



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

December 30, 2014

Food and
Nutrition
Service

3101 Park
Center Drive

Alexandria, VA
22302-1500

SUBJECT: WIC Policy Memorandum #2015- 3
Eligibility of White Potatoes for Purchase with the Cash-Value Voucher

TO: Regional Directors
Special Nutrition Programs
All Regions

WIC State Agency Directors
All Regions

As you may be aware, the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (the Act), was enacted on December 16, 2014. Section 753 of the Act addresses the issue of food packages in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). The Act precludes the exclusion or restriction of the eligibility of any variety of fresh, whole, or cut vegetables (except for vegetables with added sugars, fats, or oils) from being provided under the WIC Program. The Act also provides that, if the scientific review described in the provision results in a recommendation that any vegetable not be available for purchase under the program based on the nutritional value of the vegetable and the nutritional needs of WIC participants, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is authorized to exclude or restrict the purchase of those vegetables under the terms of the provision.

Thus the Act now requires State agencies to include white potatoes to be eligible for purchase with the WIC cash-value voucher. The Act requires State agencies to implement the provision no later than 15 days after the date of enactment of the Act, i.e., December 31, 2014. This policy memorandum provides guidance on implementing the provision.

State agencies must immediately begin planning for implementation of this provision. FNS understands that State agencies will need time to fully implement actions such as modifying operational systems, revising policies and authorized product lists, developing educational materials for participants and staff, producing vendor training materials, and working with vendor communities to effect a smooth implementation. State agencies are expected to complete all implementation actions as soon as possible, but no later than July 1, 2015.

State agencies must provide their FNS Regional Offices, no later than January 30, 2015, a timeline that lays out the steps the agency will take to plan for and implement this change, including (1) the operational/systems changes that will be required for implementation, (2) the training and educational steps they will take to prepare participants, staff, and vendors, (3) the date they will notify their

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vendors of the upcoming change and plan for implementation, and (4) the date they intend to complete implementation of the provision.

Regional/WIC State Directors

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Although Section 753 directs the U.S. Department of Agriculture to allow any variety of fresh vegetables (except those with added sugars, fats, or oils), FNS will also allow State agencies the option of providing processed white potatoes (frozen, canned or dried), without added sugars, fats, or oils. This option allows for consistent treatment of all vegetables in Federal WIC regulations.

Your respective Regional Office is available to answer any questions and provide technical assistance.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debra R. Whitford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

DEBRA R. WHITFORD

Director

Supplemental Food Programs Division