

WIC Vendor e-Bulletin

January 2023

Welcome to the Washington State Department of Health WIC Vendor e-Bulletin. Please share this with all staff involved in WIC. **READ, INITIAL, and place in WIC Training binder.**

You can find a copy of this document and back issues of e-Bulletins on our DOH WIC website:

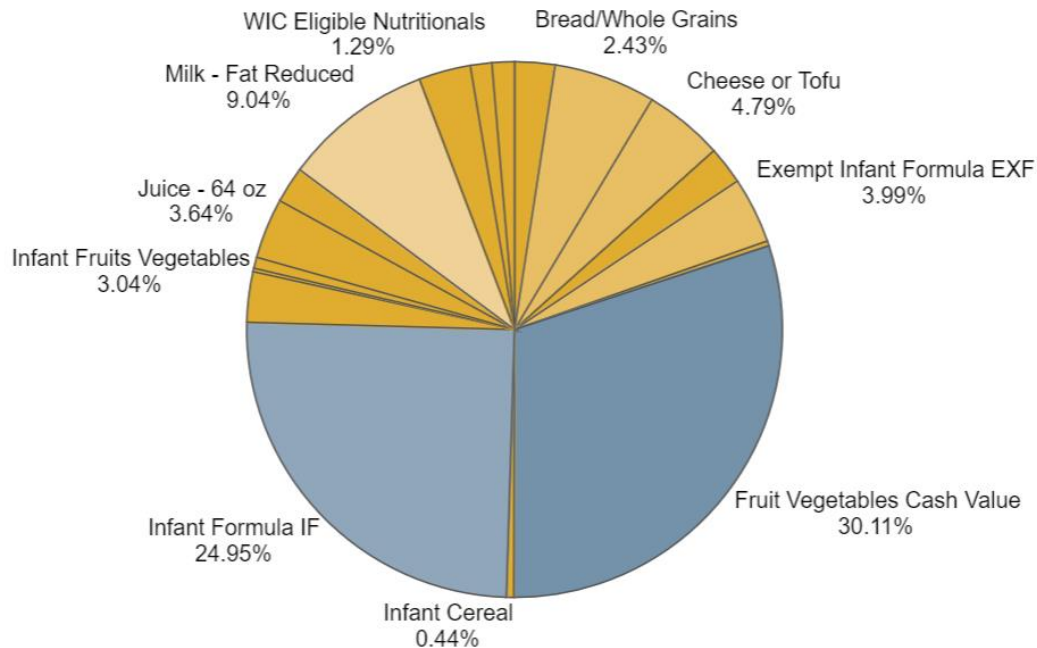
<http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/WIC/WICVendors>.

Contact us at WICRetailManagement@doh.wa.gov or 1-800-841-1410 Ext. 2 if you have questions or need assistance.

A YEAR IN REVIEW *January 1, 2022, through December 31, 2022*

As we look at data trends of foods sold at your stores in 2022 compared to 2021, there was a shift in a couple food categories in Washington State. The increase of fruit and vegetable (F&V) benefit dollars allotted to WIC participants in 2022 had a positive impact for retail vendors and an added nutrition benefit for families.

These added F&V dollars yielded a 30.11% redemption rate compared to 22.33% in 2021. However, infant formula redemptions decreased from 33.01% in 2021 to 24.95% in 2022 due to inventory challenges. The chart below shows more categories and the percentages redeemed by retail vendors in Washington last year.



January 1, 2022, through December 31, 2022:

Your WIC Vendor Management Team, comprising of three staff, provided WIC Interactive Training to **420** vendors and two of those staff conducted **120** monitor visits. We are ending the year with a total number of 662 WIC authorized vendors as of December 31, 2022.

Thank you for your continued partnership and we look forward to a great year with you!

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URGENT - WIC ONLINE VENDOR INTERACTIVE TRAINING



Stores that have not met their training requirement must attend an interactive training. We will be issuing a Notice of Violation to stores that do not complete the last remaining online training on **February 15th at 1:30 – 3:00pm**. Currently, we are not planning to schedule additional trainings for 2023 due to other priorities.

If your store has met this requirement, this is a great opportunity for a refresher or for new staff to learn about WIC. We will be sending an email to stores who have yet to meet this requirement by January 20th as a reminder to register. **If you're unsure if your store has met this requirement, please contact us.**

Your store can sign up for this online training by registering at <https://doh.wa.gov/you-and-your-family/wic/wic-vendors/training> or by scanning the QR code.



DAIRYGOLD MILK CHANGE – NOT WIC APPROVED

Darigold is making changes to some milk container sizes. The below list of milk will no longer be manufactured. They have been replaced by 59oz containers. The 59oz containers are not WIC approved and will not be added to the Approved Product List (APL) but should hit shelves by January 16th.

Darigold will no longer supply these 64oz sizes to grocery suppliers but will remain on the APL until they are no longer in circulation for purchase.

UPC or PLU	Item Description	Size
26400275619	DG WHOLE MILK 0.5 GAL	64 oz
26400289616	DG 2% MILK 0.5 GAL	64 oz
26400296010	DG FAT FREE MILK 0.5 GAL	64 oz
26400298717	DG 1% MILK 0.5 GAL	64 oz
26400405214	DG LACT FREE FAT FREE MILK 0.5 GAL	64 oz
26400440086	DG LACT FREE WHOLE MILK 0.5 GAL	64 oz
26400405207	DARIGOLD LACT FREE 2% MILK 0.5 GAL	64 oz
26400440406	DG LACT FREE 1% MILK 0.5 GAL	64 oz

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Compliance Outcomes: September 1, 2021, through October 31, 2022

COMPLETED VENDOR INVESTIGATIONS	
Covert Compliance Buys	60
Inventory Audits	12
TOTAL INVESTIGATIONS COMPLETED	72
VIOLATIONS	
	# OF INSTANCES
Selling Expired infant formula	6
Overcharging	5
Failed Minimum Inventory (Infant Formula Only)	*15
Product Substitutions	1
Charging for Foods Not Received	0
Recalled Formula Found on Store Shelves	2
TOTAL VIOLATIONS	28

* All instances of failed minimum inventory requirements were waived because of the nationwide infant formula shortage and the general supply chain issues caused from the COVID 10 pandemic.

SIMILAC INFANT FORMULA AVAILABILITY

The increased production of Similac Advance and Similac Isomil Soy infant formulas are at a healthy level. However, Similac Sensitive and Similac Total Comfort production is barely meeting demand currently. There have been spotty shortages and the manufacturer, Abbott, believes production should be healthy soon.

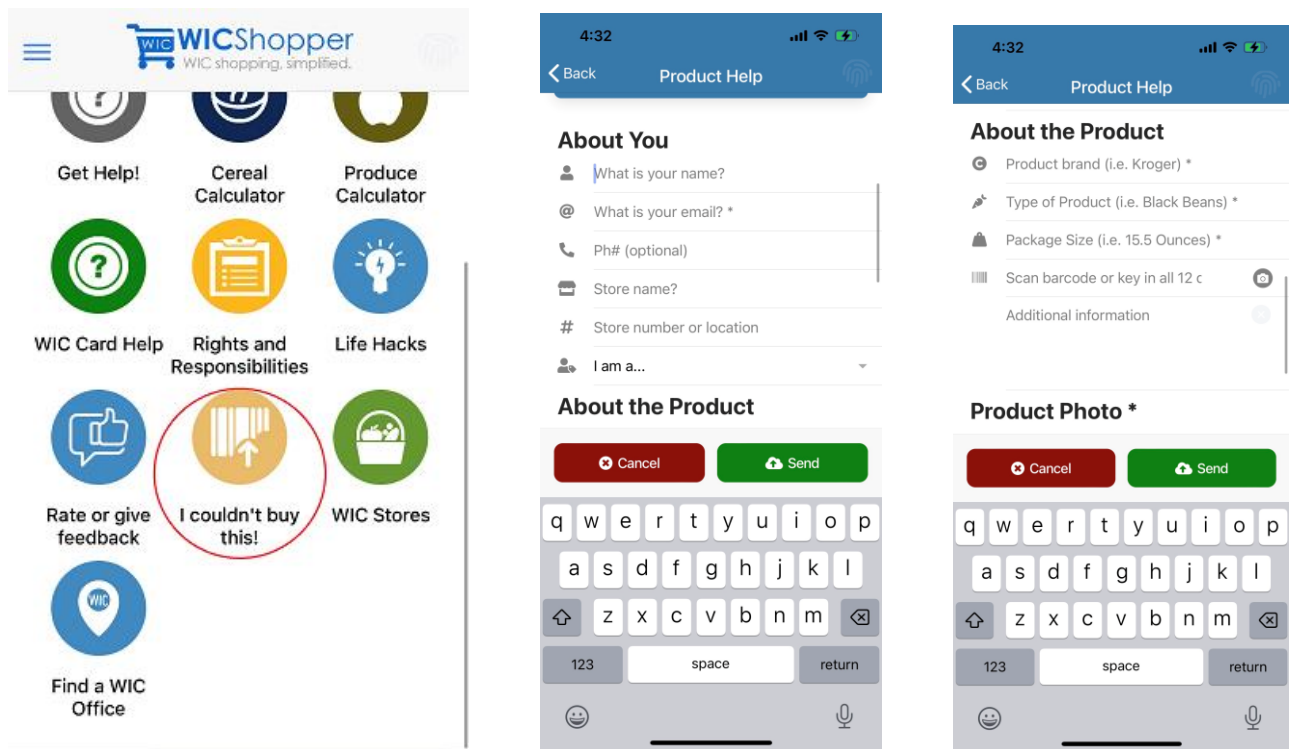
Our WIC Foods Team is assisting WIC participants by requesting procurements of formula that is difficult to find in stores for local WIC Clinics, when necessary. They are also advising clinics to switch the participant's formula to Similac Advance or other available alternatives, if possible.

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WIC SHOPPER APP HIGHLIGHT: I COULDN'T BUY THIS!

Have you experienced a food item not ringing up as a WIC approved? If you are familiar with the WIC Shopper app, the “I couldn’t buy this” feature allows you or a WIC participant to report a food not showing up as approved. This is also an easy tool to use if you simply have a question or comment about the food, not necessarily an issue. Complete your contact and product information. You can upload a photo of the food product if needed. You will then press “send”, and the Foods Team will receive your submission. Once received, it will be reviewed, and you will receive a response from the Foods Team or a Vendor Management Team member.



INFANT FORMULA RETRACTION PLAN

In response to the infant formula recall earlier this year, WIC added a total of 93 temporary WIC approved formulas. WIC will start to phase out these temporary formulas by no longer issuing them to WIC participants beginning February 1, 2023 and will no longer be WIC approved by June 1, 2023. Visit our website or scan the QR code for a list of approved formulas and their effective dates. [WIC Approved Infant Formula | Washington State Department of Health](#)



Please note that Similac for Spit-Up 12.5 oz (UPC: 070074567310) is no longer a WIC approved formula, as it has been discontinued by the manufacturer.

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POS VS. SHELF PRICING



It's important to ensure your shelf prices match what's programmed into your POS system. For example, if the shelf price is \$4.79 yet it rings up as \$4.99, it can result in receiving a violation of your contract. Your WIC Vendor contract states the following in section 9 found on page 8:

9.1 In addition to complying with procedures for food pricing set forth in the Vendor Selection Criteria, the Contractor shall sell WIC approved foods to WIC participants at the same price charged to other customers.

Shelf Price: \$4.79

Part of your contract includes program integrity. Our vendor Compliance Team conducts covert compliance buys to ensure all requirements are met, such as verifying the proper dollar amounts are charged to WIC. When a shelf price is lower than the price in the POS, this will result in a Notice of Violation.

You can review the contract by scanning the QR code. Please contact us if you have questions related to any contract requirements.



UPCOMING: WIC VENDOR RE-CONTRACTING



On September 30, 2023, **ALL** WIC vendor contracts will expire due to the end of the current contract period. Beginning June 1, 2023, vendors will be able to reapply for WIC authorization to be considered for the next vendor contract period. The next vendor contract period is October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2026.

Details on how to reapply will be sent out via email to authorized store contacts. Please contact us at 1-800-841-1410 if you have questions.

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ORDERING VENDOR SUPPLIES



If you are in need of WIC Vendor Supplies, you can request these at:
<https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/opinio/s?s=WICVendSupp>
or by scanning the QR code.



You can request supplies such as: Vendor Training Guides, Shopping Guides, WIC Wisdom Activities, Employee Training Records, Tender Cards, WIC Accepted Here Window Clings, Shelf Tags, and more.

Please fill out the contact information accurately to ensure you receive your request promptly.

MAINTAINING VENDOR SELECTION CRITERIA

As a WIC authorized vendor, it is essential to meet and maintain the Vendor Selection Criteria (VSC) throughout the contract period. Vendor Selection Criteria, which includes the WIC Minimum Inventory Requirements (MIR), ensures your store meets the definition of a Full-Line Grocery. For more information, access the VSC by using the QR code to the right.



Full-line Grocery requirements include a minimum variety and amounts of items (non-WIC foods) that must be always available to shoppers. These requirements ensure WIC authorized stores can support the primary shopping needs of WIC customers and are periodically monitored by our friendly Vendor Management Specialists.



The MIR QR to the left and the MIR table below shows the WIC approved foods that must always be available on premise for purchase. These items can be identified using WIC shelf tags. It is helpful for WIC participants when WIC foods are easily identified. The program provides WIC shelf tags to authorized vendors free of charge. If you need additional shelf tags, please email us and we'd be happy to send you some.

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Minimum Inventory Requirements

Food Category	Approved Sizes	Minimum Required Inventory
Baby Cereal	8 oz or 16 oz box or flip-lid container	32 oz total; including at least 2 boxes or containers of 8 oz baby cereal
Baby Food – Fruits and Vegetables	4 oz glass jar or 4 oz plastic container (2-packs allowed)	Any combination of 32 total jars or plastic containers; 4 varieties
Breakfast Cereal	9, 11.8, 12, 12.1, 14, 14.3, 14.5, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 21.5, 21.7, 22, 24, and 36 oz boxes	12 boxes total; 3 varieties; including at least 1 whole grain cereal
Cheese	8 oz, 1 <u>lb</u> or 2 <u>lb</u> packaged block, shredded, or string cheese	Six 1 LB blocks total; 3 varieties
Dried or Canned Beans/Peas/Lentils	16 oz bag or 15-16 oz can	64 oz total; 2 varieties
Eggs	12-count carton (1 dozen) small, medium, large size, extra-large, or jumbo	6 cartons of 1 dozen
Fish – Canned	Tuna: 2.5 oz, 5 oz, 6 oz, 20 oz (4-5oz pks) Pink salmon: 2.5 oz, 5 oz, 6 oz, 7.5 oz, 14.75 oz Sardines: 3.75 oz to 4.25 oz	12 cans total; 2 varieties
Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	Bags or packages, whole or cut	20 varieties total; including at least 5 varieties of fruits and at least 5 varieties of vegetables
Infant Formula	See WIC infant formula reference materials	9 cans Similac Advance 12.4 oz powder
Juice for Women	46 oz can or plastic bottle of vegetable juice, or 11.5 oz / 12 oz frozen container of juice	Any combination of 6 total cans, plastic bottles, or frozen containers; 3 varieties
Juice for Children	64 oz plastic bottle	6 bottles total; 3 varieties
Milk	Quart, half-gallon or gallon container or powdered conversion to these sizes. Evaporated: 12oz can	10 gallons total; including a total of at least 5 gallons 1% or nonfat milk; any combination of approved sizes
Peanut Butter	16 oz jar	6 jars total; 2 varieties
Whole Grain and Whole Wheat Choices	Brown rice: 16, 14 oz (instant only), or 32 oz bag; oatmeal: 16 oz, 18 oz, 32 oz; tortillas: 16oz; whole wheat pasta: 16 oz bag or box; 100% whole grain/wheat bread: 16 oz	128 oz total; including at least 2 different options, and at least 2 loaves of 100% whole wheat bread or 100% whole wheat hamburger or hot dog buns in 16 oz size
Frozen Fruits and Vegetables, Goat Milk, Soy Beverages, Tofu and Yogurt, Baby Food Meats	No minimum inventory requirement	

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CONTACT US

Washington State Department of Health

Office of Nutrition Services, WIC Vendor Management

(800) 841-1410 Ext. 2

WICRetailManagement@doh.wa.gov

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/WIC/WICVendors>

WIC Foods: WaWICFoods@doh.wa.gov

Complaints: www.doh.wa.gov/youandyourfamily/WIC/makeacomplaint

For all POS related issues contact your POS Provider

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