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the distributing agency in instances where more than a six-month inventory is needed. Justification shall be submitted by the distributing agency to the FNSRO for approval in instances where more than a six-month inventory is needed at the distributing agency level.

(3) The distributing agency shall take corrective action to ensure that excess inventories at all levels are eliminated and shall document actions taken to reduce excessive inventories.

[53 FR 20426, June 3, 1988, as amended at 54 FR 42475, Oct. 17, 1989; 62 FR 53730, Oct. 16, 1997]

§ 250.15 Financial management.

(a) *Distribution charges.* (1) Recipient agencies may be required to pay part or all of the direct costs for intrastate storage and distribution of donated food through distribution charges assessed by the distributing or subdistributing agency, except as provided in paragraph (a)(2) of this section.

(i) Distributing and subdistributing agencies assessing distribution charges shall submit a description of their system with all data used in calculating the rate to be used for the upcoming school year to the FNSRO for approval. The initial description and data shall be submitted by June 30, 1990. Updates to this information shall, at a minimum, be submitted to the FNSRO for approval every three years by March 31.

(ii) At least 90 days before increasing distribution charges beyond normal inflation, the distributing/subdistributing agency shall submit to the FNSRO a description of the change together with all data used to calculate the change. FNS will take action on the proposed increase in accordance with paragraph (a)(1)(v) of this section.

(iii) Allowable costs include but are not limited to those program costs referenced in paragraph (f)(2) of this section, i.e. transportation, storage and handling of donated foods, salaries of persons directly connected with the administration of the program and other program related expenses. Examples of other program related expenses are administrative costs such as fringe benefits, travel expenses, rent, utilities, accounting/auditing services, computer

services, and the costs of providing program services to recipient agencies such as the cost for administering and monitoring the State's processing program, and technical assistance workshops.

(iv) Distribution charges shall not be assessed for costs which would be unallowable under the Cost Principles in the Department's Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, 7 CFR part 3015, subpart T. In no case may distribution charges be assessed for costs which are paid for by State Administrative Expense (SAE) funds, State or local appropriated funds or any other funds available to the distributing or subdistributing agency to administer the program. Distribution charges shall not be based on a percentage of the value of the commodities distributed.

(v) FNS shall review the information and inform the distributing agency of the appropriateness of its distribution charges. If it is determined that a distributing agency's proposed distribution charges are excessive or incorporate inappropriate costs, the distributing/subdistributing agency will be required to adjust the distribution charges to reflect an appropriate level or submit further justification sufficient to satisfy the FNSRO that the proposed distribution charges are essential to cover allowable costs and services. This further justification shall include information from recipient agencies regarding their satisfaction with services provided.

(vi) Distribution charges, including any excess distribution charges which may accrue (as defined in paragraph (f)(4) of this section) shall be used in accordance with provisions of paragraph (f) of this section.

(2) Whenever a commodity is donated to a State without charge or credit against entitlement, recipient agencies may not be assessed for any part of the intrastate costs of storage and transportation of such commodity that is in excess of the distributing or subdistributing agency's direct costs for such storage and transportation minus any amount that the Department provides to the State to pay such costs under part 251 of this chapter.

(3) Under no circumstances shall recipients be required to make any payments in money, materials, or services for or in connection with the receipt of donated foods, nor shall voluntary contributions be solicited (except for the nutrition programs for the elderly) in connection with the receipt of donated foods for any purpose.

(b) *Sale of containers.* When containers or packing materials in which donated foods are received are disposed of by sale, the proceeds of such sale shall be used solely in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (f)(2) of this section.

(c) *Claims.* If a distributing agency improperly distributes or uses any donated foods, or causes loss of or damage to a donated food through its failure to provide proper storage, care, or handling, the distributing agency shall, at the Department's option:

(1) Replace the donated food in its distribution program in kind, or, in the case of section 6 donated foods, where replacement in kind may not be practicable, with other similar foods, or

(2) Pay to the Department the value of the donated food as determined by the Department.

Upon the happening of any event creating a claim in favor of a distributing agency against a subdistributing agency, recipient agency, warehouseman, carrier or other person, for the improper distribution, use, or loss of, or damage to, a donated food, the distributing agency shall take action to obtain recovery. All amounts collected by such action shall, at the Department's option, be used in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (c)(1) of this section, or, except for amounts collected on claims involving section 6 donated foods, shall be expended for program purposes in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (f) of this section. Determinations by a distributing agency that a claim has or has not arisen in favor of the distributing agency against a subdistributing agency, recipient agency, warehouseman, carrier or other person, shall, at the option of the Department, be approved by the Department prior to the distributing agency taking action thereon. Where prior approval has not been given by the Department, a distrib-

uting agency's claim determinations shall be subject to review by the Department. In the case of an inventory shortage, when the loss of any one commodity does not exceed one percent of the total quantity of the donated food distributed or utilized from any single storage facility during the fiscal year in which the loss occurred, or during the period for which an audit was conducted by representatives of the Department, or, if approved by FNS, during the period for which an audit was conducted by the distributing agency, if the distributing agency finds that: (i) The cause of the shortage cannot be established, (ii) the lost donated foods were held in non-commercial storage or other facilities owned or operated by the distributing agency, a subdistributing agency or a recipient agency, and (iii) there is no indication that the loss was the result of negligence or continued inefficiency in operations, the distributing agency need not take any further claims action, but the factual basis for not taking further claims action shall be subject to review by the Department. Furthermore, distributing agencies shall not be required to file or pursue a claim for a loss which does not exceed an amount established by State law, regulations, or procedure as a minimum amount for which a claim will be made for State losses generally, but no such claim shall be disregarded where there is evidence of violation of Federal or State statutes. Distributing agencies which fail to pursue claims arising in their favor, or fail to provide for the right to assert such claims, or fail to require their subdistributing agencies and recipient agencies to provide for such rights in accordance with § 250.12(b), shall be responsible to the Department for replacing the donated foods or paying the value thereof in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (c)(1) or (2) of this section. Distributing agencies which pursue claims arising in their favor, but fail to obtain full restitution shall not be liable to the Department for any deficiency unless the Department determines that the distributing agency fraudulently or negligently failed to take reasonable action to obtain restitution. The Department may, at its option, require

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assignment to it of any claim arising from the distribution of donated foods.

(d) *Demurrage.* Demurrage or other charges which accrue after a car or truck has been placed for unloading by the delivering carrier, or which accrue because placement of a car or truck is prevented, shall be borne by the distributing agency, except that demurrage or other charges may be borne by the Department where such charges accrue because of actions by the Department and without the fault or negligence of the distributing agency.

(e) *Redonation expenditures.* In accordance with §250.13(g), whenever a distributing agency requests authority to make redonation of any donated foods and the Department requests that the donated foods be federally inspected, these inspections will be made at the expense of the distributing agency. Any donated foods which the Department determines are acceptable for redonation shall be moved at the distributing agency's expense to the closest point within the FNS region in which the State is located where it can be utilized, or to a closer point outside the region, if such a transfer is mutually agreed to by the Department and the distributing agency. In those instances in which the distributing agency satisfactorily demonstrates to the Department that the need for any redonation resulted from no fault or negligence on its part, the Department shall assume such transportation costs as it determines to be proper. Whenever a redonation is made at the request of the Department, the Department shall pay all transportation and handling costs in connection with such redonation and shall pay to the distributing agency all storage and handling costs accrued on the donated foods at the time of redonation, as determined by the Department, except when the request is made as a result of negligence on the part of the distributing agency.

(f) *Use of funds accruing in operation of the program.* (1) *Funds accruing from claims.* Funds accruing from recoveries from loss or damage claims (which are authorized under paragraph (c) of this section to be expended for program purposes) shall be used only for the payment of expenses of the food dis-

tributing program, including transportation, storage and handling or donated foods, salaries of persons directly connected with the program, and other administrative expenses. In accordance with paragraph (f)(4) of this section, the receipt and expenditure of funds so accrued shall be reviewed by the distributing agency to determine that fund balances are not in excess of program needs.

(2) *Other funds.* Funds accruing from the sale of containers, packing materials, salvage of donated foods, distribution charges, or insurance shall be returned to the Department or used only for the payment of expenses of the program which will improve program operations including, but not limited to, transportation, storage and handling of donated foods, salaries of persons directly connected with the program and other program-related expenses. Funds accruing from the collection of distribution charges which are determined to be in excess of program needs pursuant to paragraph (f)(4) of this section shall be used in accordance with that paragraph. Funds accruing from the operation of the program shall not be used for those costs which are unallowable under the cost Principles in the Department's Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, 7 CFR part 3015, subpart T. These unallowable costs include, but are not limited to:

- (i) Bad debts;
- (ii) Contingencies;
- (iii) Contributions and donations;
- (iv) Entertainment;
- (v) Fines and penalties;
- (vi) Governor's expenses;
- (vii) Interest and other financial costs;
- (viii) Legislative expenses; and
- (ix) Losses on other grants.

(3) *Segregation of funds.* Distributing agencies and subdistributing agencies shall maintain two separate accounts for funds accruing from program operations. Funds accruing from the collection of distribution charges shall be maintained in an operating account. Funds accruing from the sale of containers, salvage of foods, insurance and recoveries of claims for the loss or damage of donated foods shall be maintained in a salvage account.

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(4) *Excess funds.* The distributing agency shall review the receipt and expenditures of funds annually to ensure that fund balances are not in excess of program needs. At a maximum, the operating account fund shall not exceed the sum of the previous year's highest three-month expenditures. Funds exceeding this maximum shall be considered in excess of program needs unless the distributing agency provides sufficient justification as to the need for such funds and receives approval from the FNSRO. FNSRO may determine that funds equal to or less than the expenditures for the previous year's highest three months are in excess of what is needed. In such instances, the distributing agency shall reduce the excess funds in the operating account by reducing distributing charges or returning the funds to the contributor. The salvage account will have no set limit. FNSRO must, however, give prior approval to each deposit to or expenditure from the salvage fund which is in excess of \$2,500. The distributing agency shall impose upon subdistributing agencies and recipient agencies similar provisions for the use of such funds accruing from the operation of their programs.

[53 FR 20426, June 3, 1988, as amended at 54 FR 42476, Oct. 17, 1989]

§ 250.16 Maintenance of records.

(a) *General requirements.* (1) Accurate and complete records shall be maintained with respect to the receipt, distribution/use and inventory of donated foods including:

(i) End products processed from donated foods and

(ii) The determination made as to liability for any improper distribution, use of, loss of, or damage to, such foods and the results obtained from the pursuit of claims by the distributing agency.

Such records shall also be maintained with respect to the receipt and disbursement of funds arising from the operation of the distribution program, including the determination as to the amount of payments to be made by any processor, upon termination of processing contracts.

(2) Distributing agencies shall require all subdistributing and recipient

agencies to maintain accurate and complete records with respect to the receipt, distribution/disposal and inventory of donated foods, including end products processed from donated foods, and with respect to any funds which arise from the operation of the distribution program, including refunds made to recipient agencies by processors in accordance with § 250.30(k).

(3) Unless a distributing agency maintains an offer-and-acceptance system in accordance with § 250.48(e), the distributing agency shall maintain accurate and complete records with respect to amounts and value of commodities refused by school food authorities. School food authorities shall also be required to maintain such records of refusals.

(4) Each processor, food service management company, warehouse, or other entity which contracts with a distributing agency, subdistributing agency or recipient agency shall be required to keep accurate and complete records with respect to the receipt, distribution/disposal, storage and inventory of such foods similar to those required of distributing agencies under this paragraph. Where donated foods have been commingled with commercial foods, the processor shall maintain records which permit an accurate determination of the donated-food inventory. The processor shall also be required to keep formula, recipes, daily or batch production records, loadout sheets, bills of lading, and other processing and shipping records to substantiate the use made of such foods and their subsequent redelivery, in whatever form, to any distributing agency, subdistributing agency or recipient agency. Processors must maintain records which will permit a determination regarding compliance with the contracting provisions required by § 250.30(f) (3) and (4) as well as maintain records used as the basis for compiling the processor performance reports required by § 250.30(m).

(5) All recipient agencies shall be required to keep accurate and complete records showing the data and method used to determine the number of eligible persons served by that agency.