

Expanding Fruit and Vegetable Benefits in WIC: A Key Provision for WIC Participants and State Agencies

What is the WIC Fruit and Vegetable Expansion Provision?

The American Rescue Plan, enacted on March 11, 2021, includes a provision that expands access to fruits and vegetables for mothers and children participating in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). WIC food packages currently provide \$9 for fruits and vegetables per month for children and \$11 per month for women. The new WIC Fruit and Vegetable Expansion Provision provides funding for states to increase the monthly value of fruits and vegetables in both the women's and children's food package up to \$35 per month for up to four months. Funds must be distributed by September 30, 2021. To ensure participants receive the full four months of benefits, states should act quickly to begin distributing the enhanced fruit and vegetable benefits by June at the latest.

What are the Advantages of Opting in to the Provision?

This new Provision is critical for states to opt in to because it will supplement the health of WIC participants and bolster local economies.

- Increased access to fruits and vegetables through this Provision can improve the health, food security, and financial stability of WIC participants during COVID-19.
- The increase in WIC benefits will also help bolster local economies as dollars are spent at local grocery stores.
- The new Provision would also increase demand for and turnover of fresh produce in local food stores, thereby improving food environments and supporting local produce farmers.

How Much Will States Receive?

If all states fully adopt the new Provision, an estimated \$476 million in additional fruit and vegetable benefits would be offered to women (\$133 million) and children (\$343 million) across the nation. Estimates are based on September 2020 data, which is the most recently available participation data. View the state-by-state estimates in Table 1 to see how much additional funding your state could receive by opting in to the Provision.

What are the Next Steps?

- Watch for implementation guidance provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- Make a plan for your state to fully opt in to the WIC Fruit and Vegetable Expansion Provision.
- Develop an outreach plan to educate current and potential participants on the additional funding they will receive through the Provision by distributing linguistically and culturally relevant materials through multiple communication channels. The increased value of the women and children's food packages under this Provision is an opportunity to enroll more women and children in WIC as the benefits are better able to outweigh other barriers to participation.
- Prepare stores and farmers' markets participating in WIC to stock up on high-quality and well-priced fruits and vegetables to meet the demand.

TABLE 1. Estimated Increase in WIC Fruit and Vegetable Benefits, by State¹

State	Women Participating in WIC ²	Estimated Additional Funding for Women ¹	Children Participating in WIC ²	Estimated Additional Funding for Children ¹	Total Women and Children Participating in WIC ²	Estimated Total Additional Funding ¹
Alabama	25,391	\$2,437,536	60,824	\$6,325,696	86,215	\$8,763,232
Alaska	3,121	\$299,616	8,288	\$861,952	11,409	\$1,161,568
Arizona	27,025	\$2,594,400	73,825	\$7,677,800	100,850	\$10,272,200
Arkansas	13,408	\$1,287,168	21,259	\$2,210,936	34,667	\$3,498,104
California	192,303	\$18,461,088	573,699	\$59,664,696	766,002	\$78,125,784
Colorado	18,112	\$1,738,752	42,601	\$4,430,504	60,713	\$6,169,256
Connecticut	9,133	\$876,768	23,219	\$2,414,776	32,352	\$3,291,544
Delaware	3,647	\$350,112	8,807	\$915,928	12,454	\$1,266,040
District of Columbia	2,948	\$283,008	7,143	\$742,872	10,091	\$1,025,880
Florida	95,141	\$9,133,536	222,886	\$23,180,144	318,027	\$32,313,680
Georgia	42,595	\$4,089,120	87,858	\$9,137,232	130,453	\$13,226,352
Hawaii	5,825	\$559,200	15,459	\$1,607,736	21,284	\$2,166,936
Idaho	6,642	\$637,632	16,999	\$1,767,896	23,641	\$2,405,528
Illinois	35,266	\$3,385,536	71,303	\$7,415,512	106,569	\$10,801,048
Indiana	33,309	\$3,197,664	85,755	\$8,918,520	119,064	\$12,116,184
Iowa	12,835	\$1,232,160	33,779	\$3,513,016	46,614	\$4,745,176
Kansas	10,058	\$965,568	25,191	\$2,619,864	35,249	\$3,585,432
Kentucky	22,869	\$2,195,424	59,321	\$6,169,384	82,190	\$8,364,808
Louisiana	23,559	\$2,261,664	36,786	\$3,825,744	60,345	\$6,087,408
Maine	3,162	\$303,552	8,998	\$935,792	12,160	\$1,239,344
Maryland	27,576	\$2,647,296	66,570	\$6,923,280	94,146	\$9,570,576
Massachusetts	22,415	\$2,151,840	66,016	\$6,865,664	88,431	\$9,017,504
Michigan	42,422	\$4,072,512	126,850	\$13,192,400	169,272	\$17,264,912
Minnesota	20,744	\$1,991,424	58,739	\$6,108,856	79,483	\$8,100,280
Mississippi	16,327	\$1,567,392	38,226	\$3,975,504	54,553	\$5,542,896
Missouri	23,214	\$2,228,544	43,318	\$4,505,072	66,532	\$6,733,616
Montana	2,920	\$280,320	8,187	\$851,448	11,107	\$1,131,768
Nebraska	7,329	\$703,584	19,524	\$2,030,496	26,853	\$2,734,080
Nevada	12,385	\$1,188,960	32,190	\$3,347,760	44,575	\$4,536,720
New Hampshire	2,561	\$245,856	8,265	\$859,560	10,826	\$1,105,416
New Jersey	30,887	\$2,965,152	76,305	\$7,935,720	107,192	\$10,900,872
New Mexico	8,686	\$833,856	18,588	\$1,933,152	27,274	\$2,767,008
New York	78,396	\$7,526,016	202,135	\$21,022,040	280,531	\$28,548,056
North Carolina	55,147	\$5,294,112	140,823	\$14,645,592	195,970	\$19,939,704
North Dakota	2,148	\$206,208	5,732	\$596,128	7,880	\$802,336
Ohio	41,098	\$3,945,408	74,869	\$7,786,376	115,967	\$11,731,784
Oklahoma	16,105	\$1,546,080	32,892	\$3,420,768	48,997	\$4,966,848
Oregon	16,045	\$1,540,320	45,675	\$4,750,200	61,720	\$6,290,520
Pennsylvania	39,121	\$3,755,616	94,321	\$9,809,384	133,442	\$13,565,000
Rhode Island	3,312	\$317,952	8,435	\$877,240	11,747	\$1,195,192
South Carolina	20,733	\$1,990,368	40,863	\$4,249,752	61,596	\$6,240,120
South Dakota	2,894	\$277,824	7,850	\$816,400	10,744	\$1,094,224
Tennessee	28,946	\$2,778,816	51,951	\$5,402,904	80,897	\$8,181,720
Texas	185,646	\$17,822,016	311,725	\$32,419,400	497,371	\$50,241,416
Utah	8,777	\$842,592	20,429	\$2,124,616	29,206	\$2,967,208
Vermont	2,301	\$220,896	7,257	\$754,728	9,558	\$975,624
Virginia	26,735	\$2,566,560	63,696	\$6,624,384	90,431	\$9,190,944
Washington	26,675	\$2,560,800	73,292	\$7,622,368	99,967	\$10,183,168
West Virginia	7,214	\$692,544	18,787	\$1,953,848	26,001	\$2,646,392
Wisconsin	17,280	\$1,658,880	51,117	\$5,316,168	68,397	\$6,975,048
Wyoming	1,677	\$160,992	3,840	\$399,360	5,517	\$560,352
U.S.	1,384,065	\$132,870,240	3,302,467	\$343,456,568	4,686,532	\$476,326,808

1. Additional funding for states fully utilizing the WIC Fruit and Vegetable Provision: \$35 monthly benefit for four months.

2. Source: USDA WIC Average Monthly Participation Data for September 2020.