

HAWAII WIC PROGRAM FOOD SELECTION CRITERIA

PURPOSE

The Hawaii WIC Program shall provide a reasonable selection of nutritious foods within each category and will consider the client's nutritional needs, client cultural preferences, cost, and consistency with sound food buying practices, and state and program-wide availability.

GENERAL CRITERIA

Foods and their packaging shall be evaluated by the Food Selection Committee (FSC) based on the following factors: nutritional considerations, cost, product distribution, participant acceptance and administrative feasibility.

A. NUTRITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. WIC foods shall meet the Federal WIC food package requirements. Refer to the following link:
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/wic-food-packages-regulatory-requirements-wic-eligible-foods>
2. The allowed foods must be compatible with current dietary recommendations for maternal, infant, and child health.
3. The food package shall offer a variety of types and brands of the allowed foods to ensure that all client dietary needs shall be considered (i.e., high fiber cereals, low-fat milk, lactose-reduced milk, corn-free formula, etc.).

B. ACCEPTABILITY OF FOODS

Foods shall be selected that can be consumed by the majority of clients and shall consider cultural and special food needs of the clients. The relative acceptability of a food item by clients and staff shall be determined before that food item is added to or removed from the food package.

1. Client preference surveys shall be conducted periodically. Foods that show a high degree of acceptability shall be considered for the allowed WIC food list.
2. Cultural food beliefs, preferences, and practices shall be considered when evaluating a food item.
3. The ease of preparation and client acceptance will also determine allowable forms and packaging of specific foods.

C. AVAILABILITY OF FOODS

The selection of food products for the WIC Food Package shall be determined based on availability at the retail and wholesale level.

1. The food product shall be available from the majority of the largest wholesale distributors.

2. The food product, with the exception of infant formula, shall have been available for at least one year on store shelves before it is considered for addition to the WIC Food Package.

D. COST

1. The cost of food items shall be considered prior to authorization. Higher priced items may be disallowed if equally nutritious products are available at a lower cost.
2. When there is an immediate (soon after being authorized) or ten percent (10%) increase in the cost of an authorized food, it may be reviewed to assess the impact to the Programs' budget and may be removed from the food list when the impact is relevant.
3. With exception of the fruit and vegetable cash value vouchers, Hawaii WIC has a "No Organic" policy.

E. HAWAII WIC PROGRAM SELECTION CRITERIA

Food Item	GUIDELINES
Cereal	<p>The package size shall not be smaller than 12 ounces (oz) for cereals.</p> <p>The authorized cereals must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• at least three types of grains (i.e., corn, rice, wheat, oat).• at least half of the cereals on the food list must have whole grain as the primary ingredient by weight and meet the labeling requirements for making a health claim as a "whole grain food with moderate fat content".• at least two hot cereals• one high fiber (≥ 4 grams dietary fiber per oz) cold cereal.• one cereal that is fortified with 100% of the RDA for vitamins and minerals.• three cereals containing low levels of phenylalanine.
Juice	<p>Juice may be frozen or shelf stable.</p> <p>Any brand prominently displaying the words "100% Juice" and "120% Vitamin C" (or more if applicable for the product) on the containers front label. 100% orange juice is not required to have the vitamin C labeling. Must conform to FDA standard of identity.</p> <p>Must be 10 to 16 oz size and include apple, orange, grape, pineapple and brand specific blended flavors.</p>

Food Item	GUIDELINES
Cheese	<p>The package size must be 16 oz.</p> <p>Domestic cheese in block or ball are allowed in the following varieties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheddar • Colby • Monterey Jack • Mozzarella • Swiss <p>Shredded, cubed, random weight and deli counter cheeses are not allowed.</p> <p>Cheese with added flavors or ingredients such as, wine, peppers, onions or pepperoni is not allowed.</p> <p>Cheese food, cheese products, cheese spreads and imitation cheeses are not allowed.</p>
Eggs	<p>Medium or Large white chicken eggs are allowed.</p> <p>Extra large, jumbo, brown eggs and egg substitutes are not allowed.</p> <p>Specialty eggs, including low cholesterol, Docosahexaenoic (DHA), organic, free range, cage free, nest and fertile eggs are not allowed.</p> <p>Eggs shall be packaged in cartons of a dozen.</p>
Canned Fish	<p>Chunk light water-packed tuna, canned pink salmon, canned sardines, and canned mackerel are allowed. (Except King Mackerel)</p> <p>5 oz can size for chunk light tuna. Oil packed tuna; solid white or albacore tuna, pouches, and snack packs are not allowed.</p> <p>7.5 oz can size plain pink salmon, no added ingredients. Canned red, boneless, smoked or in pouches, snack packs are not allowed.</p> <p>3.75 oz can size sardines. Any type. Flavor or seasoned sardines are allowed. (Except King Oscar and Crown Prince brands)</p> <p>15 oz can size mackerel. Any type. Flavor or seasoned sardines are allowed.</p>
Beans, Peas, and Lentils	<p>Mature legumes, the package size must be 8 - 16 oz.</p> <p>Any type or variety of dry or canned plain mature beans, peas or lentils is allowed.</p> <p>Flavored, seasoned, cooked, frozen, or gourmet beans and bean soup mixes are not allowed.</p>

Food Item	GUIDELINES
	<p>Immature varieties of legumes such as green beans, green peas, snap beans, yellow beans, and wax beans are not allowed.</p> <p>Canned forms without added vegetables, fruits, meat, sugars, fats or oils only.</p>
Peanut Butter	<p>The container size must be 16 to 18 oz.</p> <p>Plain, smooth, chunky, crunchy, or extra crunchy types of peanut butter are allowed.</p> <p>Natural peanut butter is allowed.</p> <p>Peanut butter with added ingredients such as jam, jelly, marshmallow, chocolate, honey or similar ingredients are not allowed.</p> <p>Peanut butter spreads and organic peanut butters are not allowed.</p> <p>Peanut butter in squeeze tubes are not allowed.</p> <p>Fifty50 brand not allowed.</p>
Milk	<p>Fluid whole, reduced fat, low-fat, skim or fat free cow's milk in gallon containers are allowed.</p> <p>Half gallon and quart containers of milk will be allowed only under special circumstances.</p> <p>Lactose free milks are allowed.</p> <p>Milk in the following identities is allowed: canned evaporated whole or skim milk; dry whole, non-fat or low fat milk; and calcium fortified milk.</p> <p>UHT milk is allowed for clients that are homeless or have poor refrigeration.</p> <p>Flavored milks are not allowed.</p> <p>Organic, raw, goat's, non-dairy, evaporated filled milk, buttermilk, sweetened condensed milk and half and half are not allowed.</p>
Soy Based Beverage	<p>Packaging sizing may be 32 oz (1 quart) or refrigerated half gallons.</p> <p>Plain and vanilla flavors are allowed.</p> <p>Chocolate flavor is not allowed.</p>
Tofu	<p>Any texture calcium-set tofu without added fats, sugar, oils or sodium is allowed. May also contain other coagulants i.e, magnesium chloride.</p>

Food Item	GUIDELINES
Fruits and Vegetables	<p>With the exclusion of white potatoes, any variety of fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables, including the organic form, is allowed.</p> <p>Whole or cut fresh fruits and vegetables without added sugars, fats, or oils are allowed. Must conform to FDA description requirements.</p> <p>Any type of fresh immature beans, peas or lentils is allowed</p> <p>Any type of frozen beans, (immature or mature) is allowed. Beans purchased with the CVV may contain added vegetables and fruits, but may not contain added sugars, fats, oils, or meat as purchased.</p> <p>Mature legumes in dry-packed or canned forms may be purchased with the WIC food instrument only.</p> <p>For frozen fruits and/or vegetables, may not contain added fats, oils, salt or added sugar. Vegetables must be listed as the first ingredient.</p> <p>Bagged vegetables, including lettuce are allowed.</p> <p>White potatoes; herbs and spices; edible blossoms such as squash blossoms; creamed or sauced vegetables; vegetable-grain mixtures; fruit-nut mixtures; breaded vegetables; fruits and vegetables for purchase on salad bars; salad kits; nuts; ornamental fruits and vegetables, such as chilies on a string; painted pumpkins; fruit baskets and party trays; and items such as blueberry muffins are not allowed.</p>
Whole Grains	<p>Whole Wheat Bread: Packaging sizes must be 16 oz. Packaging must be labeled with 100% whole wheat. "Whole wheat flour or bromated whole wheat flour" must be the only flours listed in the ingredient list.</p> <p>Brown Rice in 16 oz. packages. Long grain or short grain brown rice is allowed, without added sugars, fats, oils or salt (i.e., sodium)</p> <p>Jasmine and Basmati brown rice is allowed.</p> <p>Instant brown rice is not allowed.</p> <p>Corn Tortillas in 16 oz. packages. Soft corn plain, yellow or white tortillas with corn listed as the primary ingredient, if availability is limited corn tortillas made from ground masa flour (corn flour) using traditional processing methods are allowed.</p> <p>Whole Wheat Tortillas in 16 oz. packages. Whole wheat flour must be the only flour listed in the ingredient list.</p> <p>Tostadas, taco shells, flavored or organic are not allowed.</p>

Food Item	GUIDELINES
Infant Jarred Foods	<p>Stage 2 single variety or combination of plain fruits or vegetables in 4 oz containers. Fruits and vegetables must be listed as the first ingredient.</p> <p>Mixed vegetables with white potato, is an ingredient (e.g., mixed vegetables) are authorized. Infant foods containing white potatoes as the primary ingredient are not authorized.</p> <p>Organic jarred infant foods are not allowed.</p> <p>Any stage, 2.5 oz single ingredient infant meats with added broth or gravy are allowed. (Added salt and/or sugars and starches are not allowed.)</p> <p>Desserts, dinners (e.g., spaghetti and meatballs) and food combinations (e.g., meat and vegetables) are not allowed.</p>
Infant Formula	<p>Contract formulas are allowed.</p> <p>Non-contract and exempt formulas are authorized per each State Agency's (SA) policies as defined in the Federal Regulations.</p>
Infant Cereal	<p>Only single grain cereals in 8 or 16 oz boxes are allowed.</p> <p>Organic and mixed cereals are not allowed.</p> <p>Cereals with added fruit, sugar, yogurt, formula or DHA/Arachidonic are not allowed.</p> <p>Cereals in jars, cans or variety boxes are not allowed.</p>

F. HAWAII WIC PROGRAM WIC FOOD AUTHORIZATION PROCEDURE

All foods must meet nutrient standards as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture (7 CFR 246 et seq.).

The following process will be used for authorization of food products for the WIC Program:

1. A food company or other entity, such as a Local Agency (LA) shall submit a written request for authorization of a product by January 1st of the biennial year.
2. The food company representative shall furnish the Hawaii WIC Program with package flats or labels, information on package sizes and prices, and a summary of current distribution. The food company's summary of current distribution shall be in writing and shall include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Identification of the wholesaler(s) carrying the product; and

- b) Assessment of when the new product replaces the old on store shelves when there is a change in the product formulation.
- 3. The Hawaii WIC Program FSC shall be comprised of three representatives from the SA which includes the Vendor Management Specialist, Clinic Operations Section Chief and one other SA staff member and one representative from the LA and one representative from the Program Support Section. The committee shall elect a chairperson biennially. The chairperson shall be responsible for the authorization process.
- 4. The FSC shall evaluate each food product based on the Federal requirements and the Hawaii WIC Program Food Selection Criteria.
- 5. The SA staff shall verify product availability and price(s) information for all foods, which meet the Federal and State requirements.
- 6. The Program Support Section staff shall assess product information, ease in educating clients, and value to the promotion of healthful and economic food buying practices and make its recommendation as to authorization of each product.
- 7. The FSC shall survey WIC clients every two years to obtain their input regarding the food package.
- 8. The FSC shall provide LA WIC staff with product information recommendations from the Program Support Section and results of the local staff survey. The LA WIC staff shall make their recommendations on the food package.
- 9. The FSC shall review all data and recommendations and shall propose their final recommendations by May 1st to the WIC management team.
- 10. The FSC chair shall notify the food companies of acceptance or denial of the food products and will disseminate information about upcoming food changes to LA staff.
- 11. An opportunity may exist for the review of new food products outside the established time frame, if special circumstances warrant a review process.
- 12. The FSC shall coordinate the dissemination of information and education to local staff, grocers, and clients.