

OC

February 15, 2005

NOTICE TO THE TRADE – DeCA NOTICE 05-62

SUBJECT: It's Your Choice, Make it Healthy

It's time to get military families out of the "drive thru" and into the "commissary queue" and many manufacturers are on the cutting edge of the latest trend in food—nutritional and healthy. The purpose of this Notice to the Trade is to inform industry of DeCA's emphasis on nutrition during 2005 and encourage partnerships and support.

The top two military benefits—commissaries and medical (TRICARE)—are partnering to get consumers thinking about making healthy food choices to improve health and control their weight. Although much of the effort will be informational in focus, commissaries and industry are encouraged to work closely with local nutrition, health and wellness, and fitness personnel for commissary "nutritional tours" and events.

"Healthy Choices for Life" is a DoD driven TRICARE initiative aimed in part at curbing the growing trends of obesity among military families. DeCA's tie-in under the weight management portion features an "It's Your Choice, Make it Healthy" theme. TRICARE announced its "Healthy Choices for Life" campaign at its annual conference in January, where DeCA also debuted a new outreach display (focusing on produce) before nearly 3,000 active duty medical/health and wellness professionals, nutritionists and dieticians.

DeCA's "It's Your Choice, Make it Healthy" theme will be announced during National Nutrition Month®, March 2005, initially with a general release on the joint effort, and news articles focusing on nutrition, as well as customer fliers and a special section at [www.commissaries.com](http://www.commissaries.com).

Corporate Communications is developing tools and news articles for the remainder of 2005, tying in with special promotions and emphasis months, i.e., Fitness Month in May and Food Safety Month in September, as well as working closely with the DoD nutrition committee to develop "shelf talkers" offering general category guidelines to assist shoppers in making decisions on food selections. "It's Your Choice, Make it Healthy" themes will be utilized during single Service and military spouse tours—Commissary Awareness Month in May. Posters, window stickers and more will also make an appearance in stores.

The TRICARE partnership opens new communication opportunities as well as positioning DeCA as a nutrition leader for the military—and with a savings of 30 percent or more—commissaries are also the "healthy choice" when it comes to family finances.

Industry is encouraged to include a nutritional focus in advertising wherever practical, and to assist commissaries in creating awareness among military customers through events such as “healthy food fairs” and nutritional food samplings. Please note, DeCA is not endorsing specific products, and nutritional guidelines will be general in nature and approved by the USDA/Health and Human Services.

If you have further questions, please contact Bonnie Powell or Rob Hansgen, DeCA Corporate Communications, at (804) 734-8404/8772.

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Scott E. Simpson  
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