



How does the WIC Food List Affect Program Integrity?

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Program Integrity: Think outside of the box...

- ▶ Promoting program integrity is not limited to preventing fraud and containing costs
- ▶ Enforce the fact that the WIC food package is science-based by ensuring that participants receive and consume the foods that promote positive outcomes
- ▶ In order to consume the healthy WIC foods, they must be available and easy to find in grocery stores
- ▶ What if customers can't find the WIC foods because the food list is too old or too limited?

State Agency Staff – Please raise your hand if...

- ▶ You have ever had a hard time getting in touch with food manufacturers and retailers...
- ▶ You have ever wondered what other states are doing...
- ▶ You have ever had someone from the food industry try to get a food approved out of process...
- ▶ You have ever added a food to the food list, only to have it change or be discontinued...
- ▶ You have ever gotten complaints that your food list is either too complicated or too limited making it confusing for clients...
- ▶ If you have ever had to change your timelines or rules based on decisions from USDA...

Food Industry Reps – Please raise your hand if...

- ▶ You have ever had a hard time determining when WIC agencies are reviewing their food lists...
- ▶ You have ever had a hard time trying to get a hold of the correct person at the state to answer your food list questions...
- ▶ Your company has ever created a new WIC food specifically to be WIC allowed...
- ▶ You ever had a hard time getting your company to make more WIC friendly foods or WIC friendly packaging...
- ▶ You have ever tried unsuccessfully to get an eligible food approved...
- ▶ If you have ever gotten a food list or other updates at the last minute (or not at all) and not had enough time to accommodate the changes on the back end...

Challenges - State Agency Perspective

- ▶ USDA Mandates (size ranges, cost containment, brand specificity)
- ▶ Maintaining contact lists
- ▶ Balance between participant choice and simplicity of the shopping trip
- ▶ Offering culturally relevant foods
- ▶ Politics at the state and local levels
- ▶ Inconsistency in product availability throughout state
- ▶ Food Policies that work with eWIC

Retail/Wholesale Perspective

Becca Polk – Supervalu, Inc and Save-A-Lot Food Stores

- ▶ Retailers need to ensure adequate supply of WIC foods
- ▶ Meeting WIC needs while taking into account the sales of the items
- ▶ Work on the back end (for retailers) to make sure WIC eligible transactions go through
- ▶ New WIC approved items take time
 - ▶ Manufactures may need to increase production
 - ▶ Retailers may need to revise store assortment/planograms
 - ▶ Distribution Centers may need to get items in warehouse

Food Manufacturing Perspective

Melanie Hall – Kellogg Co. & Marc Walkin – Beech-Nut

Manufacturers Nurture Close Relationships with Consumers and Retailers to Bring Foods to Market



Data Driven, Insight Supported Idea



Consumer Testing Recipe/Package Development



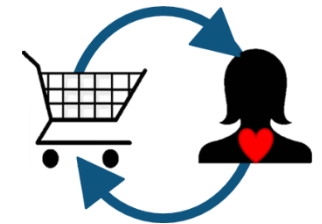
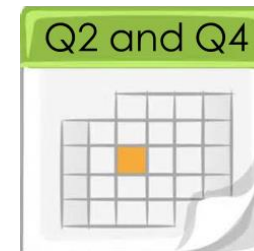
Data Driven, Insight Supported Sell-in & Shelf Reset



Forecasting and production



National Ship Date



On Shelf, in the Cart, and in Her Heart

Food Manufacturing Perspective

Disruptions Manufacturer/Retailer Relationships Lead to Confusion in Aisle and at the Register



Data Driven, Insight Supported Idea



Consumer Testing
Recipe/Package
Development



Data Driven, Insight Supported Sell-in & Shelf Reset



Forecasting and production



National Ship Date



Poor Signage
Out of Stock
Not Available

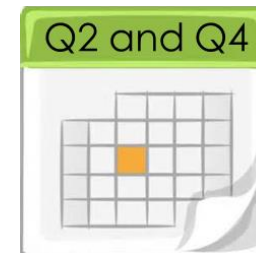
1-2 Years



Q1 and Q3



Q2 and Q4



Does Our State Have a Process That Equips...

Retailers with:

- ▶ The data needed to understand which WIC foods are the most popular
- ▶ Enough information and lead time for retailers to make shelf set decisions (e.g. reimbursement rate changes, package size requirements)
- ▶ The flexibility to allow manufacturer support of approved WIC tag placement
- ▶ Clear guidelines on approved ways to help alert clients to food list changes and support state or local agency outreach efforts

Manufacturers with:

- ▶ The data needed to make WIC friendly products and packaging
- ▶ Estimated timelines for food list reviews
- ▶ Opportunities to share WIC consumer insights on their foods
- ▶ The data and lead time necessary to make enough approved food to meet demand and prevent out-of-stocks

It's All About Communication...



**“THE SINGLE BIGGEST PROBLEM IN
COMMUNICATION IS THE ILLUSION THAT IT HAS
TAKEN PLACE.”**

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

© Lifehack Quotes



Can we develop a better process
together?

Things to consider for a comprehensive food review process

What information do you need to create a food card that excites clients and encourages redemptions, and program retention?

- ▶ What information do you have or require on client wants and needs?
- ▶ What information do you need about the food
 - ▶ Why do you need it?
 - ▶ When do you need it?
- ▶ How will this process affect your retailers?
- ▶ How will reimbursement rates be affected, if at all?

Determine the scope of the review

- ▶ USDA Mandate?
 - ▶ New foods added to Food Package?
 - ▶ Current Food list is more than 2 years old?
 - ▶ Ready for a reprint?
-
- ▶ Get a general idea of what you want so you can ask for it.

Notify Stakeholders

- ▶ Build Contact List
- ▶ Via email, snail mail, or website:
 - ▶ Scope of review
 - ▶ Timeline for review
 - ▶ Submission Deadline – allow at least 30 days for most submissions
 - ▶ Product requirements
 - ▶ Submission requirements/formats

Getting the information you need

- ▶ Consider providing a spreadsheet if you would like to combine all submissions together.
 - ▶ Format questions/columns as listed in USDA Regulatory Requirements or as listed on the label
 - ▶ Looking for something special? Consider adding some columns that are optional.
 - ▶ Prices – Cost vs Retail Price; Average vs Promotions
 - ▶ Availability – Be specific, but realize submitters have limited data

Review and Implementation

- ▶ For states with fewer staff members, consider creating a committee that may include a collaborative group of diverse members
- ▶ If your scope changes during the review process, notify submitters
- ▶ Consider what neighboring states are doing
- ▶ Send a preview to submitters
- ▶ Whatever files you send to the printer, send to submitters and corporate contacts
- ▶ Include summary of changes as well as updated minimum stock requirements and peer group definitions
- ▶ Advanced notice of 60 days is ideal, or give a grace period

How can state agencies make this process more effective?

- ▶ Post the food list review schedule and policies online
- ▶ Use a committee if your staff is limited
- ▶ Consider sending out a spreadsheet for submitters to complete
- ▶ Create a generic or shared email inbox for submissions
- ▶ Consider requesting images after you know what you want to feature in the food guide
- ▶ Help submitters help you by providing a draft of the new food list
- ▶ Allowing size ranges (where possible)

How can submitters make this process more effective?

- ▶ Create a spreadsheet or database of all of your company's WIC eligible products with micronutrients and ingredient lists
- ▶ Notify state contacts of product changes
- ▶ Create a generic WIC inbox
- ▶ Keep records of WIC eligible items, contacts, past submissions to pass on if the WIC contact changes
- ▶ Create an FTP site or webpage where State Agency staff can download labels, jpegs, and logos
- ▶ Avoid piecemeal or duplicate submissions



TOWN HALL: What are other ideas
or questions?

Thank you!

Presenter Contact Info

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