

## Soy Beverage

### Questions and Answers as of 8/12/09



#### **1. Why is medical documentation needed for soy beverages to be issued to children but not to women?**

The recommendation by the Institute of Medicine to have soy beverage available to children based on medical need rather than personal preference was made for a variety of reasons. Medical documentation for soy beverage helps to ensure health care providers are aware that children may be at nutritional risk when milk is replaced by other foods.

#### **2. What were some of the concerns regarding replacing milk with soy beverage for children?**

Key concerns included:

- Milk is a key source of nutrients critical in child growth and development which include the brain, muscle, organs, bones and teeth. Peak bone mass is achieved during childhood and adolescence. Deficits in this area are irreversible. <sup>1</sup>
- Children who avoid cow's milk have been documented to ingest less-than-recommended amounts of calcium essential for bone development. <sup>1</sup>
- Important minerals such as calcium, phosphorus and iron in soy beverages are not absorbed in the body in the same way that minerals in cow's milk are. <sup>1</sup>

#### **3. Is soy protein safe for children?**

The safety of soy protein products is unresolved as it relates to the impact of exposure of phytoestrogen on infants and young children. Further research is required to understand any effects on normal hormonal development.<sup>1</sup>

#### **4. Should I offer milk alternatives that do not require medical documentation when asked about soy beverages for children?**

For participants who cannot drink milk due to lactose intolerance, local agencies are encouraged to offer lactose-reduced or lactose-free milk (which do not require medical documentation) before offering other authorized milk substitutes.



## 5. What is the nutrition content of the soy beverages compared to 2% milk?

Key comparison aspects of the soy beverages Oregon WIC offers and 2% milk include:

- The Vitamin A and D levels are the same in all varieties. (Although nutritional equivalency of soy beverage and cow's milk cannot be scientifically determined even when it meets the FNS composition and label requirements 2)
- The fat content of the Pacific Ultra Soy Products is similar to 2% milk, whereas 8<sup>th</sup> Continent is similar to the 2.37 g fat in 1% milk.

| Nutrients in 8 oz. (1 Cup) | Pacific Ultra Soy Plain | Pacific Ultra Soy Vanilla | 8 <sup>th</sup> Continent Plain | 2% Cow Milk |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Calories</b>            | 120                     | 130                       | 80                              | 122         |
| <b>Protein</b>             | 10 g                    | 10 g                      | 8 g                             | 8 g         |
| <b>Fat</b>                 | 4 g                     | 4 g                       | 2.5 g                           | 4.81 g      |
| <b>Sugars</b>              | 8 g                     | 10 g                      | 7 g                             | 12 g        |
| <b>Vitamin A</b>           | 500 IU                  | 500 IU                    | 500 IU                          | 461 IU      |
| <b>Vitamin D</b>           | 100 IU                  | 100 IU                    | 100 IU                          | 105 IU      |
| <b>Vitamin B12</b>         | 1.47 mcg                | 1.47 mcg                  | 1.2 mcg                         | 1.12 mcg    |
| <b>Riboflavin</b>          | .5 mg                   | .5 mg                     | .51 mg                          | .451 mg     |
| <b>Calcium</b>             | 284 mg                  | 284 mg                    | 300 mg                          | 285 mg      |
| <b>Magnesium</b>           | 52 mg                   | 52 mg                     | 24 mg                           | 27 mg       |
| <b>Phosphorus</b>          | 254 mg                  | 254 mg                    | 250 mg                          | 229 mg      |
| <b>Potassium</b>           | 380 mg                  | 380 mg                    | 360 mg                          | 366 mg      |

## 6. Can a participant mix and match between the different soy beverage brands- Pacific Soy and 8<sup>th</sup> Continent options?

No. A participant may receive Pacific Soy or 8<sup>th</sup> Continent but not a mix of the two brands. The participant may select between the two varieties of Pacific Soy: Plain or Vanilla.

## 7. What is the shelf life of the soy beverages?

The shelf life of the 8th Continent 64 oz. refrigerated soy milk is 90 days from the manufacturer's date. For the 32 oz. shelf-stable Pacific Ultra Soy, it is 12 months from the date of production

**We appreciate your questions and we look forward to hearing more!**

1 American Academy of Pediatrics, "The Role of Milk in the WIC Program." June, 2009.

2 G.G. Harrison and V.A. Stallings. IOM Committee to Review the WIC Food Packages, personal communication, June, 2009 as stated in National WIC Association correspondence, July, 2009.

