

Application Period for Northern Cycle Contracts

Inside this issue:

Northern Cycle Contracts	1
WIC Vendor Training Sessions	1
White Potatoes	2
Gerber 4 oz. 2-Pack Plastic Tubs	2
Southeast Cycle	2
Summer EBT for Children	2
Scanning Policy	3
Purchasing Infant Formula for Resale	3
Change of Ownerships	4
WIC Public Comment Period	4

Applications for vendors in the Northern cycle were due February 19, 2015. (See December 2014 newsletter for affected counties.) All timely applications are currently being reviewed for accuracy and completeness. If an application is missing information or requires clarification, it will be returned to the vendor for appropriate action. Approved vendors will receive a three-year contract beginning July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2018.



The Northern Cycle includes Alcona, Alger, Alpena, Antrim, Arenac, Baraga, Benzie, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Chippewa, Clare, Crawford, Delta, Dickinson, Emmet, Gladwin, Gogebic, Grand Traverse, Houghton, Iosco, Iron, Isabella, Kalkaska, Keweenaw, Lake, Leelanau, Luce, Mackinac, Manistee, Marquette, Mason, Mecosta, Menominee, Midland, Missaukee, Montmorency, Newaygo, Oceana, Ogemaw, Ontonagon, Osceola, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle, Roscommon, Schoolcraft, and Wexford.

All applicants will be notified, in writing, of a decision regarding their application no earlier than May, 2015.

Vendors not selected for authorization will be notified in writing and placed on a waiting list. New vendors selected for authorization will require a pre-authorization site visit and will be eligible to process WIC transactions only upon receipt of a fully executed contract, but not before July 1, 2015. A WIC representative will contact the new vendor to schedule the site visit.

Vendors who were previously authorized for WIC, and whose contracts will be renewed, do not require a site visit.

WIC Vendor Training Sessions

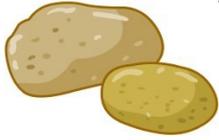
The WIC Program will soon be scheduling group training sessions with WIC authorized vendors in the SOUTHEAST part of the state. *SOUTHEAST counties that will be notified of training in their area over the next several months include Lenawee, Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, and Wayne Counties.*

All WIC authorized vendors that have been approved for continued participation in the WIC Program are required to attend a training session. The WIC Program will soon be scheduling group training session with WIC authorized vendors in the SOUTHEAST part of the state. *SOUTHEAST counties that will be notified of training their area over the next several months include Lenawee, Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, and Wayne.*

WIC vendor training sessions for other areas of the state are being identified and planned accordingly. Regardless of your location, if it is determined you are required to attend a training session, you will be notified by UPS overnight mail at least 10 days prior to the training. We anticipate any training sessions conducted this year will be held no earlier than July.

Training notifications will be mailed to you with the date, time, and location of the group training in your area. **At least one representative from each store is REQUIRED to attend, per the terms of the WIC Vendor Contract.**

White Potatoes A WIC Approved Starting May 1, 2015



USDA recently notified all states that they must now allow white potatoes to be eligible for purchase with the WIC cash value benefit no later than July 1, 2015. The Michigan WIC Program has elected to implement this required change **effective May 1, 2015**. White potatoes include varieties like Idaho, russet, Yukon gold, yellow, red, and fingerling.

As a result of this change, an updated WIC Vendor Minimum Stock Requirements Sheet will be sent to your store.

Rules for selling fresh fruits and vegetables: For independent vendors, you must enter the 4469 PLU code and the dollar amount of the sale. If you try to scan a UPC for a package of fresh fruit or vegetables, the POS will return the "Not a WIC Item" error message. For chain vendors, follow the appropriate in-store procedure at the cash register for selling WIC fresh fruits and vegetables.

As a reminder, it is a violation to use the 4469 PLU code to sell any food item other than WIC approved fresh fruits and vegetables.

Also, do not keep expired, stale, dried out, spoiled, or moldy fruits and vegetables on display for sale. If, during a routine monitoring visit by a WIC representative, such items are observed, the store can be assigned 10 sanction points per visit.

New Gerber 4 oz. 2-Pack Plastic Tubs are WIC Approved

Gerber is transitioning their infant fruit and vegetable 3.5 oz. 2-pack plastic tubs to the WIC approved 4 oz. size. While these new Gerber 4 oz. 2-pack plastic tub products are WIC approved, they WILL NOT count toward the minimum stock requirement for the infant fruits and infant vegetables food category. The Gerber 4 oz. glass jar varieties will continue to be available and WIC approved.

Vendors are required to have in stock at least 72 jars total of at least one variety single or mixed fruit **AND** one variety of single or mixed vegetable in 4 oz. glass jars in the Gerber, Beechnut, Meijer Naturals or Meijer Baby brand.

Summer EBT for Children Project



The Summer EBT for Children Project is a USDA funded collaboration between Michigan WIC and the Michigan Department of Education. Now in its fifth year, this project provides nutritious foods during the summer months to school age children that were eligible for free and reduced price school meals during the school year. Families receive an EBT card for specific foods, similar to the WIC food package. The EBT card is processed at the grocery store just like a WIC transaction is processed. For the summer of 2015 students in the following areas will receive the Summer EBT for Children electronic card: *Detroit, Grand Rapids, Kentwood, and the counties of Bay, Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Midland, Tuscola, Alpena and Houghton*. Families can use their Summer EBT for Children card at any WIC authorized retailer in the state. Benefits will be provided from **June 1st through September 7th**.

Southeast Cycle Contracts Delayed

Due to an unusually high number of applicants and unforeseen circumstances, there continues to be a delay in the processing of applications and contracts for some vendors in the Southeast region. At this time, most vendors should have received a reply.

The WIC Program is working hard to complete this process as soon as possible. Vendors who are being awarded contracts for the period of July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2017 are being notified in writing. Vendors that are NOT selected for re-authorization will also be notified in writing and placed on a waiting list for future consideration.

Reminder: Scanning Policy



Vendors . . . please remember, you *must scan the UPC of the items the WIC client is actually purchasing* so that the scanner may verify the item is authorized on that client's WIC EBT card.

It is a serious violation to scan any UPC not attached to the item the customer is actually purchasing.

For instance, some vendors are scanning the UPC code for only one flavor of baby food when the client actually has a variety of different flavors, each having a unique UPC code. In other instances, vendors are allowing clients to substitute whole milk for low-fat by scanning the UPC for low-fat milk and allowing the

client to take whole milk instead.

These actions are violations of several provisions of your WIC Vendor Contract regarding substitutions as well as improper scanning of UPC codes. **The WIC Program has already taken termination and disqualification action against several vendors for violating these provisions.**

Purchasing Infant Formula for Resale to WIC Customers

Important reminder - the Michigan WIC Program requires that all WIC authorized vendors **MUST only purchase infant formula from wholesalers, distributors, and retailers licensed by the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) or from infant formula manufacturers registered with the Food and Drug Administration.**

The MDA is available to answer any questions as to whether a wholesaler, distributor, or retailer is properly licensed or general questions you may have regarding licensing requirements and procedures. You may contact the MDA in a variety of ways:

Contact by phone: 1-800-292-3939

Contact by e-mail: mda-info@michigan.gov

Website: <http://michigan.gov/mdard>

Find a Licensed Michigan Business: [MDA Licensing, Certification and Registration](#)

If you are unable to confirm MDA licensure status or have any questions regarding this requirement, please call the WIC Vendor Relations Unit at 517-335-8937. This line will be answered by a live person from 8:00am – 5:00pm Monday through Friday.

Also, you must retain all purchase records, receipts, and invoices for WIC approved foods for at least three (3) years.

Requirements for inventory and purchase records can be found on Page 7, Section IV of your WIC Vendor Contract. These requirements will be strictly enforced and inventory records not meeting them will not be accepted. Accordingly, it is strongly suggested that WIC vendors provide their infant formula suppliers with a copy of these requirements.

If you have any questions about any of these policies, please call the WIC Program at 517-335-8937.

Change of Ownerships

Reminder: WIC authorization is not transferable to a new owner. Should a change of ownership occur, the store is no longer authorized to accept WIC transactions until a contract is written between the Department and the new owner.

New owners seeking a WIC Vendor Contract must submit a written request for an application to the Michigan Department of Community Health WIC program. To be eligible for WIC authorization under the “change of ownership” policy, the request must be received within 30 calendar days from the date the ownership changed (as evidenced by a final bill of sale) or 30 calendar days from the date the previous owner ceased doing business as a WIC vendor at that location.

Failure of the new owner to notify the Department of the change of ownership within the time frame above may result in the loss of WIC authorization.

WIC Public Comment Period

The Department of Community Health will accept written comments regarding the operation of the Michigan WIC Program between March 1, 2015 and April 30, 2015.

The public comment period provides an opportunity for WIC clients and vendors to comment or make suggestions regarding current WIC policies and procedures. This is the time to voice any concerns you may have regarding the WIC Program.

PLEASE DISPLAY THE ENCLOSED FLYER IN A PROMINENT LOCATION IN YOUR STORE.



MICHIGAN WIC PROGRAM

Michigan Department of Community Health
WIC Program, Lewis Cass Bldg., 6th Floor
320 S. Walnut
Lansing Michigan 48913

Phone: 517-335-8937
Fax: 517-335-9514

We are on the Web!
www.michigan.gov/wic

The U.S. Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.