Starting Inventory Order Worksheet Help Guide for Returning Troops

Troops who order a sufficient supply of cookie packages upfront minimize their need to return to the cupboard right away. You will have inventory for the girls to keep selling after GO Day, fill those Girl Delivery orders, and keep up their momentum. This is a win-win for the troop, Girl Scouts in the troop, caregivers and customers. Below are a few things to keep in mind when determining and placing your Starting Inventory Order. Please refer to your *2023 Cookie Program Troop Guide* for complete details.

New this year, the Troop Goal Worksheet you have used for the past several years to determine your goals and budget is now incorporated into the Starting Inventory Order (SIO) worksheet, so your troop can do their planning and determine their SIO in one document (different tabs). Though you are welcome to still use the separate Troop Goal Worksheet found on our website (www.girlscoutsla.org/cookies) and then use only the Returning Troops SIO tab.

Step #1 Confirm your troop goals

Determine how much money is needed to support a vibrant troop for the year. For example, do you have a big trip scheduled this or a future year? If so, you may need to step up your sales effort. Are more or fewer Girl Scouts selling than last year? The troop should be self-supporting and should pay for membership fees, activities, uniform pieces and Take Action projects. **Include the Girl Scouts and their caregiver(s) in this goal setting and decision-making process.** Inform caregivers that the troop can support their Girl Scout's experience and they should not have to directly support the troop financially – this builds support for Cookie goals! In the SIO Worksheet, you would use the Troop Goal Planning and Cookie Goals tabs (which will transfer the data to the Returning Troop tab).

Step #2 Determine your cookie count

Once your troop goal and/or the total of your Girls Scouts' goals are determined, figure out how many packages of cookies must be sold by your troop; then divide that per girl to reach your optimal per girl sales goals. Communicate this to the members of your troop so everyone is on board. If you use the included Troop Goal Planning and/or Cookie Goals tabs in the SIO Worksheet, the number of packages and the number of girls will automatically transfer over to the Returning Troops tab (and do the math for you, too!).

Step #3 Use the Excel Worksheet

The core of the SIO Worksheet (see figure, right) is the Returning Troops tab. Enter your troop number where indicated and you will see last year's sales data for your troop. If you used the Troop Goal Planning and Cookie Goal tabs in the worksheet, the number of Girl Scouts you anticipate participating, the troop goal and the total Girl Scouts' individual goals will already appear for you. If you did not use the included Troop Goal Planning and/or Cookie Goals tabs, you will need to enter this information manually. If you are using the Troop Goal Planning tab, you should also use the Cookie Goals tab, but you can use the Cookie Goals tab alone, if desired.

Regardless of how you enter your girl and goals data, you next choose which of the two goals you wish to use to determine your SIO. You will want to carefully consider these totals; which one makes the best starting point for your troop -- remember, in as much as you do not want to order to little, you also don't want to order too much. You can, as you make this determination, select a percentage from 75% (baseline) to 90% to determine your Starting Inventory Order.

With each percentage chosen, you will see total case count, and below that a suggested variety mix that makes up that total. This is only a guideline. When placing your order in eBudde, the varieties reflected on the worksheet can be adjusted according to what you believe is best for your troop –keeping in mind the overall total you decided upon.

Your last step involves the Summary tab, which pulls the data from the included Troop Goal Planning and Cookie Goals tab plus summarizes the data from the Returning Troops tab. The information from this lower section is what you will share with your Service Unit Cookie Program Chair (SUCPC) via the embedded link on this tab.
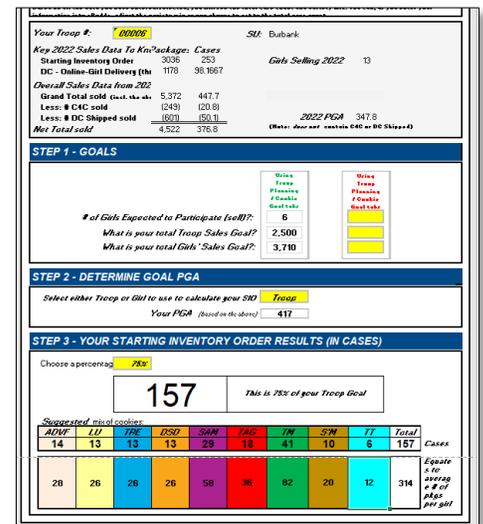
Reminders:

- The worksheet is a GUIDELINE to get you started. What you order should factor in boothing plans and ultimately the troop's overall commitment level.

- Troops are responsible for selling AND paying for all packages of cookies ordered; no refunds.

- TCCs cannot make the Girl Scouts in their troop sell, nor require them to sell a certain number of packages.

- We understand the drive for the SIO Rewards (that's why they are there), but troops should not enter an SIO just to earn the reward if they are unsure of the troop's overall abilities. Go with what you are comfortable with and keep it motivational. This is supposed to be fun and energizing, not over-the-top burdensome.

- However, ordering too few packages of cookies could jeopardize the troop from having the inventory necessary to be successful in the first two weeks of the sale and to keep up with demand.

- Remember you will still need to enter your SIO into eBudde so that your SIO gets ordered.

- Have a great 2023 Cookie sale! Let us know what support you need to succeed.

Step #4 – Completing the eform to Submit Data to your SUCPC

As noted in Step #3, there is a tab labeled Summary. In the lower right corner is a link to an eform (Google Forms) where you will enter several bits of data so that your Service Unit Cookie Program Chair (SUCPC) knows what methodology you used to determine your SIO – Troop Goal? Girls' Goals? 75%? 90%?... All of this will help the SUCPC help you make sure you will have enough cookies up front for your troop to be successful.

On this tab, you will select that you used the Returning Troop worksheet (as this Summary appears for new troops, too) and all your datapoints will appear, including a recap of the suggested variety mix (however, you will not be providing the variety mix to your SUCPC, just the overall case total). We recommend you print out this tab/page so you have it handy for completing the eform. Note, you will only be entering information from the Starting Inventory Order (bottom) section.

We will remind you again that you will enter the suggested variety mix into eBudde. Of course, you may adjust up or down any variety, but you want it to be equal to (or greater than) your decided upon total case count.

Returning Troop Variety Mix

For returning troops there is an additional tool to help you manage your troop inventory. Just like the Starting Inventory Order worksheet, it takes your sales from the previous season, but instead of projecting forward, it allows you to look back.

Enter your troop number to see what types of transactions (SIO, cupboard, troop to troop transfers, etc.) make up the sum of your sales. Keep in mind, 2022 was a very unusual season, so we do not recommend you use the percentages here to decide your SIO, though your previous season's SIO may be helpful. This data is provided for informational purposes.

With that in mind, let's review what data is there. In the top section you will see your overall sales by variety, and the percentage of the total by each variety. *Note, it includes all packages for which you took responsibility, even if they were not sold.*

Next, this data is broken out by category and in each category, total packages and the percentage of the total that equates to. Cupboard transactions are the net of your activity, so reflects

what you ultimately had after any exchanges. Again, keep in mind the inventory challenges of 2022, this does not reflect what you might have otherwise picked up, it reflects what was available for you to pick up. Troop to troop transactions are also the net of what you traded or transferred to another troop against what you received from another troop. It also reflects any Service Unit to Troop transactions – in typical year these are rare, this past season it was not so rare.

You will also see here the Digital Cookie activity, including Girl Delivery. As Girl Delivery was turned off on February 7 (owing to the same inventory challenges that affected cupboards), it is only a snapshot in time and does not reflect what your troop's potential sales would have been.

How to use this sheet

Enter your troop number (include any leading zeros, if applicable). Keeping in mind the challenges of 2022, compare the data - see what your SIO was from the previous season … did you need to pick up a lot more at the cupboard? Maybe you want to order more up front. Or did you order too many of something and see that the amount/percentage for cupboard activity is negative? That means you ordered more than you needed and returned many of them in exchange (at least it would in a typical year).