

### 7. *Coordination and cooperation*

(a) Within the bureau: All of USDA's food assistance programs are administered by the Consumer and Marketing Service. Each of the administering divisions is kept fully informed of the activities, scope, and developments in the other food programs so they may move forward together.

(b) With other units of USDA: Through membership on such groups as the Interagency Committee on Nutrition, Rural Area Development Board, the Poverty Program Liaison Task Force, and the Task Force on Appalachia, food assistance programs personnel keep other agencies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture informed as to changes and developments in food assistance programs. These groups, together with the Extension Service, provide ready lines of communication to reach those in USDA's field offices with information on the program.

(c) With other Federal agencies: Office of Economic Opportunity. There has been the closest cooperation with every phase of the Office of Economic Opportunity. Children enrolled in Headstart, although for the most part not eligible for the full range of school lunch assistance as child-care centers, do benefit from donated foods used to serve lunch or snacks. Through USDA-OEO cooperative efforts, every sponsor of a Headstart project receives a buying guide and special menus to help them in providing nutritious meals for preschool children.

In a number of areas, OEO is providing cash assistance to supplement regular school lunch funds where a community cannot support a heavy load of free or reduced price meals.

The national school lunch program has been made an approved work station for those enrolled in the Neighborhood Youth Corps, administered by the U.S. Department of Labor and the work experience program, administered by HEW.

Information materials have been developed jointly to inform the regional offices of all these agencies as to the availability and benefits of the national school lunch program.

*Office of Education.*—Cooperative efforts are under way to encourage use of title I funds of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 in acquiring facilities and labor for school food service and in supplementing school lunch funds where the need is great and there is no community action program.

*ICCY.*—Through membership on the Interdepartmental Committee on Children and Youth, information on the national school lunch program is widely disseminated throughout the Federal Government.

(d) With State governments: Since the program is administered through State educational agencies, each with a school lunch program official, liaison is close and constant. The school lunch division holds a series of conferences each year in each of the five areas of the consumer food programs for a full discussion and exchange of ideas with State personnel.

A national conference is held every 5 years to which State school lunch personnel are invited, not only to attend, but to participate actively.

Each month, the district offices of consumer food programs send to the school lunch officials in their area an informational letter as to new activities and developments.