

Access To Affordable and Nutritious Food: Understanding Food Deserts Implications of Low Access for Food and Nutrition Assistance Programs

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Mission of WIC

- WIC is mandated to serve as an adjunct to good health care during critical times of growth and development, in order to prevent the occurrence of health problems, including drug and other harmful substance abuse, and to improve the health status of eligible infants, mothers and children.

Where is WIC?

- 50 States
- District of Columbia
- Puerto Rico
- U.S. Virgin Islands
- Guam
- American Samoa
- Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
- 34 ITOs



WIC Benefits

- supplemental foods
- nutrition education
- referrals to health and social services



Ensuring Adequate Participant Access

- Over 46,000 authorized vendors
 - Supermarkets 55%
 - Medium or Small Grocery 20%
 - Convenience 5%
- Vendors are required by the State to carry a minimum variety and quantity for each WIC food category.

Ensuring Adequate Participant Access, cont

State Considerations For Vendor Selection:

- Must consider the number of other authorized vendors in the same area, and
- Any geographic barriers to such vendors.

WIC Foods Are Changing

- CURRENTLY:
- WIC Formulas
- Milk
- Cereal (infant & adult)
- Juice
- Eggs
- Cheese
- Dried Legumes or Peanut Butter
- Tuna
- Carrots

- NEW REVISED:
- Contains all the current foods plus:
- Fruits and Vegetables
- Whole Wheat Bread or other Whole Grains
- Soy-beverage & Tofu
- Light Tuna, Salmon, Sardines, Mackerel
- Canned Legumes
- Infant Foods

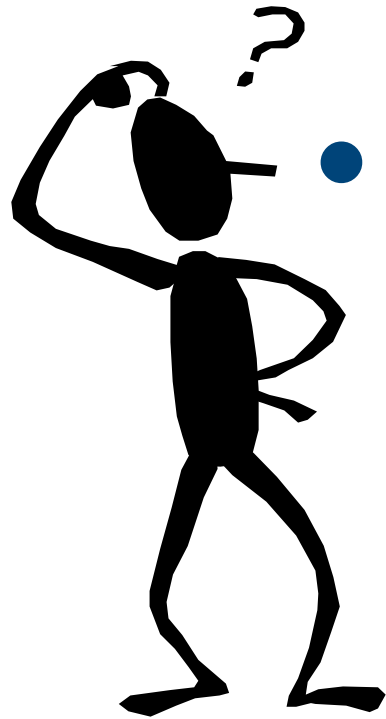
Access To WIC Foods

- Increase access to fruits and vegetables and whole grains for children and women
 - Fresh, frozen or canned fruits and vegetables
 - Whole grain cereal
 - Whole wheat or whole grain bread, buns or rolls
- Increase access to infant food fruits, vegetables and meats for infants >6mos

Results of Two Fruit and Vegetable Pilots

- California – 1 urban, 1 rural location
- New York – statewide
- Both projects well received by vendors and participants
- Increased retailer sales
- Increased variety of fruits and vegetables in rural location over time

Questions???????



- Visit our website
 - www.fns.usda.gov/wic