

VIRGINIA WIC PROGRAM
RETAILER ADVISORY MEETING
MAY 14, 2009

10:00 AM - 12:30 AM

ATTENDEES - SEE Listing of stores/corporate contacts at the end.

Agenda Review and Rules of the Road - Ephraim Ewing

Introductions of attendees and guests at site locations as well as 800-line attendees - Ephraim Ewing

Expectations common among attendees included upcoming training information, the new food list, store-designated brands, shelf labels, any WIC changes and store brands and reduced fat cheese.

Review of Next Steps from March 2009 Retailer Advisory Meeting: Sheila Brewer provided an update on several action items from the March meeting, including:

- Follow up completed with Wal-Mart (Jayson Scadden) regarding concerns with being required to use shelf labels.
- Discuss draft Shelf Labels and Store Brands Guidelines for the Vendor Manual (today's RAM)
- Sanction Schedule will be highlighted at today's meeting
- Follow up completed with Margaret Richardson (DECA Headquarters) on commissaries and designated "store brand" reporting requirement. DECA will have to submit a separate profile for each commissary to the State WIC Program by 7/1/2009.
- Discussion/review of training opportunities with new food list - (assume there are no questions or further concerns since no comments had been received)
- Concern over "whole grain products" - (specific brands and manufacturers provided in handout).

WIC Director's Update - Donna Seward

- Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) project has been approved. Working with VITA; contractor not yet awarded. Working on Multi-state (VA-W/VA) procurement. Will share specific timelines at next Retailer meeting.
- State budget crunch hitting WIC pretty hard in many ways; however, there will be an EBT coordinator and a contract person to work with retailers implementing EBT.
- The WIC Program plans to hire a UPC database person.
- The question was raised as to whether VA WIC accepts EBT (cards) from other states. The answer is no, for WIC. EBT cards for the purpose of SNAP (food stamp) benefits are pretty much accepted from other states.

Draft Guidelines for Vendor Manual - Sheila Brewer

Update of store-designated brands (see handout) - this is the first presentation of these drafts. Now is the time to clarify and identify any issues. Letters were sent to retailers in April and store designated brands need to be declared in the Retailer Store Management System (RSMS) by May 15. All prices must be updated via RSMS by May 25th. Selling store brand products for selective foods will become effective October 1, 2009. Between May – September stores can go into RSMS and update their selection, if needed.

Once again, each store is required to identify (at store or corporate level) their store designated-brands for selective WIC products (milk, cold and hot cereals, frozen juice, liquid juice, peanut butter and cheese).

Beginning in August, WIC expects to have a new version of RSMS and stores will be able to enter prices in advance of the October implementation date.

Individual commissaries need to follow-up with Margaret Richardson (Headquarters) to identify commissary specific store brands.

Any concerns pertaining to the timeline for either of these draft guidelines should be submitted in writing to Sheila Brewer as soon as possible (by June 12th).

Some caveats for store-designated brands also apply to shelf labels. Want to inform participants of new shelf labels and design by summer.

If your store/company wants to design customized tags you will need to get written approval of the shelf label (tag).

Once available, stores can order state-issued tags by sending a Retailer Supply Request form back to the State WIC office. It is anticipated that shelf labels will be available July/August.

If you already have a customized label you'll still need to re-submit the label information to Sheila for review and approval.

The new food list may be available for distribution at the next Retailer Advisory meeting. Trainers will be the focal point for distributing the new Food list to their respective stores. An e-mail will be sent when the new food list becomes available.

Questions continue to arise over verbiage (store-designated brand) and the appropriate labeling. Sheila Brewer will put the information in a "table" format in an effort to make it easier to understand the various categories. Sheila will send out via email the requested table by May 21st.

Sanction Violation Schedule Changes March 9, 2009

Alex Acharya reviewed the highlights of the letter sent in March (also provided as a handout). There were no questions about the new violation categories that have been added to the sanction schedule.

Miscellaneous:

Sheila briefly closed the meeting with a review of miscellaneous issues (NOTE: meeting ran slightly over and some attendees had to leave early. Sheila discussed the issues with Similac Advance vs. Similac Advance Early Shield and the Nutramigen Enflora).

Benefits:

- Store designated brands and labeling discussion
- Director's update and the presence in general of Donna at the meeting
- Hand-out materials
- Baby food update
- Shelf labels and having some input
- Nutramigen Enflora
- List of training sites
- Having meeting on telecom

Concerns:

- Use of mandatory shelf labels
- Getting a copy of the new food list
- Brown rice size
- Training all cashiers
- Available space for attending training being offered
- Providing materials in time for training of personnel

- DECA-related concerns

Next Steps

- Freda's birthday (a Norfolk site thing)
- Attend next meeting Wednesday, July 22, 2009 (note: June unable to attend this date).
- Provide comments to Sheila on store-designated brands or shelf label "drafts" by May 28, 2009.
- Submit alternative shelf label design/layout suggestions to Sheila by June 14, 2009.
- Sheila will submit draft Store Brand and Shelf label guidelines to USDA by June 24th.
- Sheila will send email note when the October 1, 2009 WIC Approved Food List is available for distribution or via the webpage.
- Sheila will send out a table that illustrates the various types of "approved" foods (i.e., any brand, store brands, contract) and their shelf label requirements.
- WIC will update the message on the shelf label (tear off pad) being developed for distribution to participants pertaining to the use of "store brands".
- Sheila will update the Store Designated Brand guidelines to include other situations, i.e., shortages at the manufacturer/supplier due to natural disasters, product recalls, etc.
- Once the tear off pad layout is updated, send this new version to Food Lion, Giant of Maryland.

Attendees and Representation (on-site and 800 line)

Site Facilitators: Freda Bolling, Sheila Brewer, Ephraim Ewing, June Thompson

Other presenters from State WIC Office: Donna Seward, Megan Garrett, Alex Acharya

Burkeville Market, Camellia Foods, DECA Headquarters, Deltaville Market, Farm Fresh Corporate, Farmers Foods Corporate, Fine Foods Superette, Food Lion Corporate, Fort Belvoir Commissary, Food Star, Fork Union Town and Country, Fresh Foods, Genes Supermarket, Giant Food of PA (Martins), Giant of Maryland, Grant's Supermarket, Hall's Market, K-VA-T Corporate, Kroger Corporate, Lowes Foods, Matthew's Market, MDI, Miller's Market, National Federation of Independent Businesses, North Ave Market and Deli, Reid's Supermarket, Safeway Corporate, Save-A-lot Corporate, Save-A-Lot (Roanoke), Slaughter's Supermarket, Shoppers Food Warehouse Corporate, Star Value Sunnyside Market, Super K-Mart Corporate, T & M Grocery and Deli, Triplett's Grocery, Ukrops Corporate, VPCGA, Virginia Retailer Federation/Retail Alliance, Virginia Retailer Federation, VRMA, Wades #42, Wades #48, White's Fresh Foods and Wal-Mart Corporate.

Handouts:

- March 9, 2009 Sanction Violation Schedule
- Store Designated Brand (proposed guidelines)
- Shelf labels (proposed guidelines)
- Sample shelf label and tear off pad (for participant use – store brands).
- Nutramigen Enflora LGG (letter dated may 7, 2009)
- Mandatory Recertification Training (letter dated April 24, 2009)