USDA

United States Department of Agriculture

Food and Nutrition Service

Mountain Plains Region

1244 Speer Boulevard, Suite 903
Denver, Colorado 80204-3585

JAN 0 6 2003

Reply to
Attn of: CACFP-687
SFSP-465
SP 03-05

Subject: Baby Fruits or Vegetables with DHA

STATE AGENCY DIRECTORS - (Special Nutrition Programs)
Colorado ED, Colorado DPHE, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri DH, Missouri ED, Montana OPI, Montana DPHHS, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming

In response to a number of inquiries, we wish to clarify that certain baby food products containing DHA cannot be served to infants as part of a reimbursable meal in the child nutrition programs. DHA is an omega-3 fatty acid known as docosahexaenoic that may be added to commercially prepared fruits or vegetables.

The source of DHA in some lines of baby food products, such as Beech-Nut First Advantage Sweet Potato Souffle or Tropical Blend, is egg yolk. These DHA-added products combine fruits or vegetables with dried egg yolk, heavy cream, rice flour, vanilla extract, and other ingredients. They are not labeled or marketed as desserts, but they contain similar ingredients that may not be appropriate for an infant younger than 8 months of age. Introducing these "dessert-like" ingredients into an infant's diet at an earlier age could result in a food sensitivity or a food allergy.

Although DHA-added products cannot contribute to the infant meal pattern, they may be served as additional foods to infants 8 months of age or older. Since they contain several ingredients, additives, or extenders that could cause allergic reactions, we recommend that the center, the provider, or the school check with the infant's parent or guardian, before serving them.

Darlene Sanchez

DARLENE SANCHEZ
Regional Director
Special Nutrition Programs