Section 3: *Customizing the MSC II MENUS*

MSC II is a set of cycle menus that must be followed to meet nutrient goals and gain the benefits of cycle menus. The system, however, will allow some flexibility so you can tailor ***MSC II*** to meet student preferences, availability of USDA commodities, and purchasing or production emergencies.

When customizing the menu for an individual school district, the days of each week may be arranged in an order that will best meet delivery and production needs.

In case of emergencies, the first line of defense in making appropriate substitutions is to choose another menu item from the same week's menu. For example in Week 2 Day 2 of the Elementary menus, if Pizza is not available, switch to the Corn Dog Nuggets planned for Day 5 of the same week. Serve the pizza when Day 5 arrives on the menu cycle. The weekly nutrients will not be altered by the change.

What is the Customizing Chart?

The ***MsC II*** *Customizing Charts* are tools that help you tailor ***MsC II*** menus to meet your needs. The charts provide lists of nutritionally equivalent alternatives for each ***MsC II*** food item in the traditional USDA meal pattern: meat/meat alternates, fruits, vegetables, and grains/breads component categories. The charts are easy to use and all of the recipes identified by the charts are located in the ***MsC II*** Manual.

The benefits of using the Customizing Charts include:

* Reducing the efforts of the foodservice staff because the tedious calculation of nutritionally equivalent substitutions already has been performed.
* Recipes with comparable nutrients are grouped together. Choosing an alternative item from the ***MsC II*** customizing chart will not affect the weekly nutrient goals for your CN program.

Why use the *MsC II* Customizing Charts?

There are only four reasons to use the ***MsC II*** Customizing Charts:

- To tailor ***MsC II*** to specific food preferences of your students. This is done when you first decide to use *MsC II* in your school district; and these changes become permanent.
- To address changes due to receiving USDA commodities. These changes will occur periodically.
- To address emergencies such as food supplies not delivered on time, or a failed food product requiring a substitute. These changes only meet the needs of that day's production and are used only when switching menu items within the same week does not meet your needs. The menu returns to the original food item the next time this day appears on the cycle.
- To adjust menus for seasonal availability of fresh produce. Menus were planned with a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. The time of year affects both price and availability of fresh produce.

Organization of *MsC II* Customizing Charts

The ***MsC II*** Customizing Charts are organized by meal components. The charts are meat/meat alternates chart, vegetables chart, fruits chart, and grains/breads chart. The organization and use of each chart is discussed separately.

When customizing menus for your school district, variety of food items should be considered. Substitute a similar item such poultry for poultry when possible. The menus have been planned using a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. Consider seasonal availability and price when planning menus and using the customizing charts.

Meat/Meat Alternates Chart

MsC II menu items are listed in numerical order in separate tables. The recipe name and number are listed at the top of the table. The next line lists the calories, range of calories, the total fat grams and the saturated fat grams. Alternate choices that meet the same meal component requirements, as well as nutrients, are listed in two columns below the top two lines of the table. To use this chart, find the entree you want to customize and then choose one of the alternatives that meets your production goals. This choice will allow you to maintain weekly nutrient standards. When making substitutions, you will still need to verify that all meal components for that menu are satisfied.

Each selection is within a range of 90 to 110 % of the calories. The selection is equal to or less than the amount of total fat and saturated fat grams listed. In some

instances, the selections generated were less than two and the amount of total fat and saturated fat grams were expanded to + 10 percent of the figures. EXPANDED was added after the recipe name to indicate that this had occurred. Items are in order by recipe number.

Vegetables Chart

The vegetables have been grouped into four categories based on calories and fat. Group 1 contains vegetable recipes with 50 or fewer calories and less 3 grams of fat. Group 2 contains vegetable recipes with calories between 51 and 100 calories and less than 3 grams of fat. Group 3 contains vegetable recipes between 100 and 200 calories and less than 3 grams of fat. Group 4 contains recipes with the highest level of fat grams, over 3 grams. Calories for these items are over 100. To choose an alternative vegetable item, find the vegetable you wish to substitute and choose another from the <u>same</u> group in the chart. Staying within the same group will allow you to maintain the same weekly averages for nutrients. Always consider the other nutrient contributions for the vegetable recipes.

Fruits Chart

Fruits have been divided into three categories based on calories. Group 1 contains fruit recipes with 50 or fewer calories. Group 2 contains fruit recipes with calories between 51 and 100 calories. Group 3 contains fruit recipes between 100 and 250 calories. To make a fruit substitution, choose another fruit in the same group. Consider the other nutrient contributions for the recipes.

Grains/Breads Chart

Grains and bread products are divided into three categories based on calories and grams of fat. Group 1 contains recipes with calories between 1 to 100 calories and 5 grams of fat or less. Group 2 contains recipes with calories between 101 to 200 calories and 5 grams of fat or less. Group 3 contains breads with 101 – 300 calories with 5 to 10 grams of fat. To make a substitution in this meal component, choose another bread or grain item in the same group.