Ohio | Department of Education

John R. Kasich, Governor
Dr. Richard A. Ross, Superintendent of Public Instruction

TO: All Commodity Distribution Program Participants

FROM: Commodity Distribution

SUBJECT: Commodity Distribution Updates for SY2013-2014

DATE: September 4, 2013

Welcome
The Commodity Distribution Team at ODE, Office for Child Nutrition (OCN) would like to welcome everyone back to this new school year! Please take a few moments to carefully review the information presented in this memo as changes have occurred this school year.

Commodity Ordering and Deliveries
Ordering of commodities in the new school year has already started. One password instead of two will now be needed to login to CATS. Delivery schedules have been posted in CATS. To view your delivery schedule, click on Agencies > Contract > Contract Packet. Finally click on "View" under "Delivery Locations" and on the next page that is displayed, click on "View Delivery Schedule" at the top right corner. The complete delivery schedule for some schools that currently show partial delivery schedule for the school year will be loaded in the system.

We have received some reports of commodity orders that are not being saved on the computers of some users. This is usually due to a compatibility issue arising from the operating system of a user that may differ from that of CATS. Schools are advised that after clicking on the "Save" button, **only** when a new window opens and a follow-up message displays, **"The Combined order was saved successfully"** ensures that an order has been properly saved in the system. Any order that is not saved in the system would **not** be transmitted to ODE. Users should immediately have their IT personnel configure their systems to "Compatibility mode" setting under the "Tools" section of their browsers, or call ODE for assistance if an order has not been saved successfully.

Commodity releases for orders will continue to be opened in CATS on the 10th of each month and close by 1:00 pm on the 25th.

State Warehouse Contract
The Department of Administrative Services has awarded contracts for all warehouse regions in the state. To verify which warehouse provides services to your school district you may log into CATS and click on Agencies > Contact > and Contract Packet.

Entitlement Dollars
The commodity entitlement rate established by the USDA has been increased from $0.2275 to $0.2325 per lunch under the National School Lunch Program for SY 2013-2014. The entitlement dollar amount for each school district is calculated by multiplying the total number of lunches served in the prior year by the commodity entitlement rate. Your entitlement dollars will be updated to reflect the number of lunches served during SY 2012-2013 in September 2013.

Delivery Charge
The delivery charge of $2.50 per case will remain unchanged in the new school year.

Department of Defense (DOD) Survey
A survey will be available in CATS 12 later this year for school districts to indicate to the Commodities Office how much of their entitlement dollars they would like to allocate toward the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables through the Department of Defense for the 2014-2015 school year. Further details regarding the survey will be made available to all school districts later this year.

Commodity Fact Sheets
Please note that the links to Fact Sheets and Ingredient Statements for all commodity items are now available for each item on the order form in CATS by clicking on "Facts" next to each commodity item. The same information can also be obtained from the ODE website at http//education.ohio.gov/. From this web page, select "Other Resources" from the "Topics" menu, then "Food and Nutrition, "Commodity Distribution Program" and finally "State Processed Commodity Documents."

New Commodity Items
We are continuing to update the list of commodity offerings to include items that would help school districts conform to the requirements in the new USDA meal pattern. Many new commodity items will be distributed during this school year. All turnovers, breadsticks and chicken now have whole grain rich bread or breading. Unbreaded chicken has also been added. Additionally, three sweet potato items and two new potato items will broaden your range of selection in the new school year.

General
Please do not hesitate to contact Commodity Distribution at **1-855-338-2666** if you have any inquiry on information provided in this memo, or on any other commodity issue**.** We wish everyone a very successful school year.