

USDA Tribal Consultation
Revisions in the WIC Food Packages Proposed Rule
Background & Next Steps
November 2021

Current WIC Food Packages

- WIC food packages, together with nutrition education, are the primary means by which the Program affects participants' dietary quality and habits. They are scientifically based and intended to address the supplemental nutritional needs of WIC's pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, infants, and children.
- By design, the quantities and types of foods are intended to (1) address the prevalence of inadequate and excessive nutrient intakes for each WIC participant category, (2) contribute to an overall dietary pattern consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and infant and toddler feeding practice guidelines, and (3) deliver priority nutrients to participants to meet their supplemental nutrition needs.
- Depending on the food package, the authorized food categories are infant formula, cereal and foods; exempt infant formulas; WIC-eligible nutritionals; milk; cheese; breakfast cereal; juice; fresh fruits and vegetables; whole wheat/whole grain bread; eggs; legumes and peanut butter; and canned fish.
- The food categories and quantities¹, as well as minimum nutritional requirements, are established at the Federal level and outlined in Federal WIC regulations.
- WIC State agencies identify the brands and package sizes in accordance with Federal WIC regulations considering factors such as prices, product availability, and participant acceptance.

WIC Food Packages Review

- Section 17(f)(11) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (as amended) requires the USDA to conduct a comprehensive scientific review of the WIC food packages at least every 10 years.
- On January 5, 2017, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) released their report entitled [*WIC Food Packages: Improving Balance and Choice*](#) with numerous, cost-neutral recommendations based on their approach to the food packages being a supplemental source of nutrients to the diets of WIC participants, among other considerations.
- NASEM found that the current food packages provide 100 percent or more of the recommended intake of several nutrients and food groups, considered these more than supplemental, and reduced amounts to align with the supplemental nature of the Program.

¹ At the individual level, food packages are tailored to meet a participant's needs, such as eliminating or substituting foods (e.g., dry beans for peanut butter) due to an allergy, cultural or personal preferences, medical or nutritional condition, or in situations where a participant cannot use or refuses the item.

NASEM likewise identified inadequate nutrient intakes and increased/added foods with these nutrients.

- NASEM recommended reducing the amounts of: (1) juice; (2) dairy (milk); (3) peanut butter; (4) legumes; (5) whole grains (for children); and (6) infant foods, as well as increasing the amounts of: (1) whole grains (for women); (2) fruits and vegetables; and (3) seafood. NASEM also recommended changes to support breastfeeding initiation and duration.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans

- On December 29, 2020, the USDA and the Department of Health and Human Services released the [2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) (DGA), the first iteration to include recommendations for infants and toddlers as well as pregnant and breastfeeding women.

Revisions to the WIC Food Packages Proposed Rule

- USDA is developing a proposed rule to amend regulations governing the WIC food packages to incorporate recommendations from NASEM's 2017 report and the latest DGA.
- These revisions are intended to ensure the WIC food packages are based on the most recent nutritional science while providing increased flexibilities, variety, and choice for participants.
- FNS anticipates publication as early as April 2022, with a public comment period.

Attachment A: Snapshot of Current WIC Food Packages for Infants (see below)

Attachment B: Snapshot of Current WIC Food Packages for Children and Women (see below)

Attachment A: Snapshot of Current WIC Food Packages for Infants
Maximum Monthly Allowances of Supplemental Foods

	Fully Formula Fed (FF)		Partially (Mostly) Breastfed (BF/FF)		Fully Breastfed (BF)	
Foods	Food Packages I-FF & III-FF	Food Packages II-FF & III-FF	Food Packages I-BF/FF & III-BF/FF	Food Packages II- BF/FF & III- F/FF	Food Package I-BF	Food Package II-BF
	A: 0-3 months B: 4-5 months	6-11 months	A: 0 to 1 month B: 1-3 months C: 4-5 months	6-11 months	0-5 months	6-11 months
WIC Formula	A: 823 fl. oz. reconstituted liquid concentrate B: 896 fl. oz. reconstituted liquid concentrate	630 fl. oz. reconstituted liquid concentrate	A: 104 fl. oz. reconstituted powder B: 388 fl. oz. reconstituted liquid concentrate C: 460 fl. oz. reconstituted liquid concentrate	315 fl. oz. reconstituted liquid concentrate		
Infant cereal		24 oz.		24 oz.		24 oz.
Infant food fruits and vegetables²		128 oz.		128 oz.		256 oz.
Infant food meat						77.5 oz.

² At State agency option, older infants may be issued a cash-value voucher for fresh fruits and vegetables in lieu of a portion of jarred infant foods.

Attachment B: Snapshot of Current WIC Food Packages for Children and Women
Maximum Monthly Allowances of Supplemental Foods

	Children	Women		
Foods	Food Package IV: 1 through 4 years	Food Package V: Pregnant and Partially (Mostly) Breastfeeding (up to 1 year postpartum)	Food Package VI: Postpartum (up to 6 months postpartum)	Food Package VII: Fully Breastfeeding (up to 1 year postpartum)
Juice, single strength	128 fl. oz.	144 fl. oz.	96 fl. oz.	144 fl. oz.
Milk³	16 qt.	22 qt.	16 qt.	24 qt.
Breakfast cereal⁴	36 oz.	36 oz.	36 oz.	36 oz.
Cheese	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 lb.
Eggs	1 dozen	1 dozen	1 dozen	2 dozen
Fruits and vegetables⁵	\$9.00 in CVV	\$11.00 in CVV	\$11.00 in CVV	\$11.00 in CVV
Whole wheat or whole grain bread⁶	2 lb.	1 lb.	N/A	1 lb.
Fish (canned)⁷	N/A	N/A	N/A	30 oz.
Legumes (dry or canned) and/or Peanut butter	1 lb. (64 oz. canned) Or 18 oz.	1 lb. (64 oz. canned) And 18 oz.	1 lb. (64 oz. canned) Or 18 oz.	1 lb. (64 oz. canned) And 18 oz.

³ Allowable fluid milk substitution options: yogurt, cheese, soy beverage, and tofu.

⁴ At least one half of the total number of breakfast cereals on State agency food list must be whole grain.

⁵ Fruits and vegetables are issued via a cash-value voucher (CVV) or benefit (CVB)

⁶ Allowable whole grain options: brown rice, bulgur, oatmeal, whole-grain barley, whole wheat macaroni products, or soft corn or whole wheat tortillas.

⁷ Allowable canned fish options: light tuna, salmon, sardines, and mackerel.