

Brief for WHITE HOUSE ON THE NATIONAL FOOD PLAN

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National Food Plan with Particular Reference to the Interrelationships of Federal, State, Local and Individual Responsibilities

The U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has important and primary responsibilities for food as a resource which must be carried out in close cooperation with other Federal agencies, State and local governments, the food processing industry generally, and the public.

In this statement particular attention is given to the following period since plans for this period have been finalized for execution.

Food Action in Immediate Post-Attack Period Should Be Coordinated

The individual family should be prepared to feed itself in a family fallout shelter for the initial two week period following an attack. The best prepared families will be able to sustain after-attack conditions have been used, and some families will be able to before the two week period expires. Families and individuals will enter mass feeding centers through their outlet as soon as it is safe to be out of fallout shelter. Local State and Federal agencies will coordinate the rationing and mass feeding programs to insure that the needs of the community are met.

It is emphasized that the USDA will actively participate in the distribution of emergency food processors, and distributors and will advise government agencies to supply when necessary to supplement the distribution of the food supplies.

Whenever it appears that food supplies will be exhausted and that the wholesale stocks designated for the use of the public are being depleted upon requirements, steps will be taken to insure that the public has access to additional food.

Even if communications with other agencies are not available, the local office of USDA will have authority to take whatever steps are necessary to insure the best utilization of government supplies and will coordinate with State and farm levels, together with the local food processors, the National Commodity Credit Corporation.

If communications permit and the supplies from the local office are inadequate, the USDA local office will coordinate the distribution of supplies to the office. Through the USDA State Office, the Federal Government, the national level may also be able to provide additional supplies.

USDA will make every effort to coordinate and gain from the various agencies. In carrying out its Federal food program, the USDA will coordinate with

or divert from a community level to meet the needs of special dietary levels. A possible exception would be provided for the use of military. A primary aim of the plan is to ensure that all people in all areas are fed as rapidly as possible after the attack is averted.

Even in the immediate post-attack period it is necessary to concentrate on the proper distribution of food supplies while the possibility of an attack. It is also important that essential food production and processing be continued at the highest level possible in order to meet the needs of the population.

There will be need to see that perishable food supplies are conserved, conserve storable products and supplies for future use in those areas where perishable supplies are most vulnerable to contamination.

In all this activity full communication and close working relationships will be maintained between Federal, State and local government agencies. Between USDA, the Office of Civil Defense, the Federal Reserve, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Federal Communications Commission and services which are available to the general public.

USDA will look to State and local government for assistance in obtaining such essential supporting items as transportation, fuel, etc., and manpower in the immediate post-attack period when such items are to be obtained through Federal Reserve channels.

The plan just outlined is described more fully in the "Federal Food Plan" which is Annex 33 to the "National Plan for Civil Defense and Defense Mobilization". This plan will serve as a framework for the following preparedness steps to be taken:

Preparedness Measures

A broad educational program will be carried out at the Federal, State and local levels designed to educate the general public on the relative responsibilities of the Federal, State and local government for food as they will apply to the emergency.

State and local governments will be urged to maintain a food inventory and for the control of local food distribution in the immediate post-attack period, so that food will be available to the maximum of available food supplies. State and local governments will be encouraged to maintain a record of food stocks and distribution of food supplies which will be essential in the post-attack period.

Plans of USDA take into account the potential food shortages which the Department has as a result of the emergency period.

USDA will proceed to plan an emergency field organization that full utilization can be made of the existing existing staff of the Department at State, county and community levels. Additional staff will be delegated to appropriate offices and field offices during the pre-emergency period.

Ability to assess the effects of attack on food supplies and processing facilities is being developed. To assess damage and related work a directory of all major food processing and storage facilities is being compiled. It should also be noted that USDA is developing a disaster relief program for members of the military who are mobilized during a national emergency.

The food program is a direct result of plans which are being prepared for defense against biological and chemical warfare. Plans for animals and crops, and distribution of food are being developed.

Total Food Supplies Will Be Adequate

Studies made by the USDA indicate that the overall supply of food will be adequate immediately following an attack on the United States. The main problem will be to distribute the available food supplies equitably and assure equitable distribution to all people.

This is a principal reason why large food stocks are being advocated.

It is recognized, however, that families should have a minimum stockpile supply, that public shelters should be stocked with food, and that some buildup of food stocks not produced in sufficient quantities in the United States may be needed. It is also recognized that there are special food problems for some areas of the United States, particularly in the particularly vulnerable areas.

The Commodity Credit Corporation has a stockpile of agricultural commodities but most of these stocks are not immediately available for use directly for food. On a temporary basis, however, these stocks can be used during any immediate emergency period to help provide food for survivors can use.

Commodity Credit Corporation stocks also include a stockpile of wheat. The criteria used in the selection of owned stocks are based on availability, but inventories of these commodities are being maintained for wheat and cereals to be available for use.

Summary and Reference to Long Range Problems

In summary, it is recognized that the event of an attack on the United States

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USDA, State and local government, to insure that the needs of contributors and the public at large are met during the immediate post-attack period.

It will be necessary for all the people fully responsible for the people is to be accomplished as possible. This objective will be possible only if adequate plans are made in the pre-attack period and if these plans are well coordinated to allow for an emergency emergency occurs.

Readiness to carry out the emergency food program is further enhanced by the fact that the country is very well stocked with a wide variety of many commodities and by the fact that the USDA has a large and experienced staff of personnel already engaged in the program which will be able to handle an emergency with little delay.

Although major emphasis will be placed on food production in the immediate post-attack period, the situation does not stop there. The processing and distribution of the food is a long and complex process which necessitate the continued cooperation and best efforts of the State and local governments; the Federal Government, and the other agencies being developed to meet the needs of the people.