

December 11, 2003

Patricia Daniels
USDA, Director, WIC
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 520
Alexandria, Virginia 22302

Dear Ms. Daniels:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on "Revisions to the WIC Food Packages." The WIC food packages have been central to WIC's demonstrated success in improving the health and nutrition of the women, infants and children enrolled in the program. This is a very important issue, and we are pleased the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is authorizing the review in order to bring the food package in line with current dietary guidelines, address nutrition related health issues and accommodate WIC 's diverse population.

The WIC community is facing new challenges compared to the challenges it faced 30 years ago. The WIC food package needs an overhaul to effectively address these challenges. The WIC food package needs an overhaul to effectively address: (1) New Dietary Guidelines/Dietary Reference Intake; (2) current public health issues such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease and cancer; and (3) Special needs for ethnic/cultural food preferences, allergies, vegetarianism, etc.

An updated food prescription that meets the Dietary Guidelines especially by including fresh fruits and vegetables is badly needed if WIC is to successfully change shopping and eating behaviors to combat obesity and food insecurity. The WIC food package needs to be in line with the education we provide. We urge USDA to support pilot testing the delivery of fruits and vegetables through the WIC food package in advance of making changes to the food package.

The Solano County WIC Program strongly supports the California WIC Program's recommendations.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Denise Kirnig, RD, MS
Nutrition Services Manager/WIC Project Director
Solano County Health and Social Services

received
DEC 15 2003

