

WIC Retailer Bulletin - Spring 2023

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Spring edition

[View as a webpage](#)



WIC Vendor Quarterly Newsletter

Megan's Message



Spring has sprung!

The spring season is known for the start new beginnings and transformation and we at the Virginia WIC Program are excited for this next chapter. The month of May will bring on the start of this change with the Public Health Emergency Declaration (PHED) expiration. All COVID-19 related waivers the Virginia WIC program has operated with throughout the pandemic will come to an end 90 days after the PHED expiration.

Virginia WIC will begin transitioning back to in-person services in May with the anticipation of being fully re-opened by August 9, 2023. Two food-related WIC waivers will also expire in August which allowed for expanded options of eggs and milk. The APL will be updated, and the WIC Food List will be the best resource for what allowable items are approved. May 1st will bring on the end of the formula recall and subsequent related waivers and substitutions. April 30th will be the last day participants will be able to purchase Similac brand infant formula temporary substitutes.

Updated information has been added to the Virginia WIC website and shared with our participants.

On the horizon is also the upcoming 2024 Virginia WIC Food List. The food applications are currently open, and we anticipate the Food List being available early next year. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has announced proposed changes to the foods prescribed to WIC participants. These proposed changes are science-based revisions to ensure the food packages reflect the latest nutrition science. The open comment period was closed in February and the submissions are now being reviewed. The final food rules are not anticipated to be released prior to our next Food List. Some of the proposed changes can be seen in the infographic below (provided by USDA):

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

We thank you for all your efforts through these challenging few years we have gone through together and look forward to our continued partnership. Happy Spring!

Megan Nason, MS, RD

Virginia WIC Program Manager
 Division of Community Nutrition
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Reauthorization Training

Effective September 30, 2023, the existing retailer agreements for Virginia WIC authorized retailers will expire. The new contract period will be October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2026. All authorized retailers must receive Contract Reauthorization Training and sign a new Retailer Agreement for the new contract period. Mandatory reauthorization training details will be announced Spring 2023 to begin in June 2023.

Companies with WIC Certified Trainers:

Online webinars will be held for WIC Certified Trainers of multi-store companies and their corporate office staff. These webinars will provide management information and instructions on training their individual stores. Information will also be provided on receiving and submitting the new Retailer Agreements. The webinars are scheduled for:

Tuesday, April 25, 2023
 10:00 am – 11:00 am EST

Wednesday, April 26, 2023
 2:00pm – 3:00 pm EST

Companies without WIC Certified Trainers:

Starting in June 2023, the State WIC Office will offer multiple online webinar training sessions for independent stores and company "multi-stores" without certified trainers, to satisfy the training requirement. The webinars are scheduled for:

Wednesday, June 21, 2023
 10:00 am – 11:30 am EST

Wednesday, June 28, 2023
 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm EST

The primary email contact in your store's WIC account will receive a webinar invitation to register online for one of the live webinars. Registration will require the store's WIC authorization number, which is the WIC identification number (WIC ID#).

IMPORTANT: WIC Vendor Team will send an email with for your specific training event.

VA WIC Formula has gone back to SIMILAC!

Please send a notice to all stores/staff about this change. Please also remind them to SCAN products; the register will tell you if a formula is approved or removed.

***NON-SIMILAC BRAND Formulas are NOT allowed**

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, VA WIC will **NO LONGER** have substitute formula waivers (from USDA) or flexibilities (from Abbott) with no exceptions. Please refer participants to the [webpage](#) for the most recent guidance on allowable formulas.

If there are concerns, please share with WICformula@vdh.virginia.gov



***SIMILAC alternate sizes and forms still active until 4/30/23**

Below is the link to the updated formula substitutions list for Similac brand. **The last day to purchase these Similac brand infant formula temporary substitutes is April 30, 2023.**

[Infant Formula Substitutions](#)

Updated Infant Formula Substitution List

Updated: 3/1/23
End Date: 4/30/23

Category	Sub-category	Item Subbed	UPC	Formula Substitute
21	082	Similac Advance 12.4 oz Powder	070074680644	Similac 360 Total Care, powder 20.6 oz
			070074680859	Similac Advance, powder - 20.6 oz
			070074680897	Similac Pro Advance, powder 20.6 oz
			070074533605	Similac Advance, powder - 23.2 oz
			070074660806	Similac Pro Advance, powder - 23.2 oz
			070074585864	Similac Advance, powder - 30.8 oz
			070074664385	Similac Pro Advance, 30.8 oz powder
			070074681177	Similac Total Care 360, 30.8 oz powder
21	034	Similac Sensitive Powder	070074680712	Similac 360 Total Care Sensitive, 20.1 oz powder
			070074680910	Similac Pro Sensitive, 20.1 oz powder
			070074660820	Similac Pro Sensitive, powder - 22.5 oz
			070074680835	Similac Sensitive, 20.1 oz powder
			070074508184	Similac Sensitive, powder - 22.5 oz
			070074629520	Similac Sensitive, powder - 29.8 oz
			070074664408	Similac Pro Sensitive, 29.8 oz powder
			070074681238	Similac Total Care 360 Sensitive, 30.2 oz powder
21	031	Similac Soy Isomil 12.4 oz Powder	070074677002	Similac Soy Isomil powder - 30.8 oz
21	088	Similac Total Comfort Powder	070074681085	Similac Pro Total Comfort, powder - 20.1 oz
			070074669403	Similac Pro Total Comfort, powder - 22.5 oz
			070074669380	Similac Pro Total Comfort, 29.8 oz powder
			8427030003795	Similac Total Comfort Stage 1 PWD - 28 oz

***SIMILAC alternate sizes and forms still active until 4/30/23**

Below is the link to the updated formula substitutions list for Similac brand. **The last day to purchase these Similac brand infant formula temporary substitutes is April 30, 2023.**

[Infant Formula Substitutions - WIC Retailers \(virginia.gov\)](#)

Updated Infant Formula Substitution List

The Status of Eggs Waiver

The current WIC Food List (2022) now allows one dozen any size grade A or AA white or brown eggs (small, medium, large, extra-large, and jumbo but no cage free- or free-range eggs). Therefore, these eggs have been moved from the temporary waiver to the current food list. WIC participants who are issued eggs on their WIC benefit card can purchase any size of white or brown eggs.

The organic eggs are still under the waiver are:

036800133334	Full Circle Organic Grade A Large Brown Eggs-1 doz
041497097869	Weis Quality Organic Large Brown Eggs - 1 doz
072036630612	Harris Teeter Organic Grade A Large Brown Eggs - 1doz
698264000418	Alderfer Organic Large Brown Eggs - 1 doz
698264000616	Alderfer Grade A Organic Jumbo Brown Eggs - 1 doz

The national public health emergency (PHE) has been extended through May 11, 2023, and all active WIC waivers under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) are now set to expire on August 9, 2023 (90 days following the end of PHE). As a result, WIC participants are allowed to purchase organic eggs through July 10, 2023.

Please contact Brian Tun at Brian.Tun@vdh.virginia.gov with questions regarding the WIC Approved Product List.

<REMINDER>

The retailer minimum stocking requirement for eggs: 2 dozen, large, grade A, or AA

Monitoring Visits

The Virginia WIC Program will resume official store monitoring visits on **Monday, May 15, 2023**. Our primary focus during these visits will be to check WIC approved shelf labels and items on the WIC Minimum Stocking chart below. In preparation for our visit, please verify you have in stock all required foods using the chart below and locate your WIC Retail store binder and verify the following contents:

- 2022 Food Lists English & Spanish
 - Cashier's Handbook
 - Directory of WIC Staff
 - Performance Guidelines: Minimum Stocking Requirement document
 - Performance Guidelines: Signage and Shelf Labels document
 - Retail Store Manual (An electronic version of latest copy is available on our website www.VirginiaWICretailers.com. Use the print option to print a copy or use [Supply Request Form](#) to order a printed copy.
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Virginia WIC Minimum Stocking

The minimum stocking requirement (MSR) must be met at all times. The products must be in the store during normal business hours. Expired foods do not count toward the requirement. Use the Approved Product List (APL) and the Approved Food List to determine approved brands, varieties, and UPCs that may be used to meet the MSR.

Item	Type	Size	Variety	Quantity	Shelf Label Required
Milk	1% OR Fat Free	Gallons, ½ gallons, quarts	2 sizes	5 gallons	Yes
Cheese	Sliced American	16 oz.	-	1 pkg.	Yes
	Block Cheddar			1 pkg.	Yes
Eggs	Large, White A or AA	Dozen	-	2 pkg.	
Beans	Dry	16 oz.	-	2 pkg.	
	Canned	15-16 oz.	-	8 cans	
Peanut Butter	Any approved	16-18 oz.	-	2 containers	Yes
	Non-whole grain	12-36 oz.	-	24 oz. total	Yes
Cereal	Whole grain	12-36 oz. cold	2 types	48 oz. total	Yes
		11.8-12 oz. hot			
Frozen Juice	Single flavored: apple orange, grapefruit, grape	12 oz.	2 flavors	2 containers total	Yes
Refrigerated/shelf stable juice	Single flavored: apple, orange, grapefruit, grape	64 oz.	2 flavors	2 containers total	Yes
Whole Grains	Whole wheat bread	16 oz.	-	1 pkg.	
	Brown rice			1 pkg.	
Infant cereal	Rice	8 oz.	-	3 pkg.	
Infant vegetables	Single ingredient or combination	4 oz.	2 flavors	128 ounces total	
Infant fruits	Single ingredient or combination	4 oz.	2 flavors	128 ounces total	
Infant Formula	Similac Advance Powder	12.4 oz.	-	9 containers	
Fruits and Vegetables (cash value benefit)	Fruit subcategories: canned, fresh, frozen	-	4 types of fruit AND 2 subcategories	\$20.00 total	
	Vegetable subcategories: canned, fresh, frozen			4 types of vegetables AND 2 subcategories	\$20.00 total

Feel free to contact the VA WIC Liaisons with any questions. Let's work together to create a positive WIC shopping experience for your customers.

VA WIC Vendor Liaisons

- Amy Romero Vendor Liaison, Northern Virginia
Amy.Romero@vdh.virginia.gov (804)864-7835
- Jennifer Trower Vendor Liaison, Eastern Virginia
Jennifer.Trower@vdh.virginia.gov (804)864-7278
- Ephraim Ewing Vendor Liaison, Western Virginia
Ephraim.Ewing@vdh.virginia.gov (804)864-7813

WIC Shelf Labels



With the introduction of the new WIC approved food list in July 2022 all stores are required to use either State WIC Office supplied "Wholesome Informed Choices" or an approved custom shelf labels on the following items.

- Breakfast Cereal: whole grain and non-whole grain (all WIC approved brands).
- Cheese: block, slice and string (all WIC approved brands).
- Juice: frozen, liquid and refrigerated.
- Milk: 1%, skim and fat free (gallon, half gallon and quart sizes).
- Peanut butter

Stores have the option of broadening the use of WIC shelf labels on other WIC approved foods as long as they use the labels consistently on all WIC eligible brands within a food category, such as whole wheat breads, baby foods, etc.

Shelf labels are very important to identify WIC-approved foods. WIC cardholders are trained to look for standard or custom shelf labels when shopping. If you need to order additional "Wholesome Informed Choices" shelf labels, or want additional information on shelf labels, please contact your assigned Vendor Liaison. You can use a Retailer Supply Request Form (see link on back cover), or directly below to request additional WIC shelf labels. See the [Signage and Shelf Labels document](#) for more shelf label details.

Retailer Advisory Meeting (RAM) – WEBEX FORMAT

The RAM is a quarterly meeting with VA WIC staff and WIC retailers to give updates and answer questions. More details on the 2023 Reauthorization Training. Previous meeting minutes were emailed and are available on this [weblink](#).

Next RAM:
Thursday, April 20, 2023, 2:00 pm.

Please consider joining us. Email Amy.Romero@vdh.virginia.gov for log in information and a copy of the meeting agenda.

ASK ALEX

Q. Where do I find the latest WIC program updates?

Answer: The [WIC Retailer Resources web page](#) contains the newest training materials, manuals and Approved Product List (APL) available for download. Access

retailer information all in one convenient place [Virginia WIC Retailers web site](#). See the [Notices and Updates](#) section for recent updated information.

Q. Where can I get more Food lists and other WIC materials?

Answer: There are 3 ways to order WIC materials.

- **Online** Supply form on VA WIC website under Resources
- **Print** Supply form and follow the instructions.
- **Call** your WIC Vendor Liaison ([Click here](#) for the Vendor Directory).

Q. What WIC materials should I have at each eWIC register?

Answer: Current (2022) Food List

Q. Where should I store the Cashier's Handbook?

Answer: Each store needs only one copy, and it should be stored in the WIC Retail Store binder.

Q. What categories have mandatory shelf labels?

Answer: Refer to the [Signage and Shelf Labels document](#) for details.

Mandatory labels: Breakfast Cereal, Cheese (slice and block), Juice (frozen and liquid), Milk (1% and fat free), Yogurt, and Peanut Butter.

Q. How often do I need to sign a new VA WIC Retailer Agreement?

Answer: Contract reauthorization for WIC authorized retailers is every three years. This year (2023) is the next contract reauthorization period.

Important Links

- [WIC Homepage](#)
- [WIC Retailer Homepage](#)
- [WIC Retailer Resources](#)
- [Infant Formula Recall Substitutes](#)
- [2022 Approved Food List](#)
- [Current Approved Product List](#) (under Store and Supplemental Food Info section)
- [Vendor Team Directory](#)
- [Commonwealth of Virginia WIC Regulations](#)
- Retailer Incident/Complaint form WIC #387
 - [Instructions](#)
 - [Form](#)
- Retailer Supply Request Form
 - [Web Form](#)
 - [Paper Form](#)
- UPC Update Form
 - [Instructions](#)
 - [Form](#)

Non-Discrimination Statement (<https://www.usda.gov/non-discrimination-statement>)



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