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**OVERVIEW OF MANUFACTURER PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING PRE-APPROVAL FOR FOOD & GROCERY PRODUCTS COMPETING WITH EXISTING SPECIFICATIONS ON THE NCPA BID**

The NCPA Board of Directors will accept Requests for Product Approval throughout the year for Products Matching Current NCPA specifications. The deadline for Competing Product Approval requests is June 30th for the next Direct to Manufacturer and Commodity Processing (DTM) bid and for the next Distributor Bid. Brokers and Manufacturers should review the current NCPA Distributor Bid spreadsheets by Product Category to determine if a product can compete with an existing bid specification.

**FOOD PRODUCTS MATCHING CURRENT BID SPECIFICATIONS**

* Products MUST meet the specification as written in the current NCPA bid spreadsheets and must be comparable to the other approved products.
* Each product specification goes through a paper screen review to verify the product meets the current bid specification exactly.
* The Board of Directors reviews and makes final approval for student testing.
* The Manufacturer/Broker will receive email notification of testing sites in two NCPA Member Districts.
* The Manufacturer submitting products for approval agrees to provide samples for student testing in school districts at no charge.
* Evaluation scores of 85% or higher will allow the product to become a pre-approved product on that specific bid line.

Manufacturers with a product that matches the description of a line item on the NCPA bid, but does not match the specification exactly, should petition the Board to have the specification amended **before sending in a request for pre-approval**. Send an email to Leann Seelman leann.seelman@dpi.nc.gov no later than June 30th for the next bid period.

There is a process for providing PASS/FAIL information with rationale to all manufacturers/brokers for each product submitted. Also, manufacturers/brokers of products accepted for Student Testing will receive all directions as to how to provide samples, etc. in the testing assignment letter.

NOTE: Approved food and supply products must be published to the GDSN 1FS database before they will be added to the bid. Contact amanda.haertel@telusagcg.com for more information.

Questions: Contact Leann Seelman at leann.seelman@dpi.nc.gov