



**Manchester Area
Conference of Churches**

Member Churches

Avery St. Christian Reformed Church
Bolton Congregational Church UCC
Catholic Community of St. Bridget
Center Congregational Church UCC
Church of the Assumption
Church of the Living God
Community Baptist Church
Concordia Lutheran Church
Emanuel Lutheran Church
First Baptist Church
North United Methodist Church
Second Congregational Church UCC
South United Methodist Church
St. Bartholomew Church
St. James Church
St. Mary's Episcopal Church
St. Maurice Church
The Salvation Army
Trinity Covenant Church
United Methodist Church of Bolton

MACC

Programs and Services

"Helping our Neighbors in Need"

33 Park Street
Administrative Office
Volunteer Services
649-2093
46 Purnell Place
Church Mouse Thrift Shoppe
647-0800
466 Main Street
Samaritan Shelter
Shepherd's Place Soup Kitchen
Emergency Food Pantries
Mobile FoodShare Program
Case Management Services
Jobs Program
647-8003
MACC Special Events
643-5540

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

Dear Ms. Daniels:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on "Revisions to the WIC Food Packages." The full range of factors affecting the nutritional, incentive and food security value of the food packages needs to be taken into account in revising the WIC food packages. With that in mind, we offer the following recommendations:

Retain Current WIC Foods

Each type of food makes an important contribution to the nutritional content of the package. In addition, these foods are acceptable, practical, accessible and cost-efficient.

Add New WIC Foods

It would be a step forward to broaden the types of foods offered in the standard WIC food packages by adding a fruit and vegetable category and more high calcium food choices including yogurt and soymilk. *The best way of offering fruits, vegetables, yogurt and soymilk to low-income families through WIC is to secure additional Congressional appropriations to cover the additional costs.*

Foods Not to Add

The addition of low-cost starches such as bread, rice and pasta would not improve the WIC food packages. Since these low-cost foods are consumed as staples and would be purchased and consumed regardless of availability from WIC, this kind of addition is unlikely to have a positive impact on the health or nutritional status of WIC clients.

Expand WIC Cultural Food Package Options

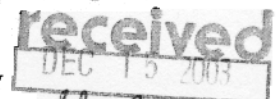
The rules should better accommodate cultural food preferences through an expansion of USDA's current cultural food package regulatory provisions to allow for a food-package to food-package based system of substitution of nutrient-dense culturally appropriate foods. The nutritional and economic value of the children's cultural WIC food package must be equal to the value of the standard children's WIC food package.

Preserve Emphasis on Key Nutrients in WIC Food Packages

The WIC food packages should continue as a special supplement of nutritionally dense foods that supply key nutrients important to the health and development of pregnant women, new mothers, infants and children. The current key nutrients – iron, calcium, Vitamins A and C, and protein – should be retained. **The B vitamin, folate, should be added as a key nutrient based on research revealing its importance in preventing birth defects.** Other nutrients should be considered based on the findings of the Food and Nutrition Board WIC review.

Protect Nutritional Integrity of Food Package by Retaining Strong Nutritional Standards

These standards include high requirements for iron in cereals and Vitamin C in fruit and vegetable juices, as well as limits on sugar and fat, including prohibition of high sugar cereals and sweetened juice or milk.





**Manchester Area
Conference of Churches**

Member Churches

Avery St. Christian Reformed Church
Bolton Congregational Church UCC
Catholic Community of St. Bridget
Center Congregational Church UCC
Church of the Assumption
Church of the Living God
Community Baptist Church
Concordia Lutheran Church
Emanuel Lutheran Church
First Baptist Church
North United Methodist Church
Second Congregational Church UCC
South United Methodist Church
St. Bartholomew Church
St. James Church
St. Mary's Episcopal Church
St. Maurice Church
The Salvation Army
Trinity Covenant Church
United Methodist Church of Bolton

MACC

Programs and Services

"Helping our Neighbors in Need"

33 Park Street
Administrative Office
Volunteer Services
649-2093
46 Purnell Place
Church Mouse Thrift Shoppe
647-0800
466 Main Street
Samaritan Shelter
Shepherd's Place Soup Kitchen
Emergency Food Pantries
Mobile FoodShare Program
Case Management Services
Jobs Program
647-8003
MACC Special Events
643-5540

Retain Current Targeting of WIC Food Package Benefits

The current fair and effective system of targeting WIC food package benefits should be retained. **We oppose reducing the size of the WIC food package for young children by shifting resources toward other food packages.** Less WIC food for these young children will also result in more non-WIC foods, which according to the recent Mathematica study, FITS, all too often include unhealthy junk food such as french fries, sweetened drinks and candy.

WIC Food Package Evaluation Should Be Comprehensive

Since the food packages were last reviewed, there has been an explosion of research and recommendations related to nutrition and health. The planned review should include an evaluation of the current health and nutritional needs, dietary habits and food preferences of the WIC population as a basis for understanding how to apply the new science to the WIC food packages. This understanding should be used to make revisions that maximize the nutritional, food security and incentive value of the packages and, consequently, WIC's ability to continue to offer foods that empower WIC families to make the best choices for their health.

Thank you for this opportunity to share our views.

Sincerely,

Dale Doll
Director of Food Services