

Message from Mike



“If you build it, he will come.” These are the words that Ray Kisella continues to hear in the movie *Field of Dreams*. This is one of my favorite movies of all time and if you have never seen it, I highly recommend it. It is about an Iowa corn farmer that hears this voice that he interprets as a command to build a baseball diamond in his fields. He does and deceased players from the past come each night to play. Among the players is his father, with whom he had a very rocky relationship.

“If you build it, they will come.” Would it not be great if it were this simple to increase access to healthy foods? If we built grocery stores and farmer markets in food deserts, people would flock to them and thus end hunger, reduce obesity, and reduce chronic disease. Only if it were that simple!

There was some great news, interesting news and disappointing news about food delivery covered by various media outlets in recent months.

The great news: Virginia Community Capitol (VCC) announced that they have received a Healthy Food Financing Initiative of \$1 million from the U.S. Department of Treasury. This funding is designed to make investments in low income communities to increase access to healthy foods. Funds may be used to assist food processors, grocery stores, mobile food retailers, farmers markets, and food cooperatives. These funds will go a long way in expanding access to healthy foods by providing financial support to providers of fresh fruits and vegetables in food deserts. More than 1.7 million Virginia residents, including 480,000 children, are living in low income

communities and have low access to supermarkets and grocery stores. For example, there is no WIC approved store in the entire county of Sussex. This is of great concern and should not be the case.

The interesting news: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced that the amount of calories from fast food was actually lower in low income neighborhoods than in higher income neighborhoods. Higher obesity rates in low income neighborhoods have long been postulated as being caused by the lack of healthy food choices so that the children receive more calories from fast food outlets. The study reported that adolescents received about 17% of their daily calories from fast food, while younger children received 9%, which is still way too high. The survey was conducted in 2011 and 2012.

The disappointing news: A store owner in Virginia was fined \$1.9 million and sentenced to 30 months in jail for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) fraud. He was found guilty of purchasing SNAP benefits, paying 50 cents for each dollar of benefits.

Again I thank all for everything that you do to make the Virginia WIC Program a success.

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It Is Coming – A New WIC Approved Food Brochure (2016)

A new and improved WIC Approved Food Brochure will be available late 2015/early 2016. This new brochure contains many of the same items as the 2012 version; however some new foods have been added, some foods have been removed, and other format changes have been made. The 2016 WIC Approved Food Brochure is slightly larger than its predecessor, and each food category has a different



colored tab to allow you to more quickly find a particular food item. Food categories that require stores to post a **“Wholesome Informed Choices”** or **“WIC”** shelf label have the WIC logo displayed next to the category name. You may also notice that “Store Designated Brand” is now referred to as “WIC Eligible Brands”. For each food category, ineligible foods are now described in the section labeled “Not Included”.

The most significant changes to the eligible foods are summarized here:

- a. Infant Formula** – A new Infant Formula flyer exists which continues to be a separate flyer. Additional formulas and WIC-Eligible Nutritional products can now be purchased at retail stores. Note: Examples of WIC-Eligible Nutritional products include Pediasure, Pediasure with fiber.
- b. Infant Cereal** – no change
- c. Infant (Baby) Foods**
 - Twin-packs of 4 ounce containers are allowed
 - 4 ounce pouches are listed in the **not included** section.
- d. Fruits & Vegetables**
 - Diced tomatoes have been added
 - Frozen peas, beans and lentils are eligible – see the Legume section for the specific varieties that are allowed.
- e. Juice**
 - Selected brands of refrigerated juice have been added
 - Additional brands of apple and grape juice (frozen and liquid) have been added, including several national brands, i.e., Welch’s liquid juice (Grape only), Juicy Juice liquid (Apple only)
 - Tomato Juice is listed in the **not included** section.
- f. Cheese** – no change
- g. Eggs** – no change
- h. Milk** – Original flavor of Silk brand soy beverage (32/64/128 oz. containers) has been added.
 - 32 oz. UPC: 0 25293 60037 9
 - 64 oz. UPC: 0 25293 60039 3
 - 128 oz. UPC 0 25293 60092 8
- i. Legumes**
Beans/Peas/Lentils – Only the following types are now eligible:
 - Black beans
 - Black-eyed peas
 - Butter/lima beans
 - Chickpeas/garbanzo beans
 - Garbanzo beans
 - Kidney beans (dark/light)
 - Lentils
 - Navy /Great Northern Beans
 - Pinto beans
 - Red beans
- Peanut butter – no change.
- j. Canned Fish** – no change
- k. Whole Grains**
 - Specific approved brands of Whole Wheat Breads are no longer listed in the WIC Approved Food Brochure – see a listing of the approved brands which have been included in this bulletin (see “Whole Wheat Breads” article for the specific approved brands).
 - Important: Whole Wheat Breads containing artificial sweeteners has been removed (i.e. Nature’s Own Sugar Free).
 - Additional brands of corn and whole wheat tortillas have been added
- i. Breakfast Cereals** – new brands and varieties have been added

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It Is Coming – A New WIC Approved Food Brochure (2016)

Retailers and cashiers should carefully review the new WIC Approved Food Brochure and new Infant Formula flyer to identify additional changes. Please contact your assigned Vendor Liaison if you have questions about any of the changes that have been made. You may also contact Brian Tun, UPC Coordinator (Brian.Tun@vdh.virginia.gov), if you want to obtain a listing of the specific Universal Product Codes (UPCs) that have been removed from the Approved Product List (APL) due to changes made to the WIC Approved Food Brochure. It is critical that you download (daily) an updated APL in order to ensure your store's registers have current information on what is allowed by the Program.

Several new sections have been added to provide more resources to cardholders/participants about eating healthy and other important issues. Information about the Complaint and Incident reporting process is highlighted in the new WIC Approved Food Brochure. This new section will help participants know what type of information is needed to follow up on issues they may encounter when shopping with their eWIC Benefit Card.

A copy of the new WIC Approved Food Brochure and Infant Formula Flyer is also available at the links below.



WIC Approved Food Brochure

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/livewell/programs/content/wic/documents/QR/WICApprovedFoodBrochureEnglish.pdf>



Infant Formula Flyer

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/livewell/programs/content/wic/documents/QR/InfantFormulaFlyerEnglish.pdf>

How Can I Find Out What Changed in the Approved Product List?

As a result of changes in the new WIC Approved Food Brochure and Infant Formula flyer, newly approved items were added and some items that are no longer WIC eligible were removed. You can find a list of Universal Product Codes (UPCs) with descriptions that were added to or deleted from the Approved Product List (APL) at the link below.

Additionally, you can contact Brian Tun, UPC Coordinator at Brian.Tun@vdh.virginia.gov or (804) 864-7849 if you want to:

- Inquire about the WIC approval status of any particular UPC (please provide the full 12 digit UPC number).
- Request an electronic copy of UPCs that were added or deleted in the APL.



Changes to the APL

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/livewell/programs/content/wic/documents/QR/2016VA-WICFoodListAddedNewUPCs.pdf>



UPC Update Request Form

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/livewell/programs/wic/content/retailers/documents/UPCUpdateRequestForm.pdf>



UPC Update Request Instructions

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/livewell/programs/wic/content/retailers/documents/UPCUpdateRequestFormInstructions.pdf>

Suggested Actions to Prepare for this Change

To make the transition to the new WIC Approved Food Brochure (2016) there are certain actions that are highly suggested, including:

- ✓ Prepare your cashiers and other store personnel – provide training to them.
- ✓ Review with your cashiers the major changes being made to WIC Approved Foods, i.e., new food choices.
- ✓ Discard all outdated WIC Approved Food Lists, Infant Formula flyers and Grape Juice Flyers.
- ✓ Contact your distributor/supplier to order new foods, formula and WIC-Eligible Nutritionals that will be WIC approved. Examples of WIC-Eligible Nutritionals include Pediasure, Pediasure with fiber.
- ✓ Use the Retailer Supply Request form to order additional copies of the WIC Approved Food Brochure and Infant Formula Flyer. Samples of these items will be sent to each store via a special mailing. The Retailer Supply Request form can be downloaded at the link below. A copy of the form will also be included in the special WIC Approved Food Brochure mailing.
- ✓ At each cash register that accepts the eWIC Benefit Card retain a copy of the new WIC Approved Food Brochure (both English and Spanish) and new Infant Formula Flyer – remember you are required to have these resources readily available at your registers.
- ✓ Confirm your point of sales (POS) contractor or IT support is downloading a copy of the WIC Program’s Approved Product List (APL) daily to ensure your system has the most current information available to you and your customers.
- ✓ Look out for additional opportunities to have your questions answered. Shortly you will receive a written notice from either your corporate trainers or the WIC Program that identifies special training sessions (optional) that will be held prior to this change being implemented to answer your questions pertaining to the WIC Approved Food Brochure and Infant Formula Flyer. Additional information will be sent via email and US Mail.
- ✓ Contact Sheila Brewer, Vendor Compliance Manager at (804) 864-7810 or at sheila.brewer@vdh.virginia.gov if there are any issues or questions about the Not-to-Exceed reimbursement level for new foods that have been added to the APL.
- ✓ Save and share this bulletin with your cashiers and store personnel and see what questions that may have about these upcoming changes.

There will not be a grace period between the old and new WIC Approved Food Brochure. These changes become effective on the date specified in the announcement. Don’t forget: the WIC Program will be doing undercover “secret shopper” buys to ensure that newly eligible items can be purchased at WIC authorized stores. Conversely, these buys will also confirm that ineligible foods are not being purchased at your stores. Remember- Training is the key to ensure your cashiers are up to speed when these food changes are implemented. If you have any questions about compliance please contact Alex Acharya at (804) 864-7811 or alex.acharya@vdh.virginia.gov.



Retailer Supply Request Form

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/livewell/programs/wic/content/retailers/documents/RetailerSupplyRequestForm.pdf>



Retailer Supply Request Form Instructions

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/livewell/programs/wic/content/retailers/documents/RetailerSupplyRequestFormInstructions.pdf>

Minimum Stocking Requirement (MSR) Changes

There have been minimum changes to the MSR. A recap of some of the areas where questions might exist is outlined in this article.



Infant Cereal *(No change from three boxes, 8 oz. containers)*

Any brand of rice cereal that is included in the APL will count toward the MSR. If the approved brand changes with the new rebate contract, the State WIC Office will notify retailers in writing of the brand of infant cereal that can be purchased.

Infant Foods *(No change from 32 containers infant fruits and 32 containers infant vegetables, two different varieties, 4 oz. containers)*

As a reminder, both individual containers and twin packs of 4 oz containers count toward the MSR. Twin packs will count as two containers. Stores must stock a total of 32 containers of fruits, in at least two different varieties, and a total of 32 vegetables in at least two different varieties.

Liquid Juice *(No change from two containers, two different varieties, 64 oz. containers)*

Two different varieties of approved liquid juice (64 ounces) shelf stable or refrigerated can be counted. The various approved varieties include: apple, grape, grapefruit, or orange. (See WIC Approved Food Brochure for specific brands juices now included).

Frozen Juice *(No change from two containers, two different varieties, 12 oz. containers)*

Two different varieties of approved frozen juice (12 ounces) can be counted towards the MSR. The various approved varieties include: apple, grape, grapefruit or orange. (See WIC Approved Food Brochure for specific brands juices now included).

Whole Wheat Bread *(No change from one package, 16 oz. container)*

Any brand of Whole Wheat Breads that are identified in the APL as approved. Remember, breads containing artificial sweeteners will no longer count toward the MSR. For example, Nature's Own Whole Wheat Sugar Free Bread has been removed from the APL. (See Whole Wheat Breads article for the specific approved brands).

Legumes *(No change from eight cans, 15-16 oz containers and one pound of dry)*

Only Black beans, Black-eyed peas, Lima/butter beans, Chickpeas/garbanzo beans, Kidney beans (dark and light), Navy/Great Northern beans, Pinto beans, Red beans, and Lentils will count toward meeting the MSR.

Fruits and Vegetables *(No change from two different subcategories (i.e., fresh and frozen or fresh and canned) and \$20.00 total for each Fruits and Vegetables category).* Diced tomatoes with herbs and spices will not be added to the APL. Diced tomatoes have been added to the APL and can count toward meeting the MSR.

Breakfast Cereals, Brown Rice, Cheese, Eggs, Infant Formula, Milk, and Peanut Butter *(no change to the MSR has been made).*

A copy of the most current Minimum Stocking Requirement can be downloaded via the link below.

See the new WIC Approved Food Brochure for specific restrictions and eligible brands for each food category.



Minimum Stocking Requirement

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/livewell/programs/wic/content/retailers/documents/stockingrequirement.pdf>

What Cashiers Need to Know

Some new foods, formulas and WIC-Eligible Nutritionals have been added to the WIC Approved Food Brochure. To ensure each cardholder receives the correct formula and foods prescribed to them, cashiers should **always**:

- a. Scan each item and allow the point of sale (POS) system to determine eligibility for the cardholder.
- b. Never assume an item is not allowed or refuse a purchase based on visual observation, or the last cardholder's WIC purchase.
 - WIC-Eligible Brands may vary based on the product type (e.g. whole grains, liquid juices, etc.)
- c. Confirm with your manager the brand or brands of milk approved at your store. Usually the store brand of (cow's milk) is the WIC 'Best Value' brand.
- d. Scan all milk products.
 - Skim or 1% low-fat milk (for children over two) and whole milk (for children under two) are the most commonly prescribed; however 2%, Lactose Free, and Soy milks can also be prescribed.
- e. Keep the new WIC Approved Food Brochure at the register for easy reference.
- f. Follow-up with management to have the Universal Product Code (UPC) added to the Virginia WIC Approved Product List if a prescribed item does not scan.
- g. Remember that each food category specifies one of the following restrictions on brands:
 - Any brand;
 - Selected brand;
 - Store brand;
 - Best value brand (applies to cow's milk only).

IMPORTANT: See the WIC Approved Food Brochure for additional information on which food categories have brand restrictions.

- h. Refer to the WIC Approved Food Brochure or call for manager assistance if questions or issues arise.
- i. Some formulas and WIC-Eligible Nutritionals can now be purchased at your store, if you stock them (see Infant Formula Flyer for additional information about the packaging and container sizes that are allowed).

WIC Shelf Labels

The new WIC Approved Food Brochure will display the green WIC "Wholesome Informed Choices" logo for categories that require a WIC shelf label. The Signage and Shelf Label guideline in the Retailer Manual (**effective October 1, 2015**) has been updated to reflect these new shelf label changes.

WIC shelf labels are required for all WIC-eligible products in the following categories:

- Breakfast cereals;
 - Cheeses (block and sliced);
 - Juices (frozen, liquid and refrigerated);
 - Legumes (peanut butter, canned and dry beans, peas and lentils);
 - Skim and 1% milk; and
 - Whole wheat breads.
- WIC-Eligible Brands may vary based on the product type (e.g. whole grains, liquid juices, etc.)

IMPORTANT: two new food categories must have WIC shelf labels used: legumes (beans, peas and lentils) AND WIC-Eligible whole wheat breads.



Labels are optional for products in other categories. For these other categories (eggs, infant cereal, infant food, formula, fish, fruits and vegetables, brown rice, and tortillas), approved products must be either completely unlabeled or completely labeled. During onsite visits completed by WIC Program staff, your level of compliance in complying with this requirement will be checked to confirm that required shelf labels are used, and optional shelf labels are used consistently within a food category.

Please note that to avoid confusion, only the green "Wholesome Informed Choices" shelf labels or **approved** "WIC" custom shelf labels should be used. Older SWO-supplied shelf labels should be removed and replaced with the "Wholesome Informed Choices" shelf labels.

Whole Wheat Breads

The WIC Approved Food Brochure no longer lists the specific names of WIC Approved brands of whole wheat breads that can be purchased by eWIC cardholders. The approved brands of whole wheat Bread (16 oz. package) that can be purchased by cardholders include:

UPC	Brand	Description
042187203485	BEST YET	100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
074323092301	BIMBO	100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
041303027806	ESSENTIAL EVERYDAY	100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
035826074645	FOOD LION	100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
035826085252	FOOD LION	100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
688267125263	GIANT	STONE GROUND 100% WHEAT BREAD
688267094811	GIANT	STONE GROUND 100% WHEAT BREAD (No Salt Added)
688267097133	GIANT	100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
051933343436	GRISSOM'S MILL	100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
024126008931	HEALTHY LIFE	100% WHOLE WHEAT WHOLE GRAIN BREAD
087848230639	KERNS	100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
011110001320	KROGER	100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
072250039499	NATURE'S OWN	LIGHT WHEAT BREAD
072250043199	NATURE'S OWN	WHOLE WHEAT W/HONEY BREAD
688267146039	NATURE'S PROMISE	NATURAL 100% WHOLE WHEAT SANDWICH BREAD
070253751516	OUR FAMILY	100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
014100071013	PEPPERIDGE FARM	100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
014100071327	PEPPERIDGE FARM	VERY THIN 100% WHL WHEAT BRD
024126352164	ROMAN MEAL	SUNGRAIN 100% WHOLE WHEAT
077633320010	ROMAN MEAL	MULTIGRAIN BREAD
077633700300	ROMAN MEAL	100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
072945611030	SARA LEE	100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
077633750497	SARA LEE	CLASSIC 100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
071010120040	SCHMIDT'S	OLD TYME 100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
045000121003	WONDER	SOFT 100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
072250011365	WONDER	100% WHOLE WHEAT BREAD

Use the above list of WIC eligible whole wheat breads to ensure all eligible breads available and stocked by your store have a WIC shelf label. If you have any questions about which brands can be purchased, contact Brian Tun, UPC Coordinator at Brian.Tun@vdh.virginia.gov.



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Scan to view online edition

The Virginia WIC Program wants to ensure that local agency staff and cardholders/participants are familiar with the upcoming changes to the Virginia WIC approved foods. During the annual statewide WIC Conference held this past October (2015), WIC Coordinators received a PowerPoint presentation. Using these presentation slides, WIC Coordinators will be able to inform their program staff about the changes made to the Virginia WIC Approved Food Brochure and Infant Formula Flyer. An informal handout based on this presentation has been used by Local agency staff to notify cardholders and participants at certification, recertification, and/or group education classes. During any of these appointments, participants will have the opportunity to ask questions about the food changes. The informal handout will be helpful and practical for participants because they can take this information to stores and find the items they wish to purchase using their WIC benefits. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation which has been used to inform cardholders/participants, as well as the handout used can be downloaded from our webpage at the links below.



Approved Food Brochure Changes Presentation

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/livewell/programs/content/wic/documents/QR/WICApprovedFoodListChangesPresentation.pdf>



Approved Food Brochure Changes Handout

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/livewell/programs/content/wic/documents/QR/WICApprovedFoodListChangesHandout.pdf>



Working With WIC Retailer Bulletin

DIVISION OF COMMUNITY NUTRITION

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Important Links and Numbers

Xerox Retailer Help Desk:

877-436-6057

Vendor Liaison:

804-864-7800 and ask to speak to a Vendor Liaison