

December 12, 2003

To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you for seeking comments on redesigning the WIC food package.

These are my thoughts and recommendations:

I suggest keeping formula, infant cereal, iron-fortified cereal, milk, cheese, peanut butter, and eggs on the food package. The cereal and formula is an excellent source of iron. The peanut butter, eggs, milk, and cheese are an excellent source of protein, and the milk and cheese is an excellent source of calcium. Those are all essential nutrients that women and children need.

I would recommend changing dried beans to canned beans. Even though we are in the south, the fact is that we live in a convenience world. As a mother, I realize that meals are often thrown together and time does not permit many times to soak and cook dried beans. The beans are an inexpensive way to get a high fiber, high folate, and protein into the diet.

I would also recommend adding iron-fortified rice as another choice to cereal. With families with more than one child, the cereal sometimes goes uneaten. Adding rice would be inexpensive and give the participants another choice of an iron rich food.

The quantities of the juice should definitely be evaluated. The amount we give contradicts the amount that we are giving. The nutritionist are preaching no more than 4-6 oz a day and we are giving enough for 6 oz a day. It gives a mixed message. I would suggest cutting the amount of juice in half because WIC is a supplemental program. We should not be providing all that is suggested. I would like to see juice with added calcium be offered as well. As an RD, I recommend this regularly to pregnant women who do not get the recommended amount of calcium.

I would also recommend soy milk versus cow milk as an option. It has health benefits and it may be more culturally appropriate.

As a Registered Dietitian for the past 9 years, I would like to see the food packages be designed to effectively need the nutritional needs cultural and ethnically. I would also like the option to deny whole milk and peanut butter to those who are overweight. The RD should also be able to work around food allergies to prescribe a more appropriate food package.

Of course, a choice of fruits and vegetables would be highly recommended. Instead of doing farmers market to a selected few states and counties, I would recommend allowing all WIC agencies to offer fruits and vegetables year around. This would work the same way farmers market coupons do, but would be allowed in the grocery store.

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LMC

Thanks for allowing me to express my opinions.

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