



## WIC Grocers Training Newsletter

As part of your store's agreement with the Vermont WIC Program, store staff must receive training every year. This helps cashiers and managers stay up to date on WIC requirements and changes, stay in compliance with program rules and be successful in your important role as a WIC Grocer.

**This issue covers the following training topics:** Supplemental foods authorized by Vermont WIC, minimum varieties and quantities of authorized foods that must be stocked by vendors, requirements related to formula sourcing, and any changes since the last training.

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### Winter Edition 2023

#### Stock Approved Foods: Food Categories and Sub-categories

##### Fruits and Vegetables

- Fresh
- Frozen
- Canned

##### Whole Grains

- Bread
- Whole Wheat Pasta
- Tortillas
- Brown Rice
- Oatmeal

##### Dairy

- Eggs
- Soymilk Beverage
- Milk
- Cheese
- Tofu
- Yogurt

##### Peanut Butter and Beans

- Peanut Butter
- Canned Beans
- Dried Beans, Lentils, and Peas

##### Cereals

- Hot Cereal
- Cold Cereal

##### Juice

- Child's Juice
- Women's Juice

##### Infant Foods

- Infant Fruits and Vegetables
- Infant Cereal
- Infant Meats
- Canned Fish
- Infant Formula

#### Approved Products List

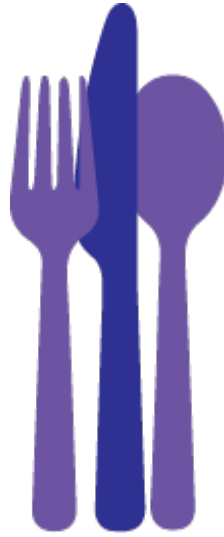
Vermont WIC has approved specific brands and products within each food category and sub-category. This list is the **Approved Products List (APL)**. Each WIC item on the APL has a UPC/PLU in the WIC system.

**The eWIC card system will only accept UPC/PLU for foods on the APL.**

#### Vermont WIC Foods Guide

Details all the Vermont WIC-Approved food products by category and subcategory.

Includes sizes, packaging, brands, varieties, and any restrictions for each WIC food category.



## Authorized Foods Scavenger Hunt

**How well do you know WIC-approved foods? Answer the questions below and locate the information in the WIC Foods Guide and/or 2022-2023 Insert. Review your answers, including page numbers, with your store's WIC trainer.**

Which WIC food subcategories are "any brand" allowed versus "specific brands"?

Provide 2 examples of Gluten Free (GF) WIC- approved cereals.

What are the 2 package sizes allowed for Oatmeal under the Whole Grain subcategory?

If a family food benefits list has 1 Peanut Butter/Beans/Peas- How many cans of beans equal 1 jar of peanut butter?

What's the fluid ounce size of child's shelf stable juice versus women's shelf stable juice?

Is guacamole a WIC-approved food?

## Inventory Requirements

### Minimum Stock Requirements

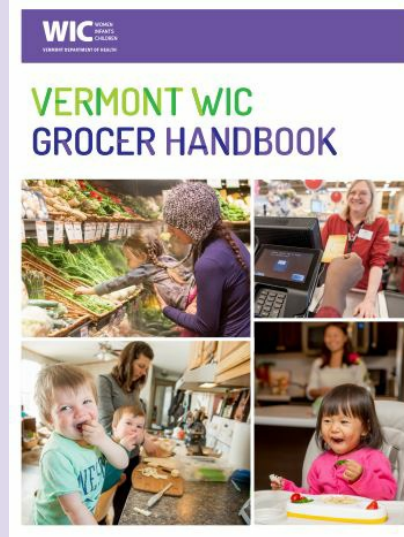
Grocers must maintain adequate stock of WIC approved foods based on guidelines listed in the Vermont WIC Grocer Handbook.

Vermont has 2 minimum inventory levels based on store size. Inventory checklists



are available as appendices in our Vermont WIC Grocer Handbook.

Grocers may request a Food Exemption for certain food items, categories or subcategories of WIC items that have had no sales in the previous 12 months as outlined in the Vermont Food Exemption Policy.



## Formula Purchase Requirements

Vermont WIC has a competitive bid contract with Abbott Nutrition for all standard infant formulas including Similac Advance, Similac Sensitive for Fussiness & Gas, Similac Total Comfort, and Similac Soy Isomil.

The Vermont WIC Program requires that all WIC authorized vendors **MUST** purchase infant formula from wholesalers, distributors, and retailers on our approved list.

[Authorized Infant Formula Supplier List](#)

## Infant Formula Rules

A participant may not purchase formula and later exchange it for another formula

A participant may not purchase another type of formula if the brand printed on the WIC food benefits list or balance inquiry is out of stock.

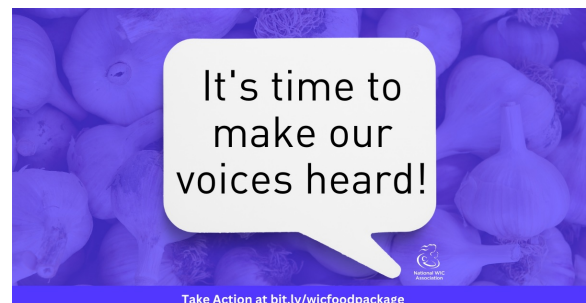
A participant may not purchase formula and later return it for cash. If you suspect that someone is requesting a cash refund for infant formula purchased with a WIC card, please report the information to the State WIC office.

Refer to the **Vermont WIC Grocer Handbook** for detailed information.

## What's New!

**USDA Proposes Science-Driven Updates to Foods Provided Through WIC**  
Proposed changes promote nutrition security and maternal and child health, increase flexibility for participants

WIC food packages are reviewed about every 10 years. The WIC food packages are specifically designed to supplement the foods and beverages participants already consume and fill in key nutritional gaps to support healthy growth and development. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)



is [proposing changes](#) to align the food packages with the latest nutrition science and support equitable access to nutritious foods during critical life stages.

Taken collectively, the changes will increase the current level of assistance while providing WIC state agencies with more flexibility to tailor the packages to accommodate personal and cultural food preferences and special dietary needs and increase variety and choice for WIC participants, making the program more appealing for current and potential participants.

FNS encourages all interested parties to provide feedback on the proposed changes. The comment period is open until **February 21, 2023**. You can learn more about the changes on the USDA [website](#) and The National WIC Association has also created a [comment platform](#), with a user-friendly template to help support you in this process. Your voice is important!

Visit the [USDA website](#) to learn more.

**USDA** Food and Nutrition Service  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

## PROPOSED UPDATES TO THE WIC FOOD PACKAGES



### OVERVIEW

WIC is a powerful public health program, proven to help moms, babies, and young children thrive. USDA's Food and Nutrition Service is recommending science-based updates to the food provided to WIC participants to best meet their nutritional needs and foster healthy growth and development. Some of the proposed changes are highlighted below.



### BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT

Increase support for mothers who mostly, but not exclusively, breastfeed **to support individual breastfeeding goals**



### SEAFOOD

Improve access to **canned fish** to reflect the latest dietary guidance



### DAIRY AND EGGS

Provide **more options**, such as different sizes of yogurt containers or substituting soy yogurt for milk or tofu for eggs



### FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Increase **fruit and vegetable benefit by 3-4x**, focus on whole fruit, and increase variety of fruits, veggies, and legumes offered



### GRAINS

Expand **whole grain options** to include things like quinoa, blue cornmeal, and whole wheat bagels

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

November 2022

**Grocers are important partners of the Vermont WIC Program**

Thank you!

Visit the [Vermont WIC Grocer web page](#) for more information and resources.

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