

# FOOD STAMP WORKERS IN FOUR LOCATIONS

## Will Be Stationed at Kodiak, Copper Center, Fairbanks, Fort Yukon

With the advent of acculturation and changing life styles, many Natives in rural Alaska are no longer able to depend entirely on the land for their food.

Many items must now be store-bought, but how can they afford the high village prices unless they are the fortunate few who have a high, steady income?

The answer to this is participation in the Food Stamp program although there are many people who do not know about the program, who have many misconceptions about it, or who have decided not to participate because there is usually such a long delay between the time they send in their money for purchasing the coupons and when they receive them.

Due to transportation problems and the lack of funds to hire trained personnel, these problems and the lack of funds to hire personnel, these problems still exist in many areas of the

state.

To try to alleviate some of these problems, RurAL CAP has entered into a \$38,852.00 contract with the Division of Public Welfare.

Under the terms of this contract, RurAL CAP's Emergency Food and Medical Services funds will be used to finance the salaries, travel, and per diem of four Eligibility Workers to be hired by the State.

These workers will be stationed, one each, in Kodiak, Copper Center, Fairbanks, and Fort Yukon and will primarily be responsible for increasing understanding of and participation in the Food Stamp program.

This will be accomplished by the Workers travelling extensively to all the villages in their areas.

On these visits, the Workers will have with them whatever is required to take applications, make certifications, and sell the Food Stamp coupons on-the-spot.

The Workers will also discuss the program in detail with the villagers to clear up any misconceptions which may have been formed, and will work with the local Food Stamp agents in proper application-taking procedures.

Through additional personnel and travel and a better understanding of the application process and the workings of the program, it is hoped that participation in the program will increase and delays in receiving the coupons will decrease.

As of this date, three of the four Workers have been hired and are currently receiving training from Division of Public Welfare personnel. The one position not filled yet is in the Copper Center-Valdez area.

If anyone is interested in becoming an Eligibility Worker II in that area, please contact your local Welfare Office for qualifications and further information.