



September/October 2008 Update

The Fresh Choices 2009 Status Report provides local agency staff members and coordinators an inside look at the work going on at the State office in preparation for the new food package changes. Each month this report will highlight information from the five workgroups that comprise Oregon’s effort to prepare for the new WIC regulations mandated by the USDA.

Food Review Workgroup

Team Lead: Karen Bettin, karen.bettin@state.or.us

- In September, Karen presented Oregon’s process for food authorization on a National WIC Association Conference Call with All States.
- The collection of price and availability data from 51 WIC Vendors across Oregon was completed and reviewed by the Food Review Workgroup. In November, the Food Review workgroup will forward final recommendations to the Food Package Steering Committee for approval, so we will know which foods Oregon plans to offer.

TWIST Workgroup

Team Lead: Kim Meyers, kimberly.meyers@state.or.us

- TWIST Fresh Choices coding has begun! The group will begin testing the new changes in early November.
- The group spent a lot of time working on changes to the “back-end” screens of TWIST, to make them consistent with the new food package rule and proposed changes to the TWIST user screens.
- The group developed some suggested changes to the food codes or “nomenclature” system, and showed their proposed changes to local agency staff during two conference calls on September 30th and October 1st. They got some great feedback and ideas for modifying this system for Fresh Choices – thank you to everyone who participated in these sessions!



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Marketing Workgroup

Team Lead: Nhu To-Haynes, nhu.h.to-haynes@state.or.us

- The marketing team developed a Fresh Choices presentation on the Food Package Changes for the poster session portion of the OPHA conference that was held in early October. Any local agency that is interested in borrowing this poster for special meetings or presentations can contact either Nhu or Jolene.
- The marketing team is finalizing Fresh Choices info sheets for partners & medical providers. These info sheets provide a quick glance at the food package changes and how it impacts these particular audiences. These will eventually be posted on the WIC homepage along with a general Fresh Choices power point for local agency use.

Fruit and Vegetables Workgroup

Team Lead: Maria Menor, maria.i.menor@state.or.us

- The Food Package Steering Committee approved the workgroup's recommendation that the fruit & veggie cash value voucher (CVV) include a three-line message in the food description area. Although the exact wording is still pending, the content of each line will be as follows:
 - 1st: Value of the CVV and what can be purchased with the voucher
 - 2nd: The shopper may pay the difference if the purchase amount exceeds the value of the CVV(s) presented
 - 3rd: The checker cannot give change back to the shopper
- The Vendor Team shared draft wording for these messages at the October 17th Vendor Advisory Council (VAC) meeting. VAC attendees proposed suggestions that the Vendor Team will take back to the Food Package Steering Committee.

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- The remaining task charged to this workgroup is regarding whether/how farmers will be authorized to accept the CVV. This task has been taken on by Vendor Team staff since they would be sharing the workload with the Oregon Department of Agriculture. It has become clear that Oregon WIC is committed to authorizing farmers to accept the CVV. Vendor staff and ODA are still, however, laying the groundwork for how this will actually work.
- Vendor Team staff will continue to provide progress updates to the Food Package Steering Committee re: the exact wording for the CVV and farmer authorization for the CVV. Which means that the Fruit & Veggie Workgroup's work is done!

Training Workgroup

Team Lead: Kim McGee, kimberly.o.mcgee@state.or.us

- A staff training and participant education proposal and time line was presented by Kim McGee and Sara Sloan at OWCA on 10/17. After many great comments and suggestions, we shared the same information with coordinators who were unable to attend OWCA at 2 conference calls on 10/29 and 10/30. The PowerPoint presentation, the time line, and a staff training checklist were shared with all coordinators via email. If you have any questions about what is planned to prepare staff and participants for Fresh Choices implementation, please call Kim, Sara, or your nutrition consultant.

We need your help!

- We need volunteers to help us develop materials that will work best for you. We are putting together work groups to work closely with us over the next 6-9 months on Fresh Choices implementation.
 - Nutrition Education (Call Sara Sloan to help with participant materials and NE plan development)
 - Staff Training (Call Kim McGee to help with in-services, statewide meeting)
 - Medical documentation (Call Cheryl Alto to participate in the LARD workgroup)
 - Breastfeeding messages (Call Kelly Sibley to help design messages for participants)

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- A new resource for Fresh Choices information is available to local agencies on the Oregon WIC Website. Check it out at:
<http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/wic/freshchoices.shtml>
- You will be receiving the first set of staff in-service and participant education materials relating to the Fresh Choices key nutrition messages by the end of November. The first key nutrition message to be addressed is "Serve low fat milk to adults and children over age 2." This set of information will focus on helping participants change to low fat milk, something they can start now in anticipation of the food package changes.

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