

# Oregon WIC Quarterly Update for Vendors

## May 2024

### WIC's 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday

This year WIC celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday! This quarterly update is dedicated to sharing WIC's history and a glimpse into some exciting changes ahead.

- **1967:** Marion Wright from the National Association of Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) brought hunger to the attention of Senate members, Robert T. Kennedy, and Joe Clark. Wright led the men on a tour of the Mississippi Delta. The trip uncovered unthinkable poverty and malnutrition. The victims of hunger were often children.
- **1968:** CBS aired a report, "Hunger in America." The broadcasted report brought the issue of hunger and malnutrition to the attention of the public.
- **1972:** The bill creating the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) was introduced in congress.
- **1974:** Oregon WIC opened its doors with five pilot programs serving 2,500 women, infants, and children. These programs offered a handful of foods: milk, eggs, cheese, formula, & juice using a paper voucher system.
- **1997:** WIC vouchers became "non-vendor-specific" so participants no longer had to pre-select the store where they would spend their vouchers.
- **2009:** WIC began offering more healthy food choices that include whole grains, fruits and veggies, and opportunities to buy local produce direct from farmers.
- **2016:** Oregon WIC said "goodbye" to paper vouchers and "hello" to an electronic debit card to buy foods.
- **In 2025:** Federal rules for WIC online shopping are scheduled to be published.
- **By 2026:** State WIC programs will implement the newly published WIC Food Package (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/news-item/usda-0061.24>) rule. The new rule offers more flexibility in package sizes, alternative food options such as plant-based milks and nut and seed butters, increased fruits and veggies, and more whole grain choices.

## WIC's Valued Vendor Partners

This anniversary also gives WIC an opportunity to recognize our many valuable vendor partners who have supported Oregon families over the years. Your services support participant's access to healthy foods and help make WIC's vision of ensuring optimal nutrition and lifelong health for every Oregon family become a reality. **Thank you!!**