

New WIC Food Package

- After 34 years, the WIC Foods are changing.
- California now preparing grocers and staff for new foods implementation by October 1, 2009.
- Children's eating and physical activity habits are formed before they start school... a new opportunity for WIC to fulfill its mission



Who gets WIC?

- Income up to 185% of poverty.
(A family of 3 can earn up to \$2,714 per month), *or*

Enrolled in Food Stamps,
CalWorks and/or Medi-Cal
Most WIC Families Work!



- Pregnant, Breastfeeding and new Mothers, Infants and Children up to the 5th birthday

What do participants get?

- Nutrition Advice: Individual and group sessions
- Breastfeeding Support, including peer counselors and breast pumps
- Referrals to Health and Social Services
- Special Checks to buy healthy foods.



WIC Foods virtually unchanged since 1974

Since 1974, many changes:

- More diverse population served, especially Asian and Hispanic families
- Changes in food supply and consumption



- Obesity epidemic
- New dietary guidelines

Goals for New Food Package

- Encourage more fruits and vegetables
- Emphasize whole grains
- Provide incentives for breastfeeding
- Be consistent with current dietary guidelines
- Reduce saturated fat
- Increase choices



Food Package Rule

CURRENT:

- Formulas
- Milk
- Cereal: infant, adult
- Juice
- Eggs
- Cheese
- Dried Beans or Peanut Butter
- Tuna
- Carrots

NEW/REVISED:

All current foods plus:

- Fruits & Vegetables
- Whole Grains (Bread or other Grains)
- Soy-beverage & Tofu
- Light Tuna, Salmon,
- Sardines, Mackerel
- Canned Beans
- Infant Foods

Fruits and Vegetables in WIC

- Add wide variety of fruits and veggies: fresh produce for women & children, baby food fruits and vegetables
- Cash-value check worth \$6-10/month.
- Canned, frozen or dried as alternatives.
- Reduce juice to match current guidelines.
- Pilots show new checks highly valued.



Dairy Products

- Reduces milk and cheese to align with US Dietary Guidelines.
- Only **nonfat or low-fat** milk for women and children over 2 years: 2%, 1% and Fat-free



- Alternatives provided: lactose-free milk, soy milk and tofu

WIC survey shows participants:

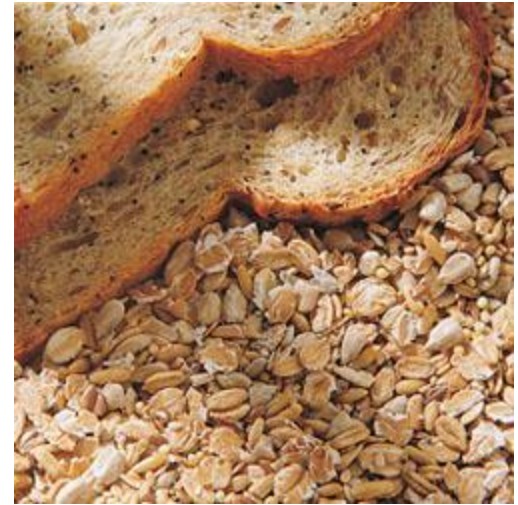
- Drink higher fat milk, but most would switch to 2%.
- Eat cheese
- Don't buy soy milk (current participants)

Clients may believe that:

- Lower fat milks are lower in nutritive value
- Lower fat milks don't taste good
- Anyone with lactose intolerance *must* eliminate milk from their diet

Whole Grains

- Adds whole wheat or whole grain bread for children and women
- At least half of cereals offered must be “whole grain”.
- Substitutes include Rice, Corn and Whole Grain Tortillas, Oatmeal and others).
- Clients now buy and eat purchase whole wheat bread and would buy brown rice.



New Foods for Babies

- Formula amounts based on feeding practice and baby's age
- Wait 'til 6 months to start solid foods
- Eliminate juice
- Add baby food fruits and vegetables
- Add baby food meat for breastfed babies
- Clients buy and would feed their babies these foods.



Incentives for Breastfeeding

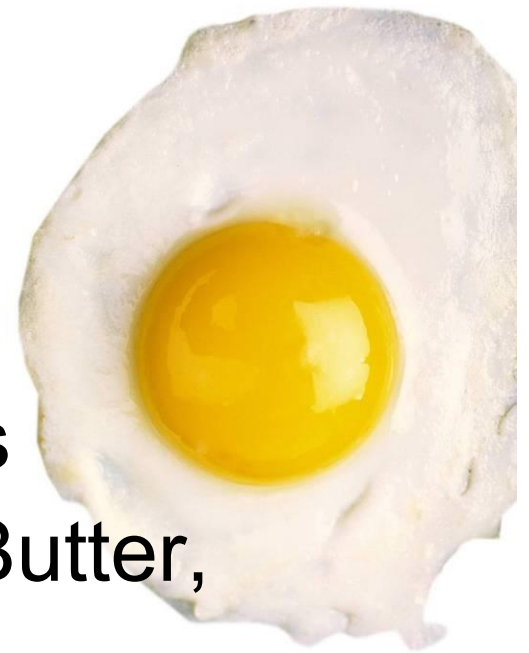
- Fully breastfeeding mothers receive most variety and largest quantity of food, including \$10 cash-value voucher for fruits and vegetables.



- Fully breastfeeding infants over 6 months receive more fruits and vegetables plus baby food meat.

Protein Foods

- Reduce eggs for children and women to 1 dozen, to align with 2005 US Dietary Guidelines
- Keep Dried Beans and Peanut Butter, adding Canned Beans



- Add canned fish options for Breastfeeding women:
Continues tuna and allow Salmon, Sardines, Mackerel for lower mercury.



Medically Fragile Infants and Children

- Continue to provide special infant formula and medical foods.
- Now also offer these children other WIC foods based on doctor's recommendation.



Impact on Participants

- More diverse and balanced foods
- Greater variety and choice
- Culturally appropriate
- Consistent with US Dietary Guidelines
- Better Nutrition!
- Addresses nutrition-related concerns (e.g. obesity, low breastfeeding rates)



WIC's Key Messages now align with foods we provide

- Eat more fruits and vegetables
- Lower the Fat
- Choose Whole Grains
- Drink less Sweetened Beverages
- Babies are meant to be breastfed



Vendor Liaison Role for WIC

- Millions in new buying power for healthy foods in low income neighborhoods.
- WIC agencies now funded to work with local stores
 - Improve Customer Service
 - Help stores get on board with new foods
- Opportunity to work with food access folks and Nutrition Network.

