

**WIC VENDOR COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES APRIL 28, 2009**

PRESENT: Dennis Banks, Ann Belanger, Tania Andreyeva, Richard Lammlin, Janet Rankin, Kim Boulette, Gerald Katz, Diane Buzzetti, Joanne Yandow, Susan Kyhn, Pat Sullivan, Frank Alvarado, Stan Sorkin, Regine Beakes, Kevin Krusz and Olga Jimenez.

Meeting began by everyone introducing themselves.

- Susan Kyhn is sitting in for the new representative for Nestle's infant formula. The last hospital she has been to was Middlesex and planning to do other hospitals in the area, so they can start newborns on Nestle instead of Enfamil. The hospitals state that there is more inventory to keep track of and paperwork when dealing with more than one company, but she's working on it.

There are no exchanges or substitutions of formulas. We have a rebate contract, so we have to give Nestle's standard products. Due to this, vendors will see fewer checks for Enfamil, Similac, and other standard formulas between October and December. After January 1<sup>st</sup>, there will be no Connecticut WIC checks for these formulas.

Vendor training and dates were discussed. Janet Rankin would like the dates to be emailed to her. Also discussed was the issue of front end managers and night managers at Big Y.

- Frank Alvarado suggested that training dates be electronically sent to him, however, it could bring the issue of everyone attending the trainings at the same time, which would not work well for making sure that we have appropriate space and materials for each session. What will be done is to add the training presentation on the web site.
- Ann and Tania from Yale's Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity spoke about their surveys with the vendors. The interviews are going fine, however there was a language barrier with Spanish, Arabic and Hindu store owners, but they are doing their best. Their purpose is to examine associations between market and neighborhood factors and the food environment, prices, variety and quality. They have completed store observations in 241 stores and interviews with 23 store managers/owners.

The main issue right now is the bread. It was discussed and will continue to be on the agenda. Gerry Katz, a store owner stated that this is going to be a real big problem. Kim proposed that maybe stores could carry either tortillas or bread. The State WIC Office will talk about this and will report at our next retailers meeting about any changes to the minimum inventory.

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Baby food issue was shelf space according to Gerry. Starting January 1, 2010, the brand of all infant foods will be Beechnut not Gerber, but between October and December, 2009 both brands will be provided.

A request was made for us to train the distributors and trade organizations. The minimum inventory requirements for vendors has been shared with them in the distributor letter, but we have not received any comments or questions from this group.

Using multiple tenders for cash value checks should not be a problem in most stores, so we have not changed our decision to allow participants to pay the extra if a purchase goes over the value of the fruit and vegetable check. Stop & Shop confirmed that their system can handle this, along with Shaw's and Janet confirmed that the programming changes are being made to Big Y's register system. An email was sent to Wal-Mart for an update on this capability since this is the only chain who has expressed to another state that this would be a problem.

Canned fruits and vegetables with sugar is an issue. It was suggested to name all cans in the food list. This list would be large since there are so many varieties and so many brands.

WIC checks will be changing from green to light cranberry color on October 1<sup>st</sup>, however, the layout is the same. Between October, November and December, stores will start seeing both colors of checks.

Juices in 46 oz. cans will be eliminated. We will be allowing 64 oz. plastic bottles instead.

We will have a nutritionist at the vendor trainings to explain the nutrition value of the products. There are several organizations trying to get stores/retailers to provide healthier foods for everyone.

A question was asked if we should ask WIC vendors in the next retailer mailing what fruits and vegetables are they going to carry. We are trying to assure that the vendors are ready for the changes and we have had very little response to the information that we've been sending.

Meeting adjourned at 4:09.