



# THE WIC FOOD CHAIN: HOW WIC SUPPORTS FARMERS AND RETAILERS

## THE WIC FOOD PACKAGE

WIC provides a monthly food package of nutritious foods tailored to supplement the dietary needs of participants to ensure good health, growth and development. The foods are specifically chosen to provide supplemental nutrition consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and established dietary recommendations for infants and children under 2 years of age. The selected foods also reinforce WIC nutrition education messages, address emerging public health nutrition-related issues, and provide wide appeal to the diverse WIC population.

## AS WELL AS HELPING AMERICAN FAMILIES TO BE HEALTHY, THE WIC FOOD PACKAGE SUPPORTS AMERICAN FARMERS AND RETAILERS.

### FARMERS

The USDA Economic Research Service estimated in 2015 that farmers received almost **\$1.3 billion** for the sale of commodities used in producing the **\$4.6 billion** in estimated WIC retail food sales.<sup>4</sup>



### RETAILERS

- » Over **48,000** authorized WIC retailers in the US - from small corner stores and commissaries to supermarkets and big box stores - partner with WIC.<sup>1</sup>
- » Roughly **25%** of all WIC retail dollars are spent at small and medium stores.<sup>2</sup>
- » In fiscal year 2017, **\$5.3 billion** in WIC food benefits were spent at authorized retailers.<sup>3</sup>

## AVERAGE QUANTITIES OF SELECT FOODS PRESCRIBED EACH MONTH\*

17.2 MILLION  
GALLONS OF  
COW'S MILK



450,000 GALLONS  
OF SOY MILK



12.9 MILLION  
BOXES OF  
CEREAL



3.96 MILLION  
POUNDS OF  
CHEESE



2,283 POUNDS  
OF TOFU



1.8 MILLION  
JARS OF  
PEANUT BUTTER



1.2 MILLION  
QUARTS OF  
YOGURT



711,409  
CANS OF  
BEANS



14.7 MILLION  
CANS OF FISH



66.5 MILLION  
EGGS



820,422 BAGS  
OF DRY BEANS



\*Estimates based on data from the WIC Participant and Program Characteristics 2016 Food Package Report and the average size/unit of WIC food in the California WIC Food Package guide.



## NWA'S MISSION

The National WIC Association (NWA) provides its members with tools and leadership to expand and sustain effective nutrition services for mothers and young children.

## WIC: EMPOWERING FAMILIES, STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

Please direct all questions to NWA at 202-232-5492.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/44073/57246\\_eib152.pdf?v=42488](https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/44073/57246_eib152.pdf?v=42488)

<sup>2</sup> Oliveira, Victor and Elizabeth Frazão. The WIC Program: Background, Trends, and Economic Issues, 2015 Edition, EIB-134, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, January 2015.

<sup>3</sup> USDA Food and Nutrition Service (2019) Fiscal Year 2017 WIC Program Data. Accessed online: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/wic-program>.

<sup>4</sup> Oliveira, Victor and Elizabeth Frazão. The WIC Program: Background, Trends, and Economic Issues, 2015 Edition, EIB-134, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, January 2015.

## WHAT FOODS DOES WIC OFFER?\*

The WIC food package includes a variety of healthy options to help pave the way for a lifetime of nutritious eating.



\*Check your state for specific guidelines.