

Changes to WIC Foods

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Minnesota WIC will be adding some new foods to benefit cards starting January 12th. As a WIC authorized vendor, you will see a smaller number of WIC customers with the new foods in January. Gradually, more and more customers will have the new foods added to their cards. The biggest change in January is that whole grains will no longer be only 16oz package sizes - customers can get any package size of WIC allowed whole grains.

Whole Grains Changes

As mentioned earlier, WIC customers can now choose any size of WIC allowed whole grain options. The whole grain benefit will be shown in ounces instead of pounds. This is an update to the WIC system that will take two days to complete. WIC customers should NOT shop for whole grains on January 10th or 11th. If they do, any WIC allowed whole grain items will not be paid for by the WIC card and should go into the balance due after WIC payment. On rare occasions, an insufficient funds error may happen. If it does, taking the whole grains out of the transaction altogether and re-running it without the whole grains should solve the issue.

Whole Grains Changes

WIC allowed breads will now include larger and smaller sizes of breads, rolls, hamburger buns, and sandwich thins. This will allow more flexibility when customers shop in stores. Also being added are larger and smaller sizes of the other WIC allowed whole grains along with a new option - wild rice. WIC customers are encouraged to use the Minnesota WIC app to find WIC allowed foods on the shelves.

Fish Changes

Tuna and pink salmon will now be available in pouches along with cans. Tuna with broth and flavors are allowed, but only plain pink salmon is allowed WITHOUT any flavorings or broth. The federal regulations state that the identity of salmon is changed when flavorings are added, so we are able to allow only plain pink salmon for WIC customers. Starting in April, not only women, but children will also have fish added to their benefit cards, so you will likely see your store selling more and more tuna and pink salmon at that time.

Sunbutter

Sun Butter will be allowed in original, no sugar added, creamy and crunchy. This provides a much-needed alternative to peanut butter for those customers with peanut allergies.

Vendor Tips for Navigating the Changes

More information will be sent out in email to vendors as the changes get closer. This communication will include the UPCs of the foods that are being added. A few things you can do as a WIC authorized vendor is to pay attention to demand for new foods - you will likely be selling more of those foods that are being added on January 12th. If you see an insufficient funds error happen, take the whole grains out of the transaction and try again. If the insufficient funds error continues happening on or after January 12th, you may need an update to your Approved Product List (APL) that feeds into your register system and allows the new foods to be paid for with the WIC card.

Making sure shelf labels are in the right place is always a good idea but will be key for the whole grain options. Shelf labels with the new foods will be available in the spring.

Things to Know

You can visit the WIC website or download the Minnesota WIC app to see the electronic version of the shopping guide now. The electronic shopping guide will be updated with the latest changes taking place on January 12th. In spring, printed shopping guides and new shelf labels will be available.

Questions?

If you have questions, please contact health.wicvendor@state.mn.us, if you have questions or need clarification. Thank you for your partnership with the Minnesota WIC Program.