the choice of not providing meals at school.

The DOE web site lists all participating sponsors of food service programs. <http://fnm.doe.state.fl.us/>. Choose the program you wish to review. Choose "Applications" button. Login as "viewer" and check label list. The site also contains links to USDA sites that provide detailed descriptions of all programs and regulations.

The Department of Health

The following programs within the Department of Health were represented on the Food Security Team:

- Child Care Food Program
- After School Snack Program
- The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- Homeless Children Nutrition Program

Child Care Food Program: This program was authorized as part of the Agricultural Risk Act and is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. It is administered by the Department of Health, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs to provide nutritious meals and snacks to children in child care settings. In 2003, the Department of Health administered this program to approximately 135,000 children daily at 5,700 sites. This program provides food to children between 130-185% of the federal poverty line at a reduced rate and to children below 130% of the poverty line for free. The average daily participation rate for this program in 2003 was 113,991.

After School Snack Program: This program is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service and administered by the DOH. Children up through the age of 18 are eligible as well as persons with disabilities over the age of 18. Snacks are reimbursed at \$.60 per snack. The 2003 average daily participation rate was 15,923 for centers and 13,050 for home day care centers.

Homeless Children Nutrition Program: This program is funded by the U.S.D.A. Food and Nutrition Service and administered by the Department of Health. DOH is working with homeless coalitions and seven homeless centers. It does not duplicate other food programs in Florida that address the same population (School Lunch, Food Stamps, Child Care Food Program and WIC). The 2003 average daily participation rate was 297.

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC): This program helps pregnant, breastfeeding and postpartum women as well as infants and children under the age of five who are living in Florida and in nutritional risk. Only families with an income of up to 185% of the poverty line are eligible for this program. The program provides a combination of supplemental nutritious foods, nutrition counseling, breastfeeding promotion and support, and referrals to health and social services. Serves an average of 345,000 clients each month in all 67 Floridian counties. There are over 300 clinic sites including health departments, community health centers, migrant health centers, hospitals, storefronts and HMOs. Vendors include 1,800 grocery stores, WIC-only stores, military commissaries and a few pharmacies.

The Department of Elder Affairs

The Department of Elder Affairs administers the following:

- Home and Community Services
- Adult Care Food Program

Home and Community Services: The Department of Elder Affairs provides congregate and home delivered meals under the Older Americans Act Title III-C. Providers must be eligible for USDA commodities according to criteria in Title III-C nutrition program. This program also focuses on nutrition counseling and nutrition education in order to address nutritional risk. Over 4 million meals are served on an annual basis.

Adult Care Food Program: This is a USDA funded program administered by the DOEA Affairs. It provides meal reimbursements to eligible Adult Day Care Programs which includes: Licensed Adult Day Care, Mental Health Day Treatment, Alzheimer's Disease Initiative and Habilitation. The program promotes the good nutrition for Florida's elderly and functionally impaired adults that attend eligible day care programs.

Grassroots Organizations

Panhandle Area Migrant Education Center: This agency serves 17 rural school districts and works with migrant farm worker families to assure children have access to education for children (food, clothing, etc). It serves over 300 children using the Summer Feeding program (breakfast and lunch for 6 weeks). They work with Hispanic farm workers in Quincy and Vietnamese fishermen in Pensacola.

Florida Association of Community Action: This agency has a statewide, toll-free number (1-800-329-FOOD) called the Hunger Hotline where any person in need can call to find out sources for short-term emergency aid. Useful data is collected with regards to the callers, allowing FACA to analyze the type and frequency of emergency food relief that is required in the state of Florida. The hotline is funded through a grant from the Department of Community Affairs. FACA also provides training and support for Community Action Agencies and member agencies throughout Florida.

Florida Impact: A statewide network of religious groups, community-based organizations advocating for low-income people, and direct service providers, Impact works on public policy and legislation. It has led the fight for school breakfasts, the Emergency Family Housing Assistance Programs for homeless families and the elimination of laws that discriminate against farm workers. Florida Impact also has a statewide Food Stamp Helpline where individuals can call in to be prescreened for food stamps and get contact information for other food assistance resources.

Farm Share: Farm Share is a food recovery/food rescue program founded in 1991 to package fresh produce for distribution though out Florida. The agency is able to get produce directly from the farmer the day it is picked. It uses prison inmate labor, volunteers and a mostly donated labor force of 35 people. Farm Share shipped tractor-trailer loads of fresh produce to 63 of the 67 counties in Florida this past year. 125 tractor-trailer loads were shipped outside the southern area of Florida. Additional loads not used in Florida were shipped as far away as New York. Farm Share is the only charity packinghouse in the Eastern United States. In addition to fresh produce, Farm Share distributes 33% of all USDA/TEFAP commodities in Florida, serving the five southern counties, Miami-Dade, Broward, Monroe, Palm Beach, and Immokalee.

Florida Association of Food Banks: This organization is affiliated with America's Second Harvest and is a group of 13 food banks located throughout the state with the mission of supporting a wide variety of nonprofit and church based feeding programs. In 2001 the Association's members distributed over 56 million pounds of food and grocery products to hungry Floridians. This nationally donated food combined with USDA commodities, food from local growers, and manufacturers, as well as food from local food drives provides a wide variety of products for over 3,000 charitable feeding programs across the state. These programs range from large feeding centers (e.g. American Red Cross and Salvation Army) to after school under-privileged youth centers to small food pantries in rural churches. All of America's Second Harvest affiliate Food Banks are monitored to ensure compliance with all appropriate health, safety and financial regulations established for the proper operation of a nonprofit food distribution program.

Food Research Action Center: The Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) is a leading national organization working to improve public policies to eradicate hunger and under-nutrition in the United States. Founded in 1970 as a public interest law firm, FRAC is a nonprofit and nonpartisan research and public policy center that serves as the hub of an anti-hunger network of thousands of individuals and agencies across the country.

Human Services Coalition of Dade County: Founded in 1996, the Human Services Coalition of Dade County (HSC) works to empower individuals and communities to create a more just society by promoting civic engagement, economic fairness and access to health and human services. At the heart of these efforts is a belief that individuals, families and communities will be strengthened through increased public awareness and civic involvement in improving systems of care.

Florida Coalition for the Homeless: The Florida Coalition for the Homeless is a dynamic organization whose membership and Board of directors include homeless advocates, service providers, members of the faith-based community, formerly homeless persons, educators, attorneys, mental health professionals and many others statewide who are committed to putting an end to homelessness and improving the conditions of persons living without shelter.

St. Petersburg Free Clinic: For over thirty years the St. Petersburg Free Clinic has helped those in the community who are in need. The current programs help individuals and families with food, financial assistance, medical care, medications, clothing, shelter, and referral information. Those who are assisted are mainly the working poor and those that "fall through the cracks" of existing services.

Florida School Food Service Association: The Florida School Food Service Association (FSFSA) is the professional association for state and local school food service directors, supervisors, food service managers, food service assistants, and nutrition educators throughout Florida. FSFSA was formed in 1950 after the National School Lunch Act of 1946 through the merger of the Food Service Directors Conference and the National Cafeteria Association. Head quartered in Tallahassee, we currently serve more than 7,500 members and are affiliated with the American School Food Service Association that serves more than 65,000 members nationally.

SHARE: SHARE is a not-for-profit organization that builds and strengthens community through volunteer service. Everyone who volunteers just two hours a month is welcome to participate. Since 1990 SHARE Florida has been helping Floridians save money on quality, nutritious food while empowering people to help one another make a positive difference in the world.

Florida Catholic Conference: The Florida Catholic Conference is an agency of the Catholic Bishops, established on February 1, 1969. It speaks for the Bishops in matters of public policy, serves as liaison to government and the legislature, and coordinates communications and activities between the Church and secular agencies. The Bishops of the seven dioceses in Florida constitute its Board of Directors.

APPENDIX C

FLORIDA'S PERFORMANCE TARGETS

(As submitted to USDA, April 2001)

FNCS VISION: <i>We will lead America in ending hunger and improving nutrition and health</i>								
FNS MISSION: <i>To increase food security and reduce hunger in partnership with cooperating organizations by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthful diet, and nutrition education in a manner that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence.</i>								
FLORIDA VISION:								
FLORIDA MISSION:								
Goal 1: Improved Nutrition of Children and Low-Income People								
Objective 1.1: Improved Food Security								
Food Security Index								
	FL	FY-1999	FY-2000	FY-2001	FY-2002	FY-2003	FY-2004	FY-2005
	Baseline	Actual	Y-T-D	Target	Target	Target	Target	Target
1. Prevalence of Food Insecurity With or Without Hunger (1996-1998 average)	11.5%							
	(+or- .87%)							
2. Prevalence of Food Insecurity With Hunger (1996-1998)	4.2%							
	(+or- .52%)							
	FY-1998	FY-1999	FY-2000	FY-2001	FY-2002	FY-2003	FY-2004	FY-2005
Program Access:	Actual	Actual	Y-T-D	Target	Target	Target	Target	Target
Food Stamp Participation	990,571	933,435	886,802	892,500	892,500	892,500	892,500	892,500
WIC Participation	345,150	337,559	296,298	305,187	311,291	317,517	323,867	327,105
NSLP (Avg Daily Lunches)	1,197,461	1,211,683	1,226,165	1,238,000	12,508,000	1,263,300	1,275,950	1,288,700
SBP (Avg Daily Meals)	364,333	375,383	386,660	390,500	394,450	398,400	402,400	406,425
CACFP (Total meals)	59,144,628	63,146,999	47,752,809	70,700,000	74,200,000	77,900,000	81,800,000	85,900,000
SFSP (Avg Daily Attendance)	216,323	197,003	235,750	236,500	237,000	237,500	238,000	238,500
% of CACFP meals served to low-income children	85.72%	86.36%	86.78%	87%	87%	87%	87%	87%
Number of SFSP sponsors	125	115	124	127	130	133	136	139
Number of SFSP sites	2,050	2,035	2,291	2,425	2,450	2,475	2,500	2,525
# of after-school snacks served in schools		309,565	3,944,428	5,000,000	5,050,000	5,100,500	5,151,500	5,255,000
Elderly Farmers Market Program	n/a	n/a	n/a	1440	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
C-1 Meals	4,583,784	4,558,192	4,468,521	4,293,826	4,508,517	4,733,943	4,970,640	5,219,172
Home Delivered Meals	5,741,612	5,439,167	5,839,469	5,985,299	6,284,563	6,598,791	6,928,730	7,275,167
ACFP Meals (total)	1,001,955	1,090,415	1,313,494	1,554,137	1,631,843	1,713,436	1,799,107	1,889,063
% of ACFP Meals served to low income adults	84.0	83.2	84.2	83.7	84%	84%	84%	84%
TEFAP	3,838,720	3,499,192	1,892,100	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
Farmers Market Nutrition Program	8,437	20,715	27,423	30,000	30,000	33,000	33,000	37,000

APPENDIX D

Nutrition Outreach Campaigns

↙ [Mooove to Lowfat or Fat Free Milk Campaign](#)

↙ [5 A Day the Florida Way! Campaign](#)

Mooove to Lowfat or Fat Free Milk Campaign

Material and information can be found directly on the *Mooove* Campaign website:
www.doh.state.fl.us/family/mooove/milk.html.

Milk is a great source of protein, calcium and vitamins! Drinking milk is important for adults, teenagers and children. Choosing the right type of milk is important, too.

[Florida's Interagency Food and Nutrition Committee](#)--a nutrition task force of governmental and educational agencies--launched a statewide campaign called "*Mooove* to Lowfat or Fat Free Milk," which made its debut in March 2002. This nutrition education initiative encourages healthy adults and children two years and older to choose lowfat or fat free milk when buying milk. Lowfat and fat free milk have the same great nutrition as whole and reduced fat (2%) milk, just less fat and fewer calories.

- [Mooove Campaign Kit](#)
- [Mooove Illustrative Materials \(posters, displays, buttons, logos\)](#)
- **Mooove Evaluation Tools:**
 - On-Line Evaluation (to be completed by agency staff)
 - Sample Evaluation Tool for Clients
- [Evaluation Results: March 2002 to February 2003](#)

Florida's Interagency Food and Nutrition Committee:

This campaign is brought to you by the following agencies of The Florida Interagency Food and Nutrition Committee:

- Florida Department of Children and Families
- Florida Department of Education
- Florida Department of Elder Affairs
- Florida Department of Health
- University of Florida IFAS Extension
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration-Florida District, Southeast Region
- Suwannee River Area Health Education Center

Mooove Campaign Kit Contents:

- Cover Letter
(Lead Agency: DCF and DOH)
- Press Release
(Lead Agency: DOH)
- Literature Review About Benefits of Lowfat Milk Campaign
- Article for Professional Newsletter

(Lead Agency: IFAS Extension)

- Lesson Plan and Activity Sheets for Preschoolers
- Lesson Plan and Activity Sheets for Elementary Age Children
- Lesson Plan for Elders

(Lead Agency: FNP, IFAS Extension, DOH)

- WIC Activities
- Taste Test Instructions
- WIC Nutrition Education Newsletter – English/Spanish
- Consumer Handout for Health Fairs, etc.
- Milk-Related Websites

(Lead Agency: DOH)

Mooove Illustrative Materials:

- Dancing Cow Graphic
- Cow Button Sheet
- *Mooove* to Lowfat and Fat Free Milk Poster – English/Spanish
- Skating Cow Display
- Winking Cow Graphic
- *Mooove* Placard
- *Mooove* Display
- Sample Bulletin Board



Mooove Evaluation Results for March 2002 to February 2003:

- [Organizations utilizing *Mooove* campaign activities](#)
- [Targeted Audience for the *Mooove* campaign](#)
- [Expenditure Report](#)

Organizations/Agencies/Programs/Events utilizing *Mooove* campaign activities:

- Libraries, Summer Library Programs
- 4-H camps, Recreation Centers, Day camps
- Family Nutrition Programs involving K-4 graders
- Senior Care Centers
- Grocery stores
- “The World’s Greatest Baby Showers”
- County Commissioners Town Hall meeting
- Food and Drug Administration office
- Women, Infants and Children (WIC) clinics
- School Food Service
- Elementary, middle, high schools
- Food Stamp offices
- Day care centers
- County fairs
- FDA Florida District Office in Maitland

Targeted Audiences:

- 73% used the campaign with preschool children
- 38% used the campaign with elementary aged children
- 38% used the campaign with teens
- 85% used the campaign with adults
- 27% used the campaign with elders

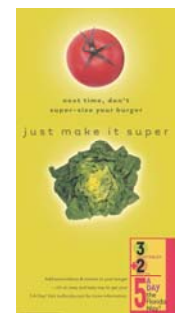
Expenditure Report for *Moove* Campaign

Materials Developed	Approximate Cost
Campaign Kits (included press release, review of research, professional article, lesson plans, clinic activities, taste test directions, consumer handout, evaluation tools).	In-kind contributions from the following Interagency member (Florida Departments of Health, Education, Children and Families, and Elder Affairs; University of Florida IFAS Extension; U.S. Food and Drug Administration-Florida District, Southeast Region; Suwannee River Area Health Education Center).
200,000 Nutrition Education Newsletters (English and Spanish)-WIC 3,000 Newsletters-Child Nutrition Programs (CNP)	\$3,766.00 WIC \$128.00 CNP
9,700 Posters-Interagency (English and Spanish)	\$4,365.00 (Total for all Interagency participants)
3,500 Stand-alone, die-cut cow displays-Department of Education (DOE)	\$4,806.00 DOE
2,000 Grocery Store Placards-WIC	\$545.00 WIC
46 displays, each consisting of 6 display pieces, with test tubes-WIC 50 milk boards-CNP	\$1,077.00 WIC \$300.00 CNP
Buttons-WIC	\$450.00 (Button Maker) \$323.00 (5,000 Button Pieces) \$90.00 (Circle Maker) \$368.00 (Printer's cost for 4,000 pieces artwork)
250 Bulletin Boards-WIC	\$1,125.00 WIC
5,000 Cow Cards-CNP	\$968.00 -CNP
TOTAL:	\$18,311.00*



5 A DAY THE FLORIDA WAY! CAMPAIGN

5 A Day the Florida Way!
Integrated Nutrition Education Initiative
March 2003-February 2004



Summary (as of October 2003)

For the second year in a row, the Florida Department of Health, Bureaus of WIC & Nutrition Services, Child Nutrition Programs, and Chronic Disease Prevention have collaborated to implement a statewide nutrition education campaign. The theme for 2002 was *Mooove to Lowfat and Fat Free Milk*. This year's yearlong campaign theme is *3 vegetables + 2 fruits = 5 A Day the Florida Way!* The campaign kick-off was March 2003 for National Nutrition Month. Below is an outline of the various resources that have been distributed, along with other 5 A Day activities.

5 A Day the Florida Way Kit

Three-ring binders were organized to form individual kits that included the following: lesson plans, coloring sheet, booklists, websites, handouts (English/Spanish), recipes booklet (English/Spanish), and a CD with all materials. Kits were distributed to all WIC agencies and 5 A Day Coordinators at the 67 county health departments throughout the state, as well as to members of the Florida Interagency Food and Nutrition Committee for distribution to their customers. A modified version of the kit was distributed statewide to approximately 1200 Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs contractors. This modified kit included a kid's cookbook by Dole, a 5 A Day promotional products catalog and a pre-campaign vegetable and fruit survey.

5 A Day the Florida Way Materials

The Department of Health's Graphics and Marketing Team of the Office of Performance Improvement assisted with the development and procurement of the following campaign materials. The Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention provided funding to produce these materials via the Florida Area Health Education Centers (AHEC), Inc.: 4 Posters (each in English/Spanish), bookmarks, cling posters, temporary "tattoos", cutting boards, and magnet calendars.

These materials were provided to county health departments, WIC participants, Child Care Food Program participants, and the Florida Interagency Food and Nutrition Committee members for distribution to their customers. The Department of Children and Families distributed the posters to all of their District offices for distribution to their local service centers for display in the lobbies. Assorted materials were also made available to local organizations via the Northeast Florida AHEC contact person.

5 A Day the Florida Way Display

The Bureau of WIC & Nutrition Services and the Graphics and Marketing Team of the Office of Performance Improvement created a display that consists of 12 interchangeable pieces that can be used together for a large display or selected pieces can be grouped for a smaller display. In addition, four recipe cards with healthful nutrition tips - available in English and Spanish - were developed to complement the display. A complete display was provided to each WIC agency. In addition, the printing file for the display is available for other Department of Health bureaus and state agencies and FIFNC members who may wish to provide the display to their customers.



5 A Day Book

A children's book entitled "*Give Me 5 A Day!*" was written by staff from the bureaus of WIC & Nutrition Services and Child Nutrition Programs. A professional artist was engaged for the book's illustrations and the DOH's Graphics and Marketing Team of the Office of Performance Improvement provided the layout for

printing the book. The book was written to serve a dual purpose - to improve literacy among lower income individuals by encouraging reading and to “teach” the importance of eating vegetables and fruits to young children. The book also emphasizes the importance of physical activity. The book will be distributed to all childcare facilities participating in the Child Care Food Program and to each WIC participant with young children. The first printing of the book includes over a quarter of a million copies in both English and Spanish.



There is also a large (54”x29”) laminated poster/display entitled Florida Kids! Get Fit! that includes the 5 A Day message and a physical activity message (poster seen above). Available in English and Spanish. The Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs distributed a flier to all Child Care Food Program participants at annual training encouraging the use of campaign materials.

5 A Day Week at Department of Health (September 22-26, 2003)

- **Press Release:** The Bureau of Chronic Disease and the Office of Communications issued a press release about National 5 A Day week on 9/24/03—it was sent to all newspapers across the state.
- **Phone Interview:** ABC Action News out of Tampa interviewed, via telephone, a nutritionist from the Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs during their morning show on 9/24/03.
- **Materials,** including pamphlets from the Produce for Better Health and additional materials developed by DOH, were sent to each 5 A Day Coordinator.
- **Displays** of *5 A Day the Florida Way!* were set up in the lobbies of each of the four headquarters buildings of the Department of Health.

Still to come:

The final report/evaluation of DOH’s nutrition education campaign—*5 A Day the Florida Way!* is currently being prepared by the Florida Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) staff and DOH staff and will be available in the near future.

APPENDIX E
USDA ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE: FLORIDA FACT SHEET

State Fact Sheets

The United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service (USDA-ERS) develops State Fact Sheets that contain frequently requested data for each state and for the total United States. These include current data on population, per-capita income, earnings per job, poverty rates, employment, and unemployment, among other data pertaining to farm and agricultural-related issues. The fact sheets were updated and released on November 6, 2003, with the latest available population figures for 2002.

See <http://www.ers.usda.gov/StateFacts/>

POPULATION, INCOME, AND EMPLOYMENT

POPULATION				
Variable	U.S.	Florida	Metro	Nonmetro
Population				
1980	226,542,204	9,746,961	9,038,653	708,308
1990	248,718,291	12,938,071	12,023,514	914,557
2000	281,421,906	15,982,378	14,837,497	1,144,881
2001	284,796,887	16,396,515	15,230,590	1,165,925
2002	288,368,698	16,713,149	15,535,468	1,177,681

For more information on population see the Rural Population and Migration Briefing Room, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/Population/> or contact John Cromartie, 202-694-5421.

INCOME				
Variable	U.S.	Florida	Metro	Nonmetro
Per-capita income (2000 dollars)				
1999	29,041	27,738	28,207	21,673
2000	29,469	27,764	28,257	21,372
Percent change	1.5	.1	.2	-1.4
Earnings per job (2000 dollars)				
1999	35,964	31,390	31,725	25,403
2000	36,316	31,534	31,885	25,128
Percent change	1.0	.5	.5	-1.1
Poverty rate (percent)				
1980	12.4	13.5	13	19.7
1990	13.8	12.7	12.4	17.1
1995	13.8	15.2	14.9	18.9
Latest (2000)	11.3	11.5		

For more information on United States poverty rates, see the County-Level Poverty Rates data page, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/PovertyRates/PovListpct.asp?st.FL&view=Percent> or the Rural Income, Poverty, and Welfare Briefing Room, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/IncomePovertyWelfare/> or contact Dean Jolliffe, 202-694-5430

EMPLOYMENT				
Variable	U.S.	Florida	Metro	Nonmetro
Total number of jobs				
1999	163,831,100	8,688,254	8,227,500	460,754
2000	167,465,300	8,950,894	8,486,233	464,661
Unemployment rate (percent)				
2000	4.0	3.6	3.5	4.7
2001	4.8	4.8	4.7	5.6

For more information on United States unemployment rates, see the County-Level Unemployment and Median Household Income data page, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/Unemployment/RDList2.asp?st=FL> or the Rural Labor and Education Briefing Room, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/LaborAndEducation/> or contact Lorin Kusmin, 202-694-5429

APPENDIX F

RELEVANT SECTIONS OF THE FARM SECURITY AND RURAL INVESTMENT ACT OF 2002

Goal 2, Objective 1, Strategy 4:

- **Section 4118** - This provision makes substantial changes to the QC system that measures States' payment accuracy in issuing food stamp benefits. Only those States with persistently high error rates would face liabilities. Current law imposes liabilities each year a State's payment error rate is above the national average. Effective FY 2003, the reforms raise this threshold so that States are not penalized unless there is a 95 percent probability that their error rate exceeds 105 percent of the national average for two consecutive years. If a State's error rate exceeds the threshold for two years in a row, a liability will be established that is equal to 10 percent of the cost of errors above 6 percent. Of that amount, USDA may waive all or part, and/or require up to 50 percent to be reinvested in corrective action programs and/or require up to 50 percent to be set aside for possible recovery in the third year. If a State's error rate exceeds the threshold for three consecutive years, the State is responsible for paying the second year at-risk amount and USDA will again require up to 50 percent of the liability amount to be reinvested in corrective action programs and up to 50 percent be set aside for possible recovery in the following year if the State again exceeds the threshold for that year. States are required to pay at-risk amounts as soon as possible after all appeals have been exhausted. When a liability against the State is established, USDA is required to provide to the Governor and State legislature a copy of the notification letter sent to the Food Stamp Program administrator. States' right to appeal liabilities and seek good cause relief are retained. As under current law, States with payment error rates above 6 percent are required to submit corrective action plans to reduce their error rate.
- **Section 4119** - This provision extends the date for completing QC reviews and resolving State/Federal differences to May 31st and extends the date for announcing QC error rates to June 30th.
- **Section 4120** – Bonuses for States that Demonstrate High or Most Improved Performance (effective on enactment of the Farm Bill) – For FY 2003, the current enhanced funding system that is based on error rates is replaced with a performance system that will award \$48 million in bonuses each year to States with high or improved performance for actions taken to correct errors, reduce the rates of error, improve eligibility determinations, or other activities that demonstrate effective administration as determined by USDA. USDA will establish guidance for awarding FY 2003 and FY 2004 bonuses by October 1, 2002 and issue regulations regarding the criteria for bonus awards for FY 2005 and succeeding years. The Secretary will solicit ideas from State agencies and organizations that represent State interests prior to issuing proposed regulations.

Goal 4, Objective 2, Strategy 5:

- **Section 4101** – Encouragement of Payment of Child Support (effective October 1, 2002) – This provision allows states the option to treat legally obligated child support payments to a non-household member as an income exclusion rather than a deduction (as provided in current law). It requires USDA to establish simplified procedures that states could use to determine the amount of child support paid by a household, including information from a state's child support enforcement agency.
- **Section 4102** – Simplified Definition of Income (effective October 1, 2002) – This provision allows a state option to exclude certain types of income that are not counted under the state's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance or Medicaid programs. Under this provision, states are allowed to exclude: educational assistance not counted under Medicaid; state complementary assistance not counted under section 1931 of Medicaid; and any type of income not counted under

section 1931 of Medicaid or TANF except for wages or salaries, benefits from major assistance programs, regular payments from a government source (such as unemployment benefits or general assistance), worker's compensation, child support payments, or other types as determined by USDA through regulations that are essential to fair determinations of food stamp eligibility and benefit amounts.

- **Section 4103** – Standard Deduction (effective October 1, 2002) – This provision replaces the current, fixed standard deduction with a deduction that varies according to household size and is adjusted annually for cost-of-living increases. Larger households will receive a higher deduction than they currently do. For households in the 48 contiguous states and DC, AK, HI and VI, it sets the deduction at 8.31 percent of the applicable net income limit based on household size. No household would receive an amount less than the current deduction (\$134, \$229, \$189 and \$118 respectively) or more than the standard deduction for a household of six. Guamanian households receive a slightly higher deduction.
- **Section 4104** – Simplified Utility Allowance (effective October 1, 2002) – This provision allows states to simplify the Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) if the states elect to use the SUA rather than actual utility costs for all households. For these states, it eliminates the current requirement to prorate the SUA when households share living quarters and it allows the use of the SUA for households in public housing with shared meters that are only charged for excess utility costs.
- **Section 4105** – Simplified Determination of Housing Costs (effective October 1, 2002) – This provision allows states to use a standard deduction from income of \$143 per month for homeless households with some shelter expenses.
- **Section 4106** – Simplified Determination of Deductions (effective October 1, 2002) – This provision allows states to disregard reported changes in deductions during certification periods except for changes associated with a new residence or earned income until the next recertification.
- **Section 4107** – Simplified Definition of Resources (effective October 1, 2002) – This provision increases the resource limit for households with a disabled member from \$2,000 to \$3,000 consistent with the limit for households with an elderly member. It also provides a state the option to exclude certain types of resources that the state does not count for TANF or Medicaid (section 1931). Under this option, states could not exclude cash, licensed vehicles, amounts in financial institutions that are readily available, or other resources as determined by USDA through regulations that are essential to fair determinations of food stamp eligibility and benefit amounts.
- **Section 4115** – Transitional Food Stamp for Families Moving from Welfare (effective October 1, 2002) – Under this provision, states may extend from the current 3 months to 5 months the period of time households may receive transitional food stamp benefits when they lose TANF cash assistance. Benefits would be equal to the amount received by the household prior to the termination of TANF with adjustments in income for the loss of TANF and, at state option, information from another program in which the household participates. A household would not be eligible for the extension if it was losing TANF cash assistance because of a sanction, was disqualified from the Food Stamp Program, or is in a category of households designated by the state as ineligible for transitional benefits. Households may apply for recertification during the transitional period with benefits determined according to current circumstances. The provision also extends through the end of the transitional period the length of time households can be certified for benefits (currently limited to 12 months for most households).
- **Section 4401** – Partial Restoration of Benefits to Legal Immigrants (various effective dates) – This provision restores food stamp eligibility to qualified immigrants who are otherwise eligible AND who: are receiving disability benefits regardless of date of entry (current law requires them to have been in the country on 8/22/96) – effective FY 2003; are under 18 regardless of date of entry (current law limits eligibility to children who were in the country on 8/22/96) – effective FY 2004; or have lived in the U.S. continuously for 5 years as a qualified alien beginning on date of entry – effective April 2003.

