****

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

Beginning December 1, 2020, 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. Requests may be made for Food and Supply products. 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.

1. **FOOD PRODUCTS MATCHING CURRENT BID SPECIFICATIONS**

* Products MUST meet the specification as written in the current NCPA bid spreadsheets.
* 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 (75% for Fish and Beans) will allow the product to become a pre-approved product on that specific bid line.

**SUPPLY PRODUCTS MATCHING CURRENT BID SPECIFICATIONS**

* Products MUST meet the specification as written in the current NCPA Lot 3 bid spreadsheets.
* Each 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 testing.
* The Manufacturer/Broker will receive email notification of testing site(s). The Manufacturer submitting products for approval agrees to provide samples for testing at no charge.

NOTE: 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 to the Board to have the specification amended. Send an email to Leann Seelman [leann.seelman@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:leann.seelman@dpi.nc.gov) no later than June 30th for the next DTM Bid cycle and October 31st for the next distributor bid cycle.

**Approved products are added to the NCPA Direct to Manufacturer and NCPA Distributor bid spreadsheets for solicitation in the next bid contract periods.**

Note: 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.

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