



# Marine Corps Food Service

Lt. Col. Jay Rogers, USMC Director Marine Corps Foodservice and Subsistence Program

**Government Food Service:**

*When did your tour officially begin? Tell us a little about yourself and how you came to become involved in the Marine Corps Food Service Program.*

**Rogers:** My tour officially began Oct. 1, 2010. I joined the Marine Corps in 1981 and received the Food Service 3381 Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) after graduation from Boot Camp at MCRD, San Diego. I served in the 3381 MOS in various food service billets until I made a lateral move to the 0431 Embark MOS in 1988. In 1994 I was selected for Warrant Officer as a Food Service Officer 3302 MOS. From 1994 until present I have served in numerous Food Service Officer Billets until being assigned as the director, Marine Corps Food Service and Subsistence Program.

**Government Food Service:** *Do you have any changes in mind for Marine Corps Food Service that you would like to bring about? Is this a response to trends in military food service?*

**Rogers:** We want to ensure that we meet all the necessary requirements to provide outstanding food-service support through our CONUS and OCONUS mess halls to the Marines and sailors aboard the installations. Our primary focus is to ensure a smooth transition from our current Regional Garrison Food Service Contract (RGFSC) to the new RGFSC II. Longer term, we want to ensure that correct and prompt decisions are made with regard to equipment and rations.



**Government Food Service:**

*Marine Corps food service is working with the U.S. Army Veterinary Command on an operational rations course structured specifically for the Marines. How is this progressing?*

**Rogers:** U.S. Army Veterinary Command conducted a course on the West Coast last year. The focus continues to be more of a continuing education for those Marines who are getting ready to deploy to OIF/OEF. This course deals mostly with operational rations, and is another tool that can be used to support our mission requirements.

**Government Food Service:**

*We should also ask for an update on the Quad Container Refrigeration System, which went into first article testing almost two years ago, as well as on Enhanced Tray Ration Heating System (E-TRHS) and Expeditionary Field Kitchen (EFK).*

**Rogers:** The Quad Container Refrigeration System prototype was concluded and the system performed as planned. However, our engineer community had procured Small Field Refrigeration Systems (SFRS) meeting our requirements while minimizing the number of different systems to support with parts and maintenance. The SFRS currently being fielded will be an inherent part of the E-TRHS.

The E-TRHS uses the kitchen-in-a-box concept. All of the required cooking appliances, utensils and serving wares are packed in an easily transportable container. The container also carries a military stan-



standard refrigeration system so that when a suitable cooking and service site is found, the box is opened, the equipment set up outside the container, and the container used to store semi-perishable or perishable food. The E-TRHS is a USMC group field-feeding platform designed to feed 250 to 350 personnel and will be the forward-feeding solution between the current TRHS and the Field Food Service System. The Marine Corps Systems Command is acting as the fielding integrator with anticipated First Unit Equipped planned for March 2011.

EFK Limited User Evaluation (LUE) is a trailer-based portable kitchen towed by the Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement (MTVR) series of prime movers. Initial feedback indicates high acceptability ratings for the kitchen layout and cooking appliances. Recommendations for improvement were provided. The updated system specification was used as the basis for a firm fixed price, indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contract that was awarded on Dec. 21, 2010, to Global Strategies Group.

---

**Government Food Service:** *Marine Corps Food Service is committed to sharpening skill-sets and occupational specialty. What are plans for 2011?*

---

**Rogers:** We have a lot of training and updating to the curriculum planned for fiscal 2011. For the Basic Course we have 38 classes scheduled; NCO and SNCO Courses have two classes per year, and

Senior Course and Reserve Course are conducted once per year. We have two Course Content Review Boards (CCRB) scheduled for fiscal 2011 that will update our instruction based off the T&R review. Currently, we are developing scenario-based training modules that focus on trends that are happening on the ground in Afghanistan.

---

**Government Food Service:** *Another commitment made by the Marines is to being environmentally conscious. What steps are being taken in 2011?*

---

**Rogers:** Following up on initiatives addressed last year, continued efforts have been implemented at installations with the procurement of additional compost machines that reduce the weight and volume of food scraps generated by the mess halls. Through our contracting partners, our CONUS

mess halls have been employing innovative best practices for sustainability that include the recycling of cardboard, plastic bottles, metal cans and paper. Mess halls aboard the Marine Corps Air Ground Task Force, Twentynine Palms, Calif., have completely eliminated the use of Styrofoam and have installed compost machines at the garrison and field mess halls. The Food Service Officer aboard Marine Corps Base Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, has a very aggressive plan to use almost exclusively biodegradable flatware for take-out service with a potential to include these products for in-house feeding as well. In addition, our RGFSC II resolicitation requires offerers to provide a Green Procurement strategy plan.

---

**Government Food Service:** *Please discuss any new initiatives or concepts for Marine Corps foodservice operations for 2011 or beyond.*

---

**Rogers:** The Marine Corps participated in the Joint Interservice Field Feeding (JIFF) working group to discuss areas of potential commonality for field feeding equipment and systems. The overall purpose is to bring the three services that use ground-based field-feeding systems together in a structured manner to work toward designing and engineering common systems that each service can use in its own respective operational situations. The group is specifically looking at developing standard interfaces, appliance configurations, design constraints, definitions of

commerciality, and common maintenance standards and concepts with the ultimate goal of a high degree of interservice commonality.

---

**Government Food Service:**

*What effect, if any, is the consolidation under Joint Culinary Center of Excellence having on Marine Corps food service?*

---

**Rogers:** While the Marine Corps is satisfied with our current training at Fort Lee, we are looking forward to observing the Navy and Air Force food service programs, which will enhance our perspective and familiarity. It should be noted that the U.S. Army and Marines have been in this joint environment for several years now, so the addition of the other services should enhance the current foodservice program. Our goal at the Food Service School is to train Marines to be prepared for what they will face on the ever-changing battlefield.

---

**Government Food Service:** *The Regional Garrison Foodservice Contracts expired in September 2009, leaving one remaining option year, which expired in September 2010. An extension was given. What is happening in this area?*

---

**Rogers:** The government exercised contract options to extend services through March 2011. The RGFSC II source selection is nearly complete; we anticipate contract awards this quarter. The current RGFSC covered 53 mess halls in total. The follow-on contracts will cover 51 mess halls due to new construction and consolidations. The follow-on contracts will be fixed-priced and performance-based and include incentive and award fee provisions. Like the current contracts, the contractors will be required to provide consistently a Main-Line Meal Option and an innovative Fast-Food Meal Option for each meal, such as a contractor's branded approach to marketing service products that will attract Marines to the mess halls.

---

**Government Food Service:** *Is the goal to give the management companies more freedom to create a menu?*

---

**Rogers:** The contractor is encouraged to offer



additional food options at mess halls in terms of customer acceptability. The goal is providing continued quality service to the warfighter. Baseline menu requirements are addressed in the Request for Proposal (RFP), which encourages providing innovative foods and menu selections that are appealing to the Marine Corps demographic areas. The main objective is to provide the warfighter with the best meal possible at an affordable price to the taxpayer.

---

**Government Food Service:** *What changes have been made to the Marine Corps 21-day Master Menu over the past year, and what changes are in store for 2011? Do menus vary between the contract-managed food service at domestic bases and Marine Corps-operated facilities overseas?*

---

**Rogers:** As part of the contract requirement for the new RGFSC II (one each for East/West Coast bases), offerers were required to submit a Master Menu, approved by a Registered Dietician (RD) along with their proposals. Menus will continue to meet all Department of Defense (DoD) Menu Guidelines. Differences do exist between the east and west contracts and also at some of the training commands/recruit depots. Some of those differences are driven by availability of subsistence items (locally available products); other differences are due to type of customer/command that those facilities support. On the RGFSC II, CONUS menus will be driven, in part, based on customer comments and feedback. At OCONUS locations, the installations are required to have menu-planning boards (which include customers of the mess halls) in order to develop a new Master

Menu annually. This menu is also required to meet the same DoD menu guidelines and be approved by a Navy dietitian.

---

**Government Food Service:** *The number of facilities will stay about the same, but construction will add, refurbish and/or consolidate mess halls. Give an update on new mess halls that were in the process of opening aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., and Camp Lejeune, N.C., plus additional projects scheduled for Camp Lejeune, and a future project aboard Marine Air Ground Task Force Twentynine Palms, Calif.*

---

**Rogers:** Camp Pendleton has a brand new mess hall at the 41 Area (Los Flores) that began operations on Feb. 1, 2010. The new mess hall is nearly 27,000 square feet with approximately 700 seats. The building includes wireless capabilities, point-of-sale terminals, a Web-based music video system, computer-generated menu boards, and various equipment redundancies to ease operating costs.

Camp Lejeune has recently completed construction of a new mess hall located at Stone Bay (Rifle Range) supporting weapons-training requirements and provides food services to the Marine Special Operations Command. This facility opened in March 2010. Camp Lejeune's goal is to replace 1940s-vintage facilities with mess halls that are environmentally friendly, while continuing to focus on providing the Marines and sailors with healthy meal options as the No. 1 priority. There are several projects in various stages of construction, to include a two-story

mess hall and one with a drive-through fast-food window. The two-story mess hall will provide food court menus on the first floor with buffet-style dining on the second floor. Innovative concepts such as these will entice our Subsistence-in-Kind (SIK) Marines into the mess halls and improve overall utilization rates.

MCRD Parris Island is currently in the construction phase of a \$24 million, 55,000-square-foot consolidated mess hall project (P-334) that will provide garrison foodservice support to both recruits and permanent staff of 2nd and 3rd Recruit Training Battalions as well as Support Battalion. Tentative completion date is June/July 2011.

MAGTFTC, Twentynine Palms is currently in the design phase of the North Mainside Mess hall, Project #114. The \$18 million, 22,000-square-foot mess hall has an estimated ground breaking during December 2011.

---

**Government Food Service:** *Update us on steps to address nutrition. Last year, menus were being reexamined with support from Navy dietitians, and there was a nutritional study requested by the Marine Corps' Special Operations Command.*

---

**Rogers:** In February 2011, a Navy Registered Dietitian (RD) will be assigned to LFS-4. We anticipate that this assignment will assist us in many areas with the initial focus being education of all personnel. Jointly, the services have been working together to make recommended changes to the DoD Menu Planning Standards. One of the big challenges we will face will be the ability of the Navy RDs to support training in nutrition and assistance with identifying individual nutritional/caloric needs and matching that to the menus at the mess halls. We can do a much better job in re-educating and providing a simple system that will enable the Marines to make the correct choices.

---

**Government Food Service:** *How is the progress in preparing for the Marines moving to Guam from Okinawa?*

---

**Rogers:** The Marine Corps currently plans to move approximately 8,000 Marines and their associated dependents from Okinawa, and roughly 2,000 transient personnel, including visiting USMC and Allied Forces. Facilities planning and programing actions are currently in progress. Factors such as funding availability and construction capacity constraints could alter the timeline.

—GFS

