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FROM: Helene Edwards, RD, LDN
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RE: Revisions to the WIC Food Packages

I strongly encourage you to consider the WIC food prescription recommendations presented in the position paper from the National WIC Association "NAWD WIC Food Prescription Recommendations".

The faces in our country have changed considerably since the WIC Program was initiated in the 1970's. The WIC food package needs to change to offer foods that reflect the cultural dietary consumption patterns of those women and children seeking WIC benefits.

Easy and cost effective changes would include more choices of grain products; more choices of fruits and vegetables instead of juice alone; alternative milk/calcium rich foods such as tofu and soymilk; and alternate protein sources. Increasing these choices would give States the flexibility to offer regionally or locally available and culturally appropriate nutritious foods that are affordable. The WIC food prescription should also offer lower fat milks as the standard milk for all women and children over age 2 years unless a medical/nutrition reason exists to indicate otherwise.

Changes to the WIC food prescription should be consistent and compatible with dietary recommendations made in the "Dietary Guidelines for Americans". WIC foods should be easily assimilated into dietary patterns that contribute to life-long good health.

The WIC Program is one of the premier nutrition programs funded by USDA. A strong component of this program is the nutrition education provided to all WIC participants. Changes to the WIC food prescription should support sound nutrition advice and national nutrition recommendations that will make the WIC Program an even more effective public health program. All of the recommendations in the NAWD position paper support that effort.

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