

# **The New WIC Food Packages**


## **Massachusetts WIC Approved Foods**



# How were WIC foods selected for Massachusetts?

The federal regulations determine which foods are eligible for the WIC program based on food categories and nutritional requirements specified by the Institute of Medicine.

Massachusetts WIC selected foods for its food list from the set of eligible WIC foods based on the following:

- cost
  - package size
  - product availability
  - ease of identifying items as WIC-eligible
  - special dietary needs of WIC participants
  - participant acceptance, preferences & cultural requirements
- 

# Changes to Foods in the New Food Packages

- Milk
- Whole grains
  - Cereal
  - Bread
  - Brown Rice
  - Tortillas
- Juice
- Soy products
- Beans (legumes)
- Canned fish
- Baby food – fruits and vegetables, meats
- Fruit and vegetable check



# Milk

- Fat free or 1% lowfat for all women and children over 2
  - Applies to evaporated and long-life milk as well
- Whole milk for children ages 12 to 23 months only\*
- 2% milk no longer included in standard food prescriptions\*\*
- “Least expensive brand” applies to both fluid milk and evaporated milk

\* Whole milk can **only** be provided to women and children over the age of 2 —with an appropriate prescription form—who have a documented qualifying medical condition **that requires the use of a high calorie WIC formula** (such as Pediasure). Guidance for assigning special medical foods and formula will be provided in the *Special Medical Foods and Formula* module.

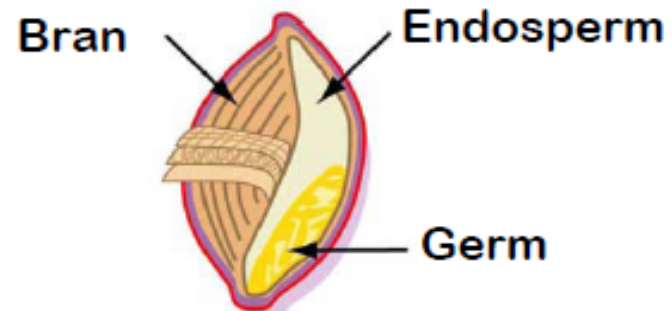
\*\* 2% milk may be issued by a nutritionist to children > 2 and women based on specific growth and nutrition criteria. Guidance for issuing 2% milk will be provided in the *Massachusetts WIC Food Prescriptions* modules.



# Whole Grains

## What is a whole grain?

A whole grain is a grain that has not been broken down by any processing. Each part of the whole grain offers important nutritional benefits.



**Endosperm:** starch, protein, some vitamins and minerals

**Bran:** fiber and B vitamins

**Germ:** B vitamins, protein, minerals and healthy oils



# Common Whole Grain Ingredients

Whole wheat flour

Unbleached or bleached whole wheat flour

Cracked wheat

Crushed wheat

Coarsely ground whole wheat flour

Stone ground whole wheat

Whole grain wheat

Toasted crushed whole wheat

Whole white wheat flour

Whole wheat pastry flour

Whole durum wheat flour

Bromated whole wheat flour

Graham flour

Entire wheat flour

Whole durum flour

Whole grain bulgur

Bulgur (cracked wheat)

Whole wheat flakes

Sprouted wheat berries

Whole wheat berries

Sprouted wheat

Whole oat flour

Oatmeal

Rolled oats

Whole oats

Oat groats

Whole barley flakes

Whole barley flour

Whole grain barley flour

Whole grain barley

Dehulled barley flour

Dehulled barley

Whole corn flour

Whole corn

Whole grain corn flour

Whole grain cornmeal

Whole cornmeal

Brown rice flour

Wild rice flour

Wild rice

Whole rye

Whole rye flour



# Whole Grains

## How are cereals chosen for the WIC food list?

- Must contain 28 mg iron per 100 g dry cereal‡
- Must contain less than or equal to 21.2 g sugar per 100 g dry cereal‡
- No single serving packets of cereal allowed\*
- Boxes must be 12.8 oz or larger\*
- At least 50% of approved cereals must be whole grain (MA WIC has 51%)

‡Criteria has not changed from the old food package

\*Criteria specific to Massachusetts



# Whole Grains

## What steps were taken to determine if a cereal is “whole grain”?

- If the first ingredient on the ingredient label (primary ingredient by weight) is a whole grain AND the following health claim was written on the product label:

*“Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods, and low in saturated fat and cholesterol may help reduce the risk of heart disease”*

Then, the cereal is “whole grain”

- If the first ingredient was whole grain, but there was no claim, a product was determined to be “whole grain” if it had enough fiber and not too much fat or cholesterol



# Whole Grain Cereals

- All Bran Wheat Flakes/Bran Flakes
- Mini Wheats Frosted/Frosted Shredded Wheat
- Grape Nut Flakes/Grape Nuts/Nutty Nuggets
- Cheerios/Tasteeo's/Toasted Oats
- Total/Whole Grain 100
- Cream of Wheat Whole Grain
- Maltex
- Maypo
- Banana Nut Crunch
- Honey Bunches of Oats – Vanilla Clusters
- Life (plain)
- Oatmeal Squares (hint of brown sugar)
- Wheat Chex



# Whole Grains

## What is a whole grain bread?

- *Whole wheat bread* must conform to FDA standard of identity. (Includes whole wheat buns and rolls) and whole wheat must be the primary ingredient by weight in all whole wheat bread products
- *Whole grain bread* must meet labeling requirements for making a health claim as a “whole grain food with moderate fat content” and whole grain must be the primary ingredient by weight in all whole grain bread products



# Whole Grains

## Whole Grain Bread

- WIC whole grain breads must be purchased in 1 pound packages
- Selections include loaves and rolls
- Eligible whole grain breads are specifically identified by size, brand and type (participant education/awareness is key)
- Only 7 brands (3 national brands & 4 private label) make whole grain breads that will be available for purchase with MA WIC checks and are listed individually on the food list
- Over time, additional eligible breads will be available in the marketplace and will be added to the food list



# Whole Grains

## Current List of Whole Grain Breads

- **Arnold** –Wheat Sandwich Rolls, Light Golden Wheat Bread, Stone Ground 100% Whole Wheat Bread
- **Pepperidge Farm** – Stone Ground 100% Whole Wheat, 100% Whole Wheat Hearty Texture, Light Style Wheat Bread, Whole Grain White, Whole Grain Light Style Sandwich, Farm Style Whole Wheat, Very Thin Slice 100% Whole Wheat, Light Style Extra Fiber Wheat, Whole Grain Bread Honey Flax 100% Natural, Whole Grain Rye Seeded
- **Wonder** – 100% Soft Whole Wheat Bread
- **Store Brands** – Gold Medal Wheat with Flax, Hannaford Country Wheat, Shaw's Wheat with Flax, Stop & Shop Wheat with Flax

# Whole Grains

## Brown Rice and Tortillas

Brown rice or tortillas can be selected as a substitution for bread. Participants will need to decide whether they would like bread or brown rice or tortillas before their checks are printed.




# Whole Grains

## Brown Rice and Tortillas

### Brown Rice

- 'Any brand' brown rice is allowed for purchase
- 1 pound package (16 ounce box) only
- Regular, quick or instant cooking
- No added sugars, fats or salts allowed

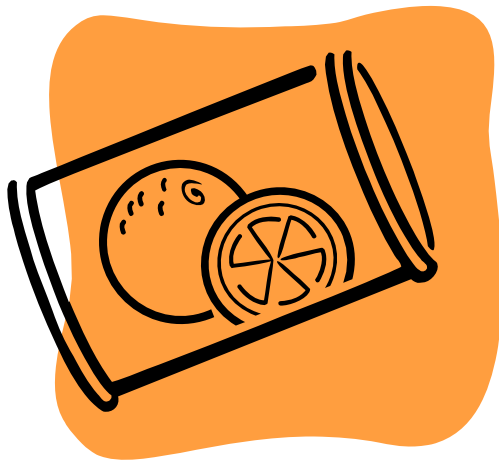
### Tortillas

- Must state "tortilla" on label
  - Soft corn and whole wheat tortillas are allowed
  - Soft corn tortillas must be made from ground masa flour using traditional processing methods
  - Whole wheat tortillas must state 100% whole wheat on front label
  - No added fats or oils allowed
- 

# Juice

## How were juices chosen?

- Must be pasteurized 100% fruit juice
- Juice must contain 120% of the Daily Value for vitamin C



# Juice

## What juices will be available from MA WIC?

- Any brand orange, grapefruit or pineapple juice (frozen concentrate) in a 11.5 or 12 oz can
- Any juice in 64 ounce bottles from Juicy Juice, Langers, Welch's and a variety of store brand that say "100% juice" AND "120% Vitamin C" on the label
- Participants receiving bottled juice **must read the labels** to check if a specific flavor is allowed!
- Participants will need to decide whether they would like frozen or bottled juice before their checks are printed

NOTE: Liquid concentrate and 46 ounce cans of juice are no longer available from MA WIC



# Soy Products

## Calcium-Set Tofu

- Calcium-set tofu is a substitute for milk (1 16-ounce package per quart of milk). “Calcium-set” means the tofu is prepared with calcium salts that make the tofu a good source of calcium
- Up to 4 pounds of tofu (substituting for one gallon of milk) may be issued to any pregnant, breastfeeding and post-partum woman
- Women and children with a documented milk protein allergy may substitute tofu for all of their milk\*
- Only Nasoya brand calcium-set tofu is allowed for purchase (16 ounce package only)
- Types of tofu authorized: Cubed Super Firm, Firm, Lite, Lite Silken, Soft, and Organic tofu is allowed

\*Criteria specific to Massachusetts



# Soy Products

## Soy Milk

- May be issued to women and children with documented milk protein allergy only\*
- Must be fortified to meet the following nutrient levels (per cup): 276 mg calcium, 8 g protein, 500 IU vitamin A, 100 IU vitamin D, 24 mg magnesium, 222 mg phosphorus, 349 mg potassium, 0.44 mg riboflavin, and 1.1 mcg vitamin B12
- Soy milk may be substituted for milk at the rate of 1 quart of soy-based beverage for 1 quart of milk up to the total maximum monthly allowance of milk
- Only plain soy milk allowed\*
- Two soy milk products are approved for Massachusetts WIC:
  - Pacific Natural Foods ( shelf stable, quarts)
  - 8<sup>th</sup> Continent Original Soymilk( refrigerated, half gallon containers)

\*Criteria specific to Massachusetts



# Legumes

## Canned Beans

- Canned beans can now be substituted for dry beans
- 4 (15.5 oz or 16 oz) cans equal 1 pound dry beans
- Must be plain, mature beans, peas or lentils
- May not contain added meat, fats, sugars or oils
- May be regular or lower in sodium
- Goya or store brand beans are allowed
- Cannot be purchased with Fruit and Vegetable Checks

*The following items are not allowable substitutions for dry or canned beans, but may be purchased with fruit and vegetable checks:*

green peas      green beans      snap beans  
orange beans      wax beans



# Canned Fish - For Fully Breastfeeding Women

Pink salmon and sardines are now allowable substitutions for tuna.

- Any brand allowed
- Red and Blueback salmon are not allowed
- May include bones or skin
- May be packed in oil or water
- Flavorings are allowed for Sardines
- Sardines must be in 3.75 ounce cans\*
- Salmon must be in 5 or 6 ounce cans\*

\*Larger container sizes are not allowed due to concerns that mothers may consume portion sizes that exceed maximum mercury levels.



# Baby Foods

Commercial baby foods available in the marketplace are divided into three stages:

- Stage 1:** Finely pureed, smooth foods with no chunks. Contain single ingredient fruits and vegetables.
- Stage 2:** Thicker version of stage 1 foods. Contains more texture to get babies used to lumps in their mouths. Contain single ingredient foods and also combines two to three ingredients in one jar. Ingredients include: fruits, vegetables, meats and noodles.
- Stage 3:** Thicker than stage 2. Contain three or more items mixed in one jar.






# Baby Foods

The New WIC Food Packages include baby food!

- Stage 2 baby food fruits and vegetables will be offered to all babies ages 6 - 11 months.
- Stage 2 baby food meats will be offered to fully breastfed babies from ages 6 - 11 months

The following will **not** be allowed:

- Baby food fruits and vegetables with added yogurt, rice, oatmeal, juice or DHA
  - Combination dinners such as chicken and rice, turkey noodle with garden vegetables
  - Other textures of baby foods that are on the market including stage 1 or first foods, stage 3 or 3rd foods or toddler lines
  - Baby food desserts, treats or cookies
  - Infant juice
- 

# Baby Foods

## Massachusetts WIC : Eligible Baby Foods

Fruits & Vegetables –

Beech-Nut (Stage 2) 4 ounce containers only

applesauce\*

pears\*

tender sweet carrots\*

tender sweet peas\*

butternut squash\*

Chiquita bananas\*

tender golden sweet potatoes\*

tender young green beans

\* Kosher item



# Baby Foods

## Massachusetts WIC : Eligible Baby Foods

Meats – For Fully Breastfed Babies Only

Beech-Nut (Stage 2) 2.5 ounce containers only

Beef and Broth

Chicken and Broth

Turkey and Broth

At this time, no kosher baby food meats are available from WIC.



# Fruit and Vegetables Check

- The fruit and vegetable check can be used to purchase fresh, frozen and canned fruits and vegetables
- The total purchase must be equal to or less than the amount listed on the check (for example, \$6.00, \$8.00, or \$10.00). Participants can not go over the amount specified on the fruit and vegetable check
- Organic fruits and vegetables ARE allowed
- Dried varieties are NOT allowed for purchase
- Mature beans, peas or lentils may NOT be purchased using fruit and vegetable checks
- Fruit and vegetable checks will be separate from Farmers' Market Checks



# Fruit and Vegetables Check



## FRESH FRUITS & VEGETABLES

### **Allowed:**

- Any variety of fresh vegetables and fruits except white potatoes\*
- Bagged salad mixtures, bagged vegetables
- Whole or cut

### **Not allowed:**

- White potatoes\* (Sweet potatoes and yams are allowed)
- Items from the salad bar, party trays, fruit baskets, dried fruit, decorative vegetables and fruits (chilies, garlic on a string, etc), and painted pumpkins
- Nuts, including peanuts, fruit/nut mixtures
- Herbs, spices, salad dressing, croutons



\*'White potatoes' are any potatoes other than sweet potatoes and orange yams


# Fruit and Vegetables Check

## CANNED VEGETABLES

### **Allowed:**

- Any brand and size
- Any plain vegetable, plain vegetable mixtures (without white potatoes)
- Any container type (metal, plastic, glass)
- Regular, low sodium

### **Not allowed:**

- White potatoes
  - Pickled (sauerkraut), creamed vegetables (including corn), or sauced vegetables
  - Baked beans, pork & beans, and mature beans purchased with a regular WIC check
  - Soups, ketchup, relishes, olives
  - Vegetables with added sugar, fats, oils
- 

# Fruit and Vegetables Check

## CANNED TOMATO PRODUCTS

### **Allowed:**

- Any brand and size
- Metal cans only
- Pastes, purees, whole, crushed tomatoes

### **Not allowed:**

- Soups, salsa, sauces (pizza, spaghetti, or tomato), ketchup, stewed and diced tomatoes
- Added sugars, seasonings, fats, oils



# Fruit and Vegetables Check

## CANNED FRUITS

### **Allowed:**

- Any brand and size packed in water or juice
- Any plain fruit, plain fruit mixtures (except fruit cocktails)
- Any container type (metal, plastic, glass)
- Applesauce – ‘No sugar added’ or ‘unsweetened’ varieties only
- 100% canned pumpkin

### **Not allowed:**

- Fruit cocktails, cranberry sauce, pie fillings
- Any syrup (heavy, light, ‘naturally light’, extra light, etc.)
- Added sugar (‘lightly sweetened in fruit juice’, etc.), nectar
- Added salt, fat, oils
- Products with artificial sweeteners




# Fruit and Vegetables Check

## FROZEN VEGETABLES

### **Allowed:**

- Any brand and size
- Any plain vegetable, plain vegetable mixtures (without white potatoes)
- Beans of any kind
- Any package type (bag, box)
- With or without salt

### **Not allowed:**

- White potatoes
  - French fries, hash browns, tater tots, other shaped potatoes
  - Vegetables with sauces (cheese sauce, teriyaki sauce, buttered, seasoned, breaded, etc)
  - Vegetables mixed with pasta, rice, or any other ingredient
  - Added fat, oil, sugar
- 

# Fruit and Vegetables Check

## FROZEN FRUITS

### **Allowed:**

- Any size
- Any brand with no added sugar
- Any plain fruit, plain fruit mixtures

### **Not allowed:**

- Fruits with added sugar
- Ingredients other than fruit
- Artificial sweeteners



# Fruit and Vegetables Check

Why are white potatoes not allowed? I thought that they were vegetables.

White potatoes—any potato that is NOT a sweet potato or yam—are not allowed by the Interim Rule. This rule is based on the recommendation by the Institute of Medicine (IOM), and is based on the amounts of starchy vegetables suggested in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA).

Data suggest that people already meet or exceed these suggested amounts—and that white potatoes are the most widely used vegetable. WIC fruit and vegetable checks are designed to increase participants' intake of nutrient-dense fruits and vegetables currently lacking in their diets. As such, white potatoes are not allowed for purchase.



# Other Approved Foods

The New Food Package does not make any changes to the description of foods available in the following categories, although the amount of these foods that participants will receive has changed:

- cheese
- peanut butter
- eggs
- infant formula



A full description of the types and amounts of all the foods each participant category will receive can be found in the *Massachusetts WIC Food Prescriptions* modules.




# Vendor Education

- Vendors have received the same guidance on changes to WIC Approved Foods
- Vendor Unit is working closely with vendors and the Vendor Advisory Board to make this transition as smooth as possible
- Vendors will be required to stock the new foods in August 2009
- Vendors will be trained on the new food package in August and September 2009



# Discussion Questions

- How do you feel about the specific changes and choices Massachusetts WIC made for the new food package?
  - How do you feel about the fruit and vegetables check?
  - Which of the changes do you think will require the most nutrition education for participants? Why?
  - Thinking about the new foods, what food category will be the most challenging for participants to select at the grocery store? Why?
  - If a medical provider or participant asked you to describe the changes to the new food package, how would you explain the changes?
  - How can we prepare for the upcoming changes detailed in this module?
- 

# Touching Hearts, Touching Minds

All parents want the best for their children. Mothers in Massachusetts told us that these emotional “pulse points” are what guide them in making decisions about feeding their families:

- Security
- Pride
- Happiness
- Success
- Hope for the Future



How could you tie the information you just learned about the new food packages to these “pulse points”?



# Resources

WIC Works Resource Center

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/>

U.S.D.A. Federal Register, Interim Rule

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/WIC/regspublished/foodpackages-interimrule.htm>

I.O.M. WIC Food Packages: “Time for a Change”

<http://www.iom.edu/CMS/3788/18047/26667.aspx>

I.O.M. Dietary Reference Intakes (DRI) : “The Essential Guide to Nutrient Requirements

[http://fnic.nal.usda.gov/nal\\_display/index.php?info\\_center=4&tax\\_level=3&tax\\_subject=256&topic\\_id=1342&level3\\_id=5141](http://fnic.nal.usda.gov/nal_display/index.php?info_center=4&tax_level=3&tax_subject=256&topic_id=1342&level3_id=5141)

