

idea corner

Reaching Food Stamp Families

The audience is waiting, the message is timely, and the offering is free. This drama is enacted three times a year by the San Bernardino County of California home economists.

The audience is 15,000 households that receive food stamps by mail. The moment of delivery is anxiously awaited by the recipients, as they anticipate what their food stamps can buy.

Within the packet of food stamps is a 4" x 6" printed card, one side in English, the other in Spanish, carrying a seasonal message. Topics have included "Enjoy Holiday Meals by Planning Ahead," "Food Fresh from the Garden," or "Help Your Children Have a Healthy Fun Summer." The message is simple, with several suggestions and an offer of

a booklet or leaflet about the subject on request.

The holiday ideas were to buy non-perishable food items over a period of several weeks to spread the cost. Turkey is available in various processed forms; parts may be preferred instead of a whole bird. Preparation tips on how to thaw, stuff, roast, and use leftovers was followed by the offer of leaflet, "Turkey Tips."

The home economist provides the message, and the Department of Public Social Service stuffs it into the food stamp mailing.

We've found this mailing another communication tool to reach families who need our EFNEP and Extension Services that may not be reached by newspaper, radio, or TV.

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