



California  
Department of  
Health Services

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Director

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency  
**Department of Health Services**

August 8, 2006

**GROCER ALERT 2006-04**



**ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER**  
Governor

TO: ALL WIC GROCERS

SUBJECT: CHANGES IN FEDERAL REGULATIONS FOR WIC FOOD PACKAGE

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**Purpose**

I am happy to inform you that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has published the *Proposed Rule: Revisions in the WIC Food Packages* on August 7, 2006, in the Federal Register. Public comments are due by November 6, 2006.

We encourage you to submit your written comments to the USDA regarding the proposed changes. Your input and partnership in this endeavor are critical as you play an important role in ensuring that healthy foods are accessible to WIC families in your community.

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**Background**

We are pleased that the Proposed Rule closely reflects the science based recommendations of the Institute of Medicine, made in the April 2005 report entitled *WIC Food Packages: Time for a Change*. The proposed changes would make the foods offered to WIC participants more consistent with the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the feeding guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatrics. They would encourage and support breastfeeding and reinforce nutrition education to improve the health of WIC families.

The recommendations include:

- adding new foods such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains;
  - providing only lower fat milk to women and children over two years old; and
  - offering soy beverage and tofu as alternatives to milk.
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**Impact**

If the proposed changes are adopted in final regulation, WIC participants will be able to purchase a greater variety of food products in your store, including fruits and vegetables. These changes will help address the cultural needs and preferences of our diverse population.

Given the operational challenges of providing fruits and vegetables as well as other new foods mentioned above to WIC participants, the proposed WIC food package regulations should be of interest to you. We look forward to working with you to implement the changes when the regulations are published as final.

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**Action  
Needed**

The *Proposed Rule: Revisions in the WIC Food Packages* has been posted on <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/regspublished/foodpackagesrevisions-proposedrule.htm>. Since the total number and type of comments that USDA receives on these proposed regulations will influence what is included in the final regulations, we encourage you to review the Proposed Rule and submit your comments to USDA by November 6, 2006.

Comments may be submitted by one of the following methods:

- **Mail** - Send comments to:  
Patricia N. Daniels, Director  
Supplemental Food Programs Division  
Food and Nutrition Service, USDA,  
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 528  
Alexandria, Virginia 22302.
- **E-mail**: Send comments to [wichq-sfpd@fns.usda.gov](mailto:wichq-sfpd@fns.usda.gov). Include "Docket ID Number 0584-AD77, WIC Food Packages Rule," in the subject line of the message. It would be helpful to also include in your message your organization and your city/state.
- **Federal eRulemaking Portal**: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- Use USDA's [online form](#) to submit comments. You will receive a confirmation page and your comments will be sent by email to FNS.

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**Questions**

I would like to thank you in advance for taking the time to support this very important change in WIC regulations. If you have any questions or comments, call Pat Gradziel or Mandeep Punia at (916) 928-8685 or e-mail at [pgradzie@dhs.ca.gov](mailto:pgradzie@dhs.ca.gov) or [mpunia@dhs.ca.gov](mailto:mpunia@dhs.ca.gov).

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