

WIC Fruit and Vegetable Check Program

Beginning in the summer of 2010, Connecticut Farmers' Markets will have the option to participate in the *WIC Fruit and Vegetable Check Program*. This program will be running separately from the Connecticut Department of Agriculture's very popular and well established *WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)* as described in Ch. 5a

Who does the WIC Fruit and Vegetable Check Program Serve?

- Women who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or have had a baby in the last six months
- Children under the age of five years old

Who is involved in the WIC Program?

This is a federally funded program, through the USDA – Food and Nutrition Service. The program is administered at the state level by the Connecticut Department of Public Health – WIC Program. The State WIC office works with local WIC Agencies state wide to ensure eligible clients receive these benefits and nutritional education. Once checks are received from a local WIC office, eligible clients can redeem these benefits at authorized locations, which now includes certain farmers' markets throughout the state of Connecticut.

How does a Connecticut Farmers' Market Participate?

In order for a Connecticut Farmers' Market to participate in the WIC Fruit and Vegetable Check Program, every farmer selling a fruit and/or vegetable must attend a training session and submit the required paperwork to the state WIC office. The market then should declare to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture their intentions to participate in this program.

What Products are Eligible for the WIC Fruit and Vegetable Checks?

Most varieties of fruits and/or vegetables. For exceptions, see the next page.

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What Products are NOT eligible for purchase with the WIC Fruit and Vegetable Checks?

- No White Potatoes
 - All varieties, including: Yukon Gold, Red Potatoes, Purple Potatoes, Russets, etc
 - Sweet Potatoes/Yams **ARE** eligible
- No Herbs, fresh or dried
- No Spices
- No Canned, Jarred, Preserved, or Dried Fruits & Vegetables
 - No decorative item – Painted Pumpkins, Gourds
 - No Prepared Foods – breads, pies
 - No Fruit & Nut mixtures
 - No Grain or Grain Mixtures
 - No Garlic
 - No Dried Beans/Peas

How are the transactions handled at an authorized Connecticut Farmers' Market?

WIC Client:

- ✓ Selects eligible commodities and hands a check to the farmer

Farmer:

- ✓ Check the ID
 - Compare the family number on the WIC check with the family ID number on the ID card
 - Compare the name on the WIC Check with the name on the ID
 - If they don't match – terminate the sale. No transaction can take place unless this information agrees
- ✓ Make sure the current day is within the "First day to use/Last day to use" boxes on the WIC checks
- ✓ Verify the items selected by the client are eligible
- ✓ Write in sale amount on the check in black ink. Black ink is recommended.
 - Amount will vary from \$5.00 or \$6.00. The maximum amount is specified on the check
 - If the sale is less than the maximum amount indicated on the check, then write in the exact amount
 - If the sale is more than the maximum amount indicated on the check, then write in the maximum value and collect the difference from the client
 - NO change can be given to the WIC client
- ✓ Ask the participant to sign and date the check in black ink(recommended)
- ✓ Compare the signature on the check to the one on the WIC ID card
 - If the signatures do not match, terminate the sale
 - The WIC ID card is a booklet/pamphlet that each client will have
- The farmer may assist the WIC client with entering the date and/or price.
- Do NOT accept a check that is pre-signed

What do the WIC Fruit and Vegetable Checks Look Like?

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CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH: SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM
FOR WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN (WIC PROGRAM) 410 Capitol Avenue, Hartford CT 06106 1-800-741-2142

64-1968 /611 **42207001**

SEQUENCE NO.	FAMILY	WIC ID	PAYEE NAME	SITE	FIRST DAY TO USE
42207001	123456	012-1234567	DOE, JANE	012	02/02/10

PAY TO THE ORDER OF:
AUTHORIZED WIC VENDOR
STAMPED HERE:

PACKAGE:
1 UP TO \$6 WIC-APPROVED FRUITS & VEGETABLES
(NO POTATOES, EXCEPT SWEET POTATOES/YAMS)
*** **
*** **
*** **
*** **

LAST DAY TO USE
02/02/10

ACTUAL \$
AMOUNT OF SALE

VOID

VENDOR MUST DEPOSIT WITHIN 60 DAYS
OF "FIRST DAY TO USE" DATE
UNITED COMMUNITY BANK
Marietta, GA

IMPROPER USE OF THIS CHECK IS SUBJECT TO STATE AND FEDERAL PROSECUTION

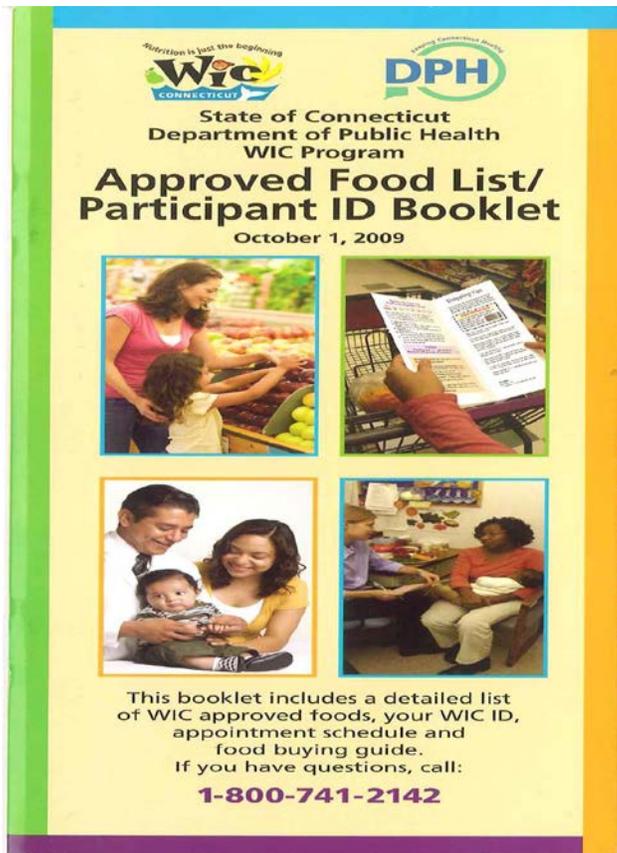
SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT OR AUTHORIZED PROXY

NOT NEGOTIABLE UNLESS SIGNED

DATE

⑈ 4 2 20 700 1 2 ⑈ ⑆ 06 1 1 1968 4 ⑆ 2 500 2 5 4 ⑈

What does the WIC ID (booklet each client will have) look like?



**Connecticut WIC Program
Participant Identification**

Bring this participant booklet for ALL visits to the WIC office and the grocery store.

Family ID Number _____

Local Agency Code _____

 *Babies were born to be breastfed.*

The signature(s) below must agree with the signature on the WIC check(s).

Payee's Name (Please print) _____

Payee's Signature _____

Caretaker's Name (Please print) _____

Caretaker's Signature _____

Alternate's Name (Please print) _____

Alternate's Signature _____

Your local office is:

VOID

Staff Signature _____

USDA does not discriminate in any of its programs. To file a complaint of discrimination, write the USDA, Director of Civil Rights, Room 326-W Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (Voice and TDD).

**Check
for a
Matching
Signature**

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This is a participant booklet. Within the booklet there are reminders and information for each WIC client. Also with the booklet there will be *WIC Fruit and Vegetable Checks* and the *WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Vouchers*. The WIC clients will bring this along with both *WIC Fruit and Vegetable Checks* AND *WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Vouchers* to the market to make purchases.

The image on the left is the cover, the image on the right is the back cover. Farmers will be concerned with the back cover that will have the signatures on it. This is where they will compare the signature on the check to one of the three signatures on the back of this booklet officially referred to as the WIC ID.

How do the Farmers Deposit the WIC Fruit and Vegetable Check?

Each authorized farmer will receive a WIC Fruit and Vegetable Check Program Endorsement Stamp. This stamp looks different and is different from the WIC/Senior FMNP Endorsement stamp.

- Use this self inking stamp on the front of the check marked "Pay To The Order Of"
- Insure that the check is completed accurately
- Corrections to the amount and/or date can be made by drawing ONE line through the error and writing the corrected information
- WIC Fruit and Vegetable Checks are to be deposited in the farmer's bank account within 60 days from the "First Day to Use" date stated on the check. If there are no errors, the checks will be paid by the WIC bank within two or three days after deposit.

Checks may be rejected by the bank if...

- The check is redeemed before the "First Day to Use" or after the "Last Day to Use"
- Missing the signature
- Missing the farmers stamp
- Missing the purchase price
- Priced in excess of the maximum dollar value of the check
- Farmer's bank encodes price incorrectly

Rejected Check Reimbursements

If a check is rejected because of an error on the Local Agency's behalf:

- The State WIC Program will reimburse the farmer the appropriate amount of the check

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- The local agency (where the check was printed) will reimburse the amount of the bank fee. The farmer must petition the local agency for this.

If the check is rejected because of a farmer error:

- The state WIC Program will reimburse the farmer the appropriate amount
- The farmer will be charged a \$4.00 administrative fee for each check
- Per federal regulations and the WIC farmer agreement, the WIC Program cannot reimburse bank fees due to farmer errors

Violations: Warnings, Disqualifications, Fines

Warnings will be given if violations are present. The fines listed below will be issued should program abuse be discovered. Farmers' markets are a new redemption location for this program. Some of these rules may not apply to the farmers' market but federal requirements of this program require these rules.

Your farm will be permanently disqualified if you or your employees are:

- Convicted in court of trafficking WIC checks or of selling guns ammunition, explosives or illegal drugs in exchange for WIC checks

Your farm will be disqualified for six years if you or your employees are:

- Administratively found to have bought or sold WIC checks for cash (trafficking), or selling guns, ammunition, explosives, or illegal drugs in exchange for WIC checks

Your farm will be disqualified for three years if you or your employees:

- Over charge the WIC Program on purchases made by clients
- Accept or cash WIC checks from unauthorized vendors, farmers or persons
- Give alcohol, alcoholic beverages, or tobacco products in exchange for a WIC Check

Your farm will be disqualified for one year if you or your employees:

- Accept WIC checks in exchange for unapproved items

Your farm will be disqualified for same amount of time if it is found to be in violation of other federal/state programs such as the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), formally known as the Food Stamp Program. A description of this program can be found in Ch. 26 of this guide.

Further Program Violations and associated fines:

A \$500 fine may be issued if...

- Requested information within the designated time frame
- The purchase price is not entered in ink on a WIC check at the time of the purchase

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A \$250 fine may be issued if...

- An altered WIC check is redeemed
- A farmer fails to attend an assigned training session with active participation in the program
- False information is provided in the application for the program

A \$125 fine may be issued if...

- A cashier does not check the WIC identification (booklet each client will have) at the time of purchase
- A cashier fails to compare the signature on the WIC check with the signature on the WIC identification booklet that each client will have at the time of purchase
- Prices are not posted on ALL eligible items
- The cashier does not have a WIC customer date a WIC check, after signing it during the transaction
- An unauthorized or counterfeit WIC stamp is used
- Not reporting a change of a farmer's bank account
- Accepting a WIC check before the "First Day to Use" or after the "Last Day to Use" as specified on the check

IMPORTANT:

Farmers are responsible for training their help at the markets. The farmers are accountable for the actions of their employees at the markets.

For further information on the WIC Fruit and Vegetable Check Program, please contact:

Connecticut Department of Agriculture, Marketing Bureau
Richard Macsuga, Marketing Representative
Phone: (860)713-2544
Richard.Macsuga@ct.gov
www.CTGrown.gov

or

Connecticut Department of Public Health, WIC Program
Kevin Krusz
Phone: (860) 509-8084 or
(800) 741-2142
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www.ct.gov/dph/wic

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