



Army Food Service

Lt. Col. Robert L. Barnes Jr., USA, Director,
Joint Culinary Center of Excellence (JCCoE)

Government Food Service: *Lt. Col. Barnes, you began your tour as Army Center of Excellence, Subsistence (ACES) director in September 2008. What areas have you focused on during that time?*

Lt. Col. Barnes: First I would like to thank your magazine for the opportunity to appear in this issue. My primary focus for the Joint Culinary Center of Excellence (JCCoE), formerly ACES, was to regain organizational credibility and rebuild relationships with our strategic partners. It's crystal clear, without our strategic partners working hand and hand with Army objectives, our most cherished asset, the soldier, would suffer greatly. Next, relook current programs to validate, improve or eliminate outdated or costly practices.



Government Food Service: *What changes to Army foodservice operations have you seen or helped bring about since becoming ACES director?*

Lt. Col. Barnes: Training integration and improvement have been on the forefront since arriving as director. Fort Lee is preparing to become the "heart" of culinary arts or foodservice training. Presently, both soldiers and Marines learn their future foodservice professions at Fort Lee. By January 2011, we include Sailors to our midst and co-locate training for Airmen hence the "Joint" part of JCCoE. Another colossal achievement occurring very soon for soldiers is our professional certification or Credentialing program. Soldiers will train on Culinary Institute of America films via the Web and achieve certifications from the American Culinary Federation.



Government Food Service: *What's on the horizon for ACES?*

Lt. Col. Barnes: One major initiative that we are excited about is the launching of our Nutrition Campaign. Basically, in plain language, we are merging the science from the medical community with the practicality of the foodservice community to properly fuel and sustain the most valuable resource of the Army – the soldier. We will roll out a "Go for Green" program this year, which is a color-coded labeling system on the serving line that helps soldiers quickly identify perfor-



mance enhancing foods. We are adding more omega-3 rich foods to the serving line because of their positive impact on brain health. We are developing a comprehensive system of better checks and balances of the nutritional quality of all foods used in the Army Food program. Finally, we are looking at facility design concepts that allow quick preparation of fresh ingredients.



Government Food Service: *You mentioned Scan and Go being tested in the Qatar Dining Facility. What is it? How did the test go or is it still going on?*

Lt. Col. Barnes: Scan and Go (S&G) was originally developed to meet the needs of dining facilities in the combat zone area of responsibility (AOR). S&G's concept occurred in two phases. Phase I consisted of getting the Army food management information system (AFMIS) operational in the dining facilities in the AOR, and Phase II brought S&G to these dining facilities. S&G addressed lack or individuals not subsisting in CENTCOM DFACs, nonexistent DFAC headcounts

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and government reimbursement for meals weren't available. Additionally, methods for obtaining quick and accurate recording of diners were needed.

This information, along with specific transaction codes involving the meal and the time of day, is used to provide a simple audit trail of who subsists in the DFAC. After each meal the information on the scanners is uploaded to AFMIS via the Web. This information resides on the AFMIS database and is also rolled up into the Decision Support System (DSS) Web site.



Government Food Service: *You also mentioned working with the Army National Guard to use AFMIS automation for dining facility operations, was that implemented or still in the works?*

Lt. Col. Barnes: United States Army Reserve (USAR) fielding has been completed with over 2,200 units being trained on AFMIS. S&G training is ongoing as sites are identified in accordance with (IAW) USAR headquarters.

The USNG and USAR headcount procedures are different from active component Army, in that many of the meals are catered, consumed at the training site or off-site at commercial restaurants. This makes manual collection of headcounts difficult. S&G completely automates that requirement. Tests have been finalized to perform the software installation of S&G in a manner that does not require a system administrator. This is significant because there are over 2200 Army Reserve units that will be using over 5000 scanners.

We hope incorporating the same procedures for USNG were used supporting USAR. Presently, we await a deployment schedule for USNG units requiring S&G.



Government Food Service: *Describe how rations, equipment and automation are evolving.*

Lt. Col. Barnes: Our foodservice programs are constantly looking and examining how to perform better. That said, the evolution of rations to date is primarily a packaging convention requiring synchronization with the available equipment for field feeding. The foods must be provided in packaging conventions that will support military logistics and military equipment. The industry has responded by using advanced packaging; however, more is needed especially in the institutional sizes. Military rations are the same foods available in restaurants and markets across

America that must be conformed to shelf life, packaging, counts, and sizes that work for the armed forces, their missions and place, time, temperature and equipment preparation.

For sustainment, we've provided an information paper and tasking to DSCP for inquiry and possible implementation on purchasing cage free vs. battery eggs.

Equipment: The Army is developing equipment to support the Combatant Commander through FY20 to provide capabilities using state-of-the-art technology. We are also looking at Joint operations and what might be the future feeding operations that support Army, Navy, Air Force and U.S. Marine Corps through NATICK development of Joint Statements of Need (JSNs).

Army specifically is developing a Battlefield Kitchen to replace the current Mobile Kitchen Trailer (MKT). In this development, we are looking at equipment that is more commercial in concept, but can support operations on a trailer or equipment can be disconnected and used in building to support feeding operations.

This equipment will also be the same type used in our Containerize Kitchen (CK) that is being re-engineered to better support our feeding mission and reduce our operational footprint. This reduces the difference in spare parts to support different systems. The CK being considered will have the Field Sanitation Center incorporated reducing the overall footprint and increasing response time in movement.

The Multi-Temperature Refrigerated Containerized System (MTRCS) is designed to distribute and store mixed rations: fresh, chilled, frozen (perishable/semi-perishable) to support 800 Troops for three days. It will replace the current Refrigerated Container System.

Automation in the foodservice community has progressed rapidly since the introduction of the AFMIS. Automation simplified the processes and allowed for



U.S. Army Pvt.s. Renee Harris and Paige Atkinson, both with the 64th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, prepare food in a field kitchen at Fort Irwin, Calif., at the National Training Center.

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a wider audience to review the data that was being generated at the lowest level. Recently, we moved to a more user-friendly Windows-based operating system; we have also developed a better Automated Head-count procedure with the implementation of Point of Sale (POS) registers and a Scan and Go option that scan diner's data from an issued identification card. The most recent improvement to AFMIS is the new requirement to track Installation processes for the Installation Management Command (IMCOM). IMCOM has developed the Installation Status Report system that requires installations to report select operational data summary reports concerning basic common levels of support. These quarterly requirements are being developed within AFMIS to provide the necessary operational data reports for headquarters to make informed decisions.

The Army is hoping to further improve on this automated system with the migration toward a new and improved food management system, which is the Department of Defense (DOD) Joint Common Food Management System (CFMS). This system is a major initiative directed by the DOD Joint Food Policy Council, which requires all services to design, develop and deploy a single food management system to replace the five current service food management systems. Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), as the DOD Executive

Agent for Subsistence, was charged with responsibility for its development. CFMS will utilize Commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) Software (Horizons OneSource) and is Web-enabled. Defense Supply Center, Philadelphia (DSCP) has Program Management (PM) responsibility. The Army is working with DSCP and all the other services on the development and/or modification of the selected COTS software. The development of CFMS is well under development and progressing toward a test phase within the next year.



Government Food Service: *Is there an effort for Army food service to be more healthful, such as reducing preservatives and processed material?*

Lt. Col. Barnes: There are a number of nutrition initiatives underway to improve diner understanding and the food service delivery of "better for you" options. Upcoming changes will be based on the U.S. National Dietary Goals, which are due out in 2010, and will be used to fine-tune the Military Dietary Reference Intakes (targets and limits for various nutrients). Communicating "what is the better choice" quickly and easily is a major goal of this year's programs.

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