

**Highlights of The  
WIC Food Package – Final Interim Rule  
Published December 6, 2007**

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**State agencies must implement by:** October 1, 2009

**Interim rule comment period ends:** February 1, 2010 (“pilot” until final rule is published)

**Cost Neutral:** USDA estimates that the revisions to the WIC food packages will be cost-neutral. No additional funds will be provided to implement this rule.

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**USDA Requires States to Implement These Changes**

**Addition of New Foods**

- ✓ Fruit – any variety of fresh, whole or cut, without added sugar, for women and children
- ✓ Vegetables – any variety (except white potatoes) of fresh, whole or cut for women and children
- ✓ Whole wheat bread (may include whole wheat buns and rolls) for women and children
- ✓ Baby foods – infant fruits & vegetables; infant meat (fully breastfed infants only)
- ✓ Breakfast Cereals (at least half of the State’s authorized breakfast cereals must meet whole grain requirement)
- ✓ New fish options for fully breastfeeding women (states must authorized two types)

**Fruit & Vegetable Cash-Value Check**

- ✓ Children and Women are to receive a dollar-amount fruit and vegetable check:
  - Children \$6
  - Pregnant, partially breastfeeding and postpartum women \$8
  - Women fully breastfeeding \$10
  - Women fully breastfeeding more than one infant \$15.
- ✓ Monthly value of the cash-value voucher will be adjusted annually for inflation
- ✓ Not allowed: white potatoes, herbs/ spices, edible blossoms of flowers, fruit leathers/roll-ups

**Therapeutic Formula and Foods**

- ✓ Adds regulatory language confirming the role of the physician and the health plan in prescribing and providing exempt formulas and medical foods
- ✓ Allows infants/children on therapeutic products to receive prescribed amounts of foods

**Additional Breastfeeding Incentives**

- ✓ Significantly increases the retail value of the foods prescribed to breastfeeding dyads: more milk, twice the eggs and baby food fruits and vegetables, baby food meats, additional fish choices, greater fruit and vegetable purchasing power
- ✓ No routine issuing of formula in the first month to breastfeeding dyads

## **Reduction/Elimination of Current Food Types**

- ✓ Quantities of milk, cheese, eggs, and juice will be reduced for women and children
- ✓ Juice will be eliminated from the infant's package
- ✓ Infant formula amounts will be reduced for partially breastfeeding infants and for all formula-fed infants starting at six months of age

## **New Milk Requirement**

- ✓ Children 12-23 months will continue to receive whole milk.
- ✓ All other children, and all women, will be issued reduced-fat, low-fat or non-fat milk.

## **New Physician Documentation Requirements**

- ✓ Continues requirement for documentation of medical need for exempt ("therapeutic") formulas and medical foods;
- ✓ Adds requirement for physician to document approval for foods received from WIC in addition to therapeutic formula, including kinds, amounts and term of prescription
- ✓ Adds requirement for documentation of approval for children to receive soy-based products as a substitute for milk

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## **States May Opt to Implement These Changes**

### **New substitutions for current and new foods**

- ✓ Processed (canned, frozen, dried) fruits and vegetables without added sugar as a substitute for fresh fruits and vegetables
- ✓ Bananas for up to 16 oz. infant fruit (1 lb. bananas = 8 oz. infant food)
- ✓ Soy beverage and tofu as substitutes for milk
- ✓ Brown rice, bulgur (cracked wheat), oatmeal, whole-grain barley, soft corn or whole wheat tortillas as a substitute for whole grain bread
- ✓ Canned salmon, sardines or mackerel (specific types) as a substitute for tuna
- ✓ Canned beans as a substitute for dried beans

### **Food Delivery Systems and the Fruit & Veggie Cash Value Check**

- ✓ State Agencies may allow participants to pay the difference when the purchase of authorized fruits and vegetables exceeds the value of the cash-value check
- ✓ State Agencies may allow farmers at farmers' markets and roadside stands to accept cash-value checks for fruits and vegetables

