



**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Public Health – Women’s & Children’s Health Section**

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Michael F. Easley, Governor

Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

**January 24, 2003**

**CACFP 03-02  
SFSP 03-01**

**MEMORANDUM**

**To: Institutions Participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program  
Sponsors of the Summer Food Service Program**

**From: Arnette Cowan, MS, RD, LDN  
Head, Special Nutrition Programs**

**Subject: Baby Fruits or Vegetables with DHA (Policy No. 210.10.33, 220.08.03, 226.20.27)**

This memorandum is in response to a number of inquiries that have been received regarding the use of baby foods containing DHA for infant meals. Certain baby food products containing DHA cannot be served to infants as part of a reimbursable meal in the child nutrition programs. DHA is an omega-3 fatty acid known as docosahexaenoic acid, that occurs naturally in breast milk and other foods, and is known to support an infant’s mental and visual development. DHA may be added to commercially prepared infant fruits or vegetables and infant formula.

The source of DHA in some lines of baby food products, such as Beech-Nut First Advantage Sweet Potato Souffle’ or Tropical Blend, is egg yolk. These DHA-added products combine fruits and vegetables with dried egg yolk, heavy cream, rice flour, vanilla extract, and other ingredients. They are not labeled or marketed as desserts, but they contain similar ingredients that may not be appropriate for an infant younger than 8 months of age. Introducing these “dessert-like” ingredients into an infant’s diet at an earlier age could result in a food sensitivity or food allergy.

Although DHA-added products cannot contribute to the infant meal pattern, they may be served as additional foods to infants 8 months of age or older. However, since they contain several ingredients, additives or extenders that could cause allergic reactions, we recommend that the center, the provider, or the school check with the infant’s parent or guardian, before serving them.

If you have any questions, please call your regional consultant.

c: SNPStaff