

# New Foods, More Choice!



**March 10, 2025**

*Issue #1*

## Welcome to the Monthly *New Foods, More Choice* Newsletter!

This newsletter will keep Oregon WIC local agency staff informed about updates to the WIC Food Package and Food List.

In this March issue, we'll cover:

- [Why the WIC Food Package is changing](#)
- [Major updates to the WIC Food Package and Food List](#)
- [A new tool in development](#)
- [Key dates to keep on your radar](#)
- [Where to find trainings and additional resources](#)

Stay informed and ready for these important and exciting changes!

**Growing healthy families**

If you need this information in an alternate format, please contact WIC at (971) 673-0040.  
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## Why the WIC Food Package is changing

In April 2024, the United States Department of Agriculture Food & Nutrition Services (USDA-FNS) finalized science-based updates to the WIC Food Packages. These updates now align with the latest [Dietary Guidelines](#) and reflect [recommendations from National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine \(NASEM\)](#).

For the third time in 50 years, WIC Food Packages are getting a major update! Beginning July 1, participants will enjoy more flexibility, a wider variety of options, and greater choice to support a healthy diet.

The updated WIC Food Package:

- Supports the nutritional needs of participants by providing a more balanced offering of foods across all food groups.
- Is more consistent with recommendations for infants and children less than 2 years of age, including the encouragement and support for breastfeeding.
- Includes more foods that consider cultural eating patterns and food preferences.
- Offers more flexibility, variety and choice.

The latest nutrition research shows a healthy diet includes:

- More plant foods, like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds
- Fewer servings of red and processed meat and sugary beverages
- Reduced salt intake
- Heart-healthy fat, such as extra virgin oil, nuts and fish
- More whole grains

The broad WIC Food Package changes coming include:

- A bigger variety of whole grains
- Changes to dairy options and alternatives
- A wider variety of proteins
- Some flexibility for cultural or dietary preferences



## Major updates to the WIC Food Package and Food List

The types and amounts of foods for WIC participants is changing on July 1. Summarized below are the major updates listed by food type.

### Fruit and vegetables

- Higher dollar amounts for fruits and vegetables will continue.
- Participants will be able to use the fruit and veggie benefit to buy:
  - Fresh herbs, such as parsley and cilantro.
  - Larger containers that contain fruits and vegetables.
- Changes with juice:
  - A \$3 increase in the fruit and vegetable benefit will replace juice in the standard food package. This will allow participants to meet their daily vitamin C need using fresh produce while also adding extra fiber.
  - If juice is preferred, \$3 of the fruit and veggie benefit can be replaced with a single container of either bottled or frozen juice. This can be done during a WIC appointment.

### Fish

All child and woman food packages will now contain fish. The amount of fish varies based on a child's age or whether an adult is pregnant, breastfeeding or postpartum non-breastfeeding. Pouches of tuna and salmon in 2.5 oz and 3 oz sizes will be added to the Food List.

Category	Fish amount
Children 1-4 years	6 oz.
Pregnant	10 oz.
Fully Breastfeeding	20 oz.
Mostly Breastfeeding	15 oz.
Some Breastfeeding or Postpartum Non-Breastfeeding	10 oz.

We encourage staff and participants to be aware of contaminants sometimes found in seafood. Follow the [guidelines in the Oregon Fish and Seafood Guide for pregnant, nursing and young children](#).



## Plant based foods and foods for those with allergies

### Soy and plant beverages

- A pea protein beverage (Ripple) and variety of soy beverages will be available.
- All approved soy and plant beverages have the following:
  - 10 or less grams of sugar
  - 8 grams of protein and
  - 8 other nutrients will be included.

### Peanut, Nut and Seed Butters

- Peanut butter alternatives will be available and include specific brands of almond butter, sunflower butter and sesame seed butter, also called tahini.
- All nut and seed butters listed on the Food List provide a similar or greater amount of protein and iron as peanut butter.

### Egg Alternative

- Eggs can be replaced with peanut, nut, or seed butters or dry or canned beans. This is a new modification done to the food package. Participants can choose from nut and seed butters or beans at the store.

## Whole grains

Whole grain benefit amount changed.

- Children will receive 24 oz. of whole grains a month.
- Women will receive 48 oz. of whole grains a month.

All of our current whole grain options will continue:

- 100% whole wheat bread
- Corn and whole wheat tortillas
- Whole wheat pasta
- Oats
- Brown rice and bulgur



Many more whole grain options will be available:

- **Twelve new whole grains** will be added! These include whole grain quinoa, sorghum, wild rice, teff, and more.
- In addition to 100% whole wheat bread, **100% whole wheat buns, bagels and English Muffins** will be added to the Food List.
- **Whole wheat pita bread and whole wheat naan will be added.** Check the 2025 Food List for the specific brands when available.
- **Gluten free whole grain bread products** will be available. The updated Food List will have the allowed brands and products.
- Certain brands of **corn meal and corn masa flour** that meet the whole grain requirements will also be available.

## Other changes you will see:

### Yogurt

- Yogurts must have no more than 16 grams of added sugar in a cup of yogurt.
- 45 yogurts are coming off the Food List because they exceed the new added sugar requirement.
- Coming to the Food List are 13 new whole milk yogurts (4 new brands) and 18 new low-fat/nonfat yogurts (5 new brands).
- All children who are 12-23 months will receive whole milk yogurt. If desired, this can all be changed to low-fat yogurt during a WIC appointment.

### Breakfast Cereal

- Cereals must provide a minimum amount of iron and not exceed an added sugar limit.
- 75% of all cereals on the Food List must have a whole grain as the 1<sup>st</sup> ingredient.
- 19 new cold cereals have been added.

### Tofu

- All tofu must meet the new calcium requirement.
- One tofu will be removed from the Food List, as it does not meet the new calcium requirement.
- Expanding tofu offerings to include tofu in 14 oz. packages, and 2 new brands.
- Tofu is available upon request.



### Cheese

- Adding cheese in 8 oz. packages and allowing sliced and shredded cheese.
- Approved Muenster, Swiss, Provolone, and sharp Cheddar cheese.

### Eggs

- Adding brown eggs.
- Eggs in any size (S, M, L, XL, jumbo) to improve egg availability.

### Juice

- Adding V8 and private label pineapple juices.

### Baby Foods

- Infants will continue to receive baby foods starting at 7 months with quantities that will vary based on the amount of breastfeeding.
- Starting at 7 months, three options will be available for the baby food fruit and vegetable benefit.
- All babies will start with 128 oz. baby food, but at a clinic appointment, this can be replaced with either: \$11 FVB and 64 oz. of baby food **OR** \$22 FVB
- Two new brands of baby food fruit and vegetables are being added to the Food List.

### A new tool in development

We are creating a **participant video** that can be used for quarterly nutrition education and for supporting families as we transition to the new Food Package.

This WIC participant video will:

- Be available by April 1 on YouTube and our website for easy sharing.
- Be set up as a message in Teletask for use as a Nutrition Education Topic, if you want.
- Help prepare participants for what is changing. Topics will include: Changes to the Food List, what these changes mean for participants, and how to check if a food is approved using the barcode scanner on the WIC Shopper app at the store.



## Key dates to keep on your radar

Date	What to expect
Jan-Feb	Food package training 1 & 2 available
March 5	TWIST Practice instructions sent
March 10	TWIST Practice environment released. New Food Packages available to use in TWIST Practice. Staff can become familiar with the new Food Packages and tailoring options before they go live.
March 12	WIC Shopper app updates
March 21-23	<b>TWIST not available</b> after 5pm Friday, March 21 through Sunday, March 23 to deploy the new changes.
March 31	Complete WIC Food Package trainings
April 1	Begin issuing new Food Package for July 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assign the appropriate package for July benefits</li> <li>• Discuss the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ modify or tailoring options (by staff),</li> <li>✓ choices by participants at the store in July, and</li> <li>✓ food category maximums.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Document Food Package nutrition education</li> <li>• Offer shopper education and resources to learn more</li> </ul>
June 1	WIC vendor training sent to stores
June 17	WIC materials sent to stores
July 1	New Food Package active New Food List available



## Where to find trainings and additional resources

### Oregon WIC Training Resources

The current Oregon WIC staff trainings on New Foods, More Choice are available on the [Staff Training In-Service and Resources](#) page and in Basecamp's Training Supervisors folder. A summary of trainings available include:

1. **Training #1** – This in-service provides details about changes to participant category and Food Package options starting April 1.
2. **Training #2** – This in-service provides details about changes to participant category and Food Package options starting April 1.
3. **TWIST Practice Packet** with instructions for using TWIST Practice and practice scenarios for assigning and issuing Food Packages during the transition and after.

### National WIC Association (NWA) Resources

- [The WIC Hub: Food Package resource landing page](#)
- [WIC Updates to the Food Package](#)

### USDA-FNS Resources

- [WIC Food Packages](#)
- [WIC Food Package Final Rule Q&As](#)
- [Updates to the WIC Food Packages Infographic](#)
- [Revisions in the WIC Food Packages Video](#)

### Partner Resources

- [FRAC: WIC Food Packages Update is a WIN for Children and Families](#)
- CSPI: [WIC is changing in 2024. Here's what to expect](#)
- Salud America!: [USDA Approves Big Changes to Improve Nutrition in WIC Food Packages](#)

