

SELLING TO THE DEFENSE COMMISSARY AGENCY (DeCA)

The Defense Commissary Headquartered at Fort Lee, Virginia procures various products to resale within the grocery stores they operate on military bases; referred to as commissaries. They procure both Brand Name and Non-Brand Name items.

How do you determine Brand Name versus Non-Brand Name?

A brand name product: An item procured by brand or trade name without reference to a specification. The brand name commercial item for resale within a commissary must also be a commercial item that is regularly sold in retail stores under the same brand name as the name by which the item will be sold to commissary stores.

- In determining whether a brand-name commercial item is regularly sold outside of commissary stores, retail sales data must be provided.

Non-Name Brand Items: Are products that have no demonstrated customer preference for specific brands. Rather, the customer preference is defined by product description, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, beef, pork, and seafood.

- These items are procured through a formal competitive solicitation process on a best value basis. The majority of these solicitations are advertised on Beta-Sam.Gov.

DeCA Requirements:

- DeCA does not have its own distribution network you will be responsible for individual store delivery through your own direct store delivery operation or through a military approved distributor.
- If you don't deliver you, must select a Frequent Delivery System (FDS) provider. In this system a third-party distributor delivers to commissaries daily based on DeCA's automated reorder system. This system uses front end scan data to create an order that is transmitted to the distributor. All products delivered from the first to the fifteenth of the month are "rolled-up" into a single invoice per commissary store. DeCA then pays the manufacturer for the items shipped in the roll-up total within terms. The process is repeated for all products sold between the sixteenth and the end of the month
- You must provide the labor to restock the shelves of your items if they are in the following categories: Candy, Seasonal Items, Baby Food, Refrigerated Meats, Frozen Foods, Chilled Foods, Dairy Products, Health and Beauty Care Items, Batteries, and Lightbulbs.
- Your products must come from a sanitarily approved source. These may be included in the Meat and Poultry Inspection Directory published by USDA; Sanitarily Approved Food Establishments from US Army Veterinary Services Command; Dairy Plan Surveyed and Approved for USDA Grading Services from USDA; and other similar directories.

How do you get started?

All selections for items to be stocked in any commissary are made by the Defense Commissary Agency's Marketing and Business Unit located aboard Fort Lee in Hopewell Virginia.

The local commissary store management does not have the authority to accept your products for stockage; they can only recommend to the Marketing Business Unit (MBU). Located at DeCA Headquarters Fort Lee, Virginia.

- There is no requirement to be in national distribution.
- There are products that have regional or local demand and can be accepted for distribution on a local or regional basis.

You can acquire the services of a Food Broker with government experience to assist in the presentation of your items to DeCA. The Broker can also assist with invoicing, payment, selecting a distribution and providing shelf stocking if required. The Broker's fee can be included in the cost of goods. For assistance in finding a broker you can consult the American Logistics Agency. They are a Trade Association that supports Military Resale. www.ala-national.org

More details can be found at DeCA's web site; www.commissaries.com

While at times challenge, selling your products to the men and women of our Armed Forces is rewarding.