

Informational Memorandum on the Thrifty Food Plan, 2006

This e-mail is to inform you that the updated Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) has been reviewed by USDA and will be posted on the website of the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP).

USDA periodically updates the TFP—holding the pricing the same (cost neutral)—to reflect the most current dietary guidance, food consumption patterns, nutrient composition of foods, and food prices. CNPP has completed the latest update (described in the report entitled “The Thrifty Food Plan, 2006”). This update was done with assistance from other agencies, specifically the USDA’s Economic Research Service and the Food and Nutrition Service.

The TFP, a model market basket of foods designed to provide a healthy diet at minimal cost, is per section 3(o) of the Food Stamp Act the basis for setting and adjusting maximum food stamp benefits. As such it also serves as a national standard for a nutritious diet at a minimal cost. It is one of four official USDA food plans and is maintained by CNPP. The TFP market baskets specify the type and quantity of foods that people could consume at home to obtain a nutritious diet at a minimal cost. The TFP needed to be updated because it was based on 1989 RDAs, rather than the 1997-2005 DRIs; the 1995 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, rather than the 2005 Dietary Guidelines; the 1992 Pyramid, rather than the 2005 MyPyramid; and 1989-91 pricing and consumption data, rather than 2001-02 data (the most recent data available at the time this update began).

A technical working group, composed of USDA nutritionists, economists, and other technical staff, and a senior advisory committee, composed of USDA policy officials, oversaw the development of the TFP update, providing advice and review. Both committees approved the updated TFP and “The Thrifty Food Plan, 2006” report.

The report can be found at www.cnpp.usda.gov. On the left of the home page, the link to the TFP report is labeled “Food Plans.”