



FRAC: Summer Nutrition Programs

Model Program

Parks and Rec. Dept. Finds Creative Uses for Commodity Food **City of Caruthersville Parks and Recreation Department, MO**

Overview

- The Caruthersville Parks and Recreation Department enhances the meals it serves through the Summer Food Service Program with a wide variety of USDA commodity foods.
- This year, the program will serve about 1,100 lunches and 500 breakfasts per day at eleven SFSP sites, all located in low-income neighborhoods and open to any child who comes to eat a meal.

Process for Meal Service

- Caruthersville makes use of the skills of many regular school year employees during the summer.
- For example, the summer program employs school cooks who are already familiar with child nutrition program regulations and meal patterns.
- Teachers are hired to supervise the children at the sites.
- In addition, the SFSP provides summer job opportunities for some youth.
- All the SFSP meals are prepared in a central kitchen and the site supervisors transport the meals in their personal vehicles.
- To make meal service easier for the site supervisors, as many meal components as possible are put together in paper bags in the central kitchen.
- And since many of the meals contain hot components, the program has figured out inexpensive and effective methods to keep food hot during transport.

Creative Practices

- To supplement the meals that are reimbursed with SFSP funds, the Parks and Rec. program gets as many USDA commodity foods as they can and uses every penny of them.
- Caruthersville finds creative ways to enhance its SFSP meals with commodity foods.
- For example, USDA dried fruits and trail mix are baked into muffins and cookies.
- The program also makes its own trail mix by combining commodity dried blueberries, raisins and walnuts.
- USDA cheese is used in tacos and on top of salads, and commodity pork is used for barbeque sandwiches.
- The children especially like the USDA canned and frozen peaches served as part of breakfast.

For more information, contact: Karen Meeks, Food Service Director, (573) 333-6136 ext. 22, kkmeeks@mail.com