

Activity #1: Grocery Store Scavenger Hunt for New WIC Foods

Step into the shoes of a WIC participant and take a trip to the grocery store! Armed with the Allowable Foods List and a mock WIC check, follow this scavenger hunt for some of the new WIC foods. This activity will help you become familiar with the new foods and the WIC shopping experience. Your observations today will help you identify issues to watch for and shopping tips to share with participants during their introduction to the new food packages.

You can do this entire activity on your own or with colleagues as you prepare yourself for the new food package implementation. Or try portions of this activity as you shop for your personal groceries. As you become more familiar with the Allowable Foods List, try conducting similar searches for other WIC-approved food items such as baby foods.

Reminder: You will want to notify the store manager that you will be conducting this activity, particularly if you do this activity as a group. Be careful not to impede customers from their shopping activities or store staff as they help customers or stock shelves.

The following mock WIC check has some of the wording that will appear on various WIC checks. This is not a real check and is not intended to represent any particular food package. You may use the wording on the mock WIC check in conjunction with the Allowable Foods List to identify particular food items and amounts in your mock shopping activities.

WIC Check DRAFT		
	<p>36 Ounces breakfast cereals 3 Cans 12-oz fz or 46-oz juice 3 Containers 64-oz juice 2 Can(s) beans 16-oz 1 Pound dry beans/peas/lentils 16 Ounces whole grains 2 Quarts soy beverage 2 Pounds Tofu 30 Ounces canned fish</p>	<p>This test check is not real.</p> <p>Use of this test check is intended for mock WIC shopping trips.</p> <p>We value your comments.</p> <p>_____ Signature: Parent/Guardian/Participant</p>
<p>Only WIC Approved Foods May Be Purchased - No Substitutions Allowed</p>		

Whole Grains

Key things to look for in your search

- Availability and variety of 100% Whole Grain Breads, Brown Rice and Corn Tortillas
- Brands and Items – can you find WIC-approved items for each of the whole grain subcategories?
- Sizes – did you find WIC-approved items in sizes that allow you to mix & match whole grain items to equal the amount listed on your WIC check?

Whole Grains

- _____ Find 1 pound of approved brown rice
_____ Find 1 pound of approved corn tortillas
_____ Complete the whole grain bread scavenger hunt (see below)

Whole Grain Bread Scavenger Hunt

Listed below are the WIC approved whole grain breads. Put a check mark next to the breads you are able to find on your grocery shopping trip and record the number of ounces listed on each bag of bread.

OROWEAT

- ___ 100% Whole Wheat Bread ___ ounces
___ Country 100% Whole Wheat Bread ___ ounces
___ Natural Honey 100% Whole Grain Bread ___ ounces
___ 100% Whole Wheat Buns ___ ounces
___ 100% Whole Wheat Hot Dog Buns ___ ounces

WONDER

- ___ 100% Stoneground Whole Wheat Bread ___ ounces
___ Soft 100% Whole Wheat Bread ___ ounces
___ 100% Whole Grain Bread ___ ounces

PEPPERIDGE FARMS

- ___ Very Thin Sliced Soft 100% Whole Wheat Bread ___ ounces
___ Stone Ground 100% Whole Wheat Bread ___ ounces
___ Soft 100% Whole Wheat Hoagie Rolls ___ ounces
___ 100% Whole Wheat Hamburger Buns ___ ounces

SARA LEE

- ___ Soft & Smooth 100% Whole Wheat Bread ___ ounces
___ Delightful 100% Whole Wheat w/Honey Bread ___ ounces
___ Hearty and Delicious Oat w/ 100% Whole Grain Bread ___ ounces

COUNTRY HEARTH

- ___ Stone Ground 100% Whole Wheat Bread ___ ounces

Whole Grain Sizes: This food group is a little different than some of the other food groups because participants have the option to combine foods in this category if desired. Practice combining items to add up to 16 ounces & 32 ounces. For example, look for bread and tortillas in packages sizes that can be combined to equal 32 ounces. Note any questions or challenges that you encounter.

Canned Fish

_____ Find a combination of 30 oz of approved fish (tuna, sardines and pink salmon).

List the type of fish and number of ounces on each can _____

Canned Beans

_____ Find a 16 oz can of beans- note the typical size of canned beans found.

Juice

_____ Find two 64 ounce containers or cartons of approved juice you could buy for a child

_____ Find three approved cans 12 oz frozen and/or 46 oz juice you could buy for a woman

Tofu

_____ Find one or both of the approved tofu items. Note where they are located in the store _____

Soy Beverage

_____ Find the Pacific Natural Foods Ultra Soy Plain and Pacific Natural Foods Ultra Soy Vanilla. Note where it is located in the store _____

Fruits and vegetables

Key things to look for in your search

- Availability and variety of fruits and vegetables in the produce and frozen foods sections
- Products - are they WIC-approved or not?
- Prices – are items priced by the pound or by the item?
- Weighing products – are scales available and easy to use?
- Sales, discount cards and thrifty shopping skills – ways to get the most with your fruits & vegetables checks
- Adding up your fruits & vegetables purchase – did you get close to your dollar amount with out going over?

Note: The Fruit & Vegetable check will read “6 Dollars fruits and/or vegetables.” (Other common dollar amounts will be \$8 and \$10.)

_____ Weigh \$6, \$8, and \$10 in fruits and vegetables

REMEMBER: Your fruit and vegetable purchase must be less than or equal to the dollar amount listed on your fruit and vegetable check. Use the Buying Fruits and Vegetables Pricing Chart in your Allowable Foods List for examples of cost of fruits and vegetables priced by the pound.

Review the “Do Not Buy” section on the Allowable Foods List. List any items that you find in the store that may be confusing or challenging to determine if they are WIC-approved.

List any tips or tricks that you use to help stretch your fruit and vegetable dollars. Did you choose items on sale or use your store discount card?

Activity #2: Scavenger Hunt Roundtable (Office) Discussion

1. Discuss the fruit and vegetable weighing and share what kinds of fruits and vegetables you found for \$6, \$8, and \$10.

2. If you had a child's check that listed 32 ounces of whole grains, give examples of what you would buy with your WIC check to equal 32 ounces based on the sizes that you found in the grocery store.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

3. If you had a woman's check that listed 16 ounces of whole grains, give examples of what you would buy with your WIC checks to equal 16 ounces based on the sizes that you found in the grocery store.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

4. Discuss the canned fish. How close were you to getting 30 oz. of canned fish? Give examples of the can sizes that you found.

5. Were you able to find both brands of Tofu at the store you visited?

6. Were you able to find the approved shelf stable soy beverage?

7. Do you think the store that you visited had enough baby foods on the shelves for WIC clients?

8. What did you find most helpful during your Grocery Store Scavenger Hunt?

9. What did you find the least helpful during your Grocery Store Scavenger Hunt?

10. What did you learn that will help you in discussing the new food packages – and store shopping – with participants?

Activity # 3:

Scavenger Hunt Roundtable Discussion - Fruits & Vegetables

Discuss the following questions that may arise for participants when purchasing fruits and vegetables with their cash value voucher. Check your responses to the answers provided.

- Can I purchase canned or dried fruits or vegetables?
- Why can't I purchase potatoes?
- Can I purchase parsley with my fruits & vegetable check?
- Can I pay the difference if I purchase more than \$6?
- Can I combine two checks and get \$12 worth of produce?
- Can I redeem my check at a Farmer's Market?
- Can I buy beans with my fruits & vegetable check?
- Can I buy organic produce?
- Can I buy bagged salad mixes?
- Can I buy cut up fruit?
- Do I have to buy the entire \$6 (\$8 or \$10) at one time?
- Question from participant to store clerk when produce total was less than check amount: "Before you write the total on the check, can I go back and get some more produce?"
- Can I purchase a vegetable party tray if it contains only vegetables?
- Can I purchase produce from the store's salad bar?
- Question from store clerk: "This check is for \$15 of fruits and/or vegetables. It is wrong, isn't it?"
- "My check is for \$8, but I only spent \$6.98. Why couldn't I get money back?"

Fruit & Vegetable Scavenger Hunt Answers:

- Can I purchase canned or dried fruits or vegetables?
No - Refer to the Allowable Foods List. The Do Not Buy section states that canned and dried fruits and vegetables are not allowed.
- Why can't I purchase potatoes?
White potatoes are a nutritious choice, but studies show that Americans eat more potatoes than any other vegetable. WIC has chosen to include all of the other fruits and vegetables in the food packages to add more variety and nutrients to what WIC participants already eat.
- Can I purchase parsley with my fruits & vegetable check?
No - Refer to the Allowable Foods List. The Do Not Buy section states that herbs are not allowed and parsley is considered an herb.
- Can I pay the difference if I purchase more than \$6?
No - Participants will NOT be able to pay extra if their fruit and vegetable purchase is more than the dollar amount listed on their check. If the participant wants to purchase extra fruits and vegetables on her own, she will need to separate those items and pay for them in her personal shopping transaction.
- Can I combine two checks and get \$14 worth of produce?
No - Multiple fruits and vegetables checks may not be combined in one transaction. For example, if a participant has an \$8.00 check for herself, and a \$6.00 check for her child, she must separate the fruit and vegetable items for her check from the fruit and vegetable items for her child's check. The cashier will process each check as a separate transaction.
- Can I redeem my check at a Farmer's Market?
No – WIC checks may only be redeemed at Colorado authorized WIC grocery stores.
- Can I buy beans with my fruits & vegetable check?
The participant may purchase frozen beans of any kind, as long as the item does not contain other ingredients listed in the Do Not Buy section of the Allowable Foods List. Dry and canned beans, peas or lentils may NOT be purchased with the fruit & vegetable check – these items will be listed as a separate item on the WIC check.
- Can I buy organic produce?
Yes – Organic fruits and vegetables are allowed. Refer to the Allowable Foods List – OK to Buy section.
- Can I buy bagged salad mixes?
Refer to the Allowable Foods List. The OK to Buy section states that salad and mixed greens (with fruits and vegetables only) may be purchased. However, salad kits with added ingredients such as cheese, dressing, nuts, etc. are NOT allowed.

- Can I buy cut up fruit?
Yes – Whole, cut or sliced fruits and vegetables are allowed. Refer to the Allowable Foods List - OK to Buy section.
- Do I have to buy the entire \$6 (\$8 or \$10) at one time?
As with other WIC checks, participants have the option to buy less than the amount specified on the check, but the check may only be redeemed once. In addition, the participant will NOT be given cash back if the purchase totals less than the check specifies. Participants should be encouraged to purchase as close to the amount listed on the check to receive the full nutritional value.
- Question from participant to store clerk when produce total was less than check amount: “Before you write the total on the check, can I go back and get some more produce?”
It is important that the participant weigh and add up the prices of her fruit and vegetables items in order to get as close to, without going over the dollar amount listed on the check PRIOR to checking out at the cash register. The Allowable Foods List features a “Buying Fresh Fruits and Vegetables” pricing chart to help determine how much a weighed item will cost. However, participants may add additional allowable produce to their cash value voucher prior to finalizing the sale. TIP: Plan to purchase additional produce “on your own”, so if at the cash register you are below the maximum dollar amount, you can add an item or two to your WIC fruit and vegetable check.
- Can I purchase a vegetable party tray if it contains only vegetables?
No - Refer to the Allowable Foods List. The Do Not Buy section states that party trays are not allowed.
- Can I purchase produce from the store’s salad bar?
No - Refer to the Allowable Foods List. The Do Not Buy section states that items from the deli or salad bar are not allowed.
- Question from store clerk: “This check is for \$15 of fruits and/or vegetables. It is wrong, isn’t it?”
No, the assumption should not be made that the check is wrong. Cashiers are trained to read the check and allow purchase based on what is stated on the check. There are some participants (those who are exclusively breastfeeding multiples) who will be prescribed \$15 of fruits and/or vegetables.
- “My check is for \$8, but I only spent \$6.98. Why couldn’t I get money back?”
There is no cash involved in WIC transactions and participants will NOT be given cash back if the purchase totals less than the check specifies. Participants should be encouraged to purchase as close to the amount listed on the check to receive the full nutritional value.

Activity #4:

Grab Bag of Additional Fun Activities - Starting Points & Ideas

- Recipe contest highlighting new WIC approved foods
- Gather new WIC food labels for display/participant education
- Play Allowable Foods List Family Feud – “Allowed or Not Allowed”
- Play New WIC Foods Jeopardy – *“I’ll Take Fruits and Vegetables for 400, Alex”*
- Purchase a variety of allowed and non-allowed baby foods. Pass out the Allowable foods List, and baby food items. Read labels and determine allowed and not allowed items.
- Office fruit & vegetable weighing activity: Using a small scale, practice weighing food models or fresh fruits and vegetables from your refrigerator/pantry. For example, Tri-County staff filled small bags with pebbles (in various amounts), and attached laminated cut-outs of local grocery store ads picturing various fruits and vegetables priced by the pound to the weighted bags. Using the scale and the Price Chart found on the Foods List (fruits and vegetables page), staff practiced weighing and adding up their fruit & vegetable “purchases” in the office. (Note: small scales can be found for purchase at www.enasco.com for under \$15).