

# GDSN attributes for end items containing USDA Foods

## Opportunity Statement

On February 6, 2018, the American Commodity Distribution Association, (ACDA,) Processing Committee held a webinar titled **Processing USDA Foods: It Begins with the Menu**. K-12 menu planners across the country utilize software systems that could move to the Global Data Synchronization Network (**GDSN**) as the best digital source for product specifications. USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) started in 2021 to require USDA Foods vendors to submit product information via GS1 GDSN for a select number of items purchased for the National School Lunch Program. However, the full power and capability of this vital tool (the GDSN,) have not yet been applied to end items containing USDA Foods for processing. But what if it did? What if further processed end items containing USDA Foods had attributes in the GDSN specific to the USDA code and School Year values in pounds and dollars? A Processor's Summary End Product Data Schedule (SEPDS) is an existing published document containing these attributes. This could significantly improve menu planning, forecasting, and procurement processes.

## The Objective

Add data fields for attributes found in further processed end items containing USDA Foods.

The GDSN supports many attributes required by K-12 Operators including ingredients, CN meal pattern credit, and nutrients for defined serving sizes and allergens. Current standards also support attributes associated with identifying certain ingredients. Adding additional data fields to contain USDA Foods attributes will allow for the flow of that data to menu planning software and improve forecasting.

## Stakeholder Perspectives

### **Recipient Agencies (RA, or K-12 Operators receiving entitlement dollars,) require:**

- An easier way to find which products they can purchase using their USDA Foods funding in real time when menu planning and forecasting are completed using back of the house software.
- Tools to calculate and forecast how much of each processed end item they should use and to integrate those items with their menu plans more easily.
- Tools and reports integrated with their existing software to audit their USDA Foods balances with actual orders.
- Streamlined procurement using approved GTINs to identify acceptable and "or equal" products.
- Electronically transfer timely and accurate information about end products containing USDA Foods into their local back-of-the-house system.
- Generate usage reports of processed end items to help compare balances reported by Processors.

### **Processors require:**

- An easier way to communicate USDA Foods information to other stakeholders, especially RAs.
- Improved forecasting by other stakeholders.
  - End goal: RAs which divert what they will use and use what they divert.

### **Distributors require:**

- To improve the accuracy of data for end items containing USDA Foods.

### **Back of House Software Companies require:**

- Inclusion in data sharing, with accessible clean data for integrated modules like forecasting, menu planning, production, ordering, receiving, inventory, and financial management.
- A common GTIN index will be available to identify end products that may contain USDA Foods for reporting purposes.

### **All Stakeholders require:**

- Minimizing inconsistent communication and delayed, out-of-date data.

### **Additional Stakeholder Roles**

#### **American Commodity Distribution Association**

- Development and training for standards.
- Promotion of standards among impacted members.
  - In School Year 2023-2024 there are approximately 65 approved Processors.

#### **GDSN 1WorldSync Data Pool**

- 1WorldSync is the largest data pool credentialed by GDSN. Updating GDSN attributes is a process requiring the collaboration of the global community. However, 1WorldSync can quickly supplement the official GDSN schema by adding these USDA Foods attributes to their local schema, making them available to anyone who uses their data pool to access GDSN. USDA and the Nourish to Flourish Database both use 1WorldSync as their data pool.

### **New attributes gleaned from SEPDS**

New attributes include:

- USDA Foods Code: numeric.
  - Refer to the USDA Foods Available List for a given School Year.
- USDA Foods Inventory Drawdown per Case for a given School Year.
  - Value shown in pounds.
- USDA Foods Value per Case for a given School Year.
  - Because the value of the ingredient will change each school year, there will be values for each separate USDA Foods code for each School Year.
- Effective Date: date
- Expiration Date: date

### **Recommended Processor Action**

Authorize GDSN data pool providers and K-12 data aggregators to use supplemental SEPDS data adding temporary attributes to the data set while the GDSN review and approval is underway.

### **Conclusion**

In working with USDA Foods, it all starts with the menu. Taking advantage of data from that point will greatly benefit many stakeholders.