

**Virginia WIC Program**  
**Retailer Advisory Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting Date: April 21, 2016**

**Retail Attendees**

Megamart Alexandria

**State WIC Office Attendees**

Alex Acharya, Al Astley, Sheila Brewer, Paula Garrett, Amy Romero, Jennifer Trower, Brian Tun, Mike Welch

**Conference Call Attendees**

Food Lion, Kroger, Commissary, Farm Fresh, Bestway, DECA Headquarters, DECA Dahlgren, Old Town Supermarket, Mic and Mac, Safeway, Priceless Foods, Wade Supermarket, and Walmart.

**Division Director Update (Michael Welch, Division Director)**

- The Crossroads maintenance contract is ending and we have started looking for a contractor for all states.
- WIC Program Participation-Stable but low around 130,000; it was at 160,000 6 years ago. But potential WIC participants have decreased: teen pregnancy lower and unemployment lower. March participant was highest since September 2015. Have started our large advertising campaign.
- Legislative Update-House subcommittee has approved 2017 WIC funding at \$6.35 billion but Senate has not started discussions and Children Nutrition Act reauthorization act still pending.
- Infant formula rebate contract-current contract is with Abbott and was to expire 6/30/16. Because of technical errors and that the bids have been contested, we will redo the request for bids process. Emergency regulations allow for the extension for the current contract. Will continue with Abbott until October 31, 2016.
- Don't change anything with current formula procedures and products until you hear from WIC.
- The purpose of the shelf labels is to make sure WIC participants get the right products; shelf labels are important.
- WIC encourages innovative ways to identify WIC products in your store.
- Approve funding with compliance buyer contractor and will continue to conduct undercover buys.
- Food Lion, Grants, and Farm Fresh met with the First Lady of the Commonwealth for an award for their work to promote the Summer Food Program.

**Special Guest: Harry Zhang, PhD**

- ODU Professor- Behavior economics
- Working with the WIC Program on research studies and focus groups.
- Goal is to improve the WIC shopping experience at stores and participant health.
- Goal is to have WIC participants stay longer in the WIC Program and increase redemption of WIC benefits.
- Trying to help vendors and make WIC a stronger program.
- Will work with all WIC vendors

- Contact information:
  - (757) 683-6870
  - qzhang@odu.edu
- Results will be shared when completed early next year

### Administrative issues – WIC Approved Food Brochure and Formula Flyer Update

- Full implementation date of WIC Approved Food Brochure and Formula Flyer will be May 2, 2016.
- There will be a transition to the new WIC Approved Food Brochure and Formula flyer.
- Local agencies have the new flyer and brochure and participants are being trained. They have been sent to stores as well.
- We are staying with the same infant flyer for near future.
- Expert Care Alimentun powder has a size change. From March 2016 through July 2016 there will be a transition. Until end of July WIC will use their formula partner CAP for this product.

### APL and WIC Approved Foods Miscellaneous

- Webinar for anyone with questions including corporate contacts, trainers, retailers and other interest parties (May 11 and May 12).
- Not all stores have received new food list. Please email Sheila when you receive brochure and formula flyers.
- Some corporate stores got the food list and they are still sending them out to their stores.
- Some confusion with request forms; if you need more please use the supply forms.
- We request you update cashiers and personnel on changes.
- There are two new products that require labels: whole wheat bread and legumes- dry and cans.
- A copy of the brochure and the flyer should be at each cash register and in retailer binder.
- We ask that you discard old lists when the new ones arrive.
- Minimum stock has two changes. Beans have been limited to 10 types and refrigerated juices in 64oz have been added. Other shelf requirements are the same.
- Great northern beans are approved but not on the food list.
- Will delay changes to formula minimum stock requirement until the contract formula is decided.
- Request was made to have shelf labels bigger.
- May 11th & 12th 2 more webinars for questions on the new food list. It is optional.
- Call Brian Tun ((804)-864-7849) to follow up with UPC questions and if a UPC is not working.
- Stores are allowed to start selling new products before official May 2nd date.
- On June 6th the old items will be removed from UPC database. If a WIC food item rings up on the UPC at your store then it's approved during this transition. If you have upset participants call 1-800 TELL WIC (800-835-5942). There is also a TELL WIC flyer you can order. Nature own sugar free is most popular bread and is no longer approved
- Jan 2016 newsletter has all the changes. If you need a reference that would be a good guide.
- Latest newsletter has links to our new webpage on last page.

### Miscellaneous Issues

- Cashiers and Program Integrity – DVD Project (cross functional workteam)
  - Working on creating a new DVD by Jan 2017
  - Contact Jennifer Trowler if you would like to participate on creation by April 30. We will send out an email about a cross functional work team to help with content.
  - DVD will include 6 modules each a few minutes in length
- Train-the-Trainers – 2 day workshop

- June 15th and 16th notice has been sent out. RSVP to Freda Bolling. Required to attend both days. There will be another in September.
- Stores are required to have annual training to participate with the WIC Program
- Working With WIC – April edition is on the WIC webpage.
- Staffing Changes-Amy Romero has been hired to replace Jessica Day-Owen's position and she has sent out a letter to her stores. Our Administrative Assistant will be retiring June 1st and we will need to hire for that position.

## Benefits

Rebate update

Dr. Zhang

Great northern beans still allowed

## Concerns

Shelf label size

## Next step next meeting

July 14, 2016