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**Dept. of Health Announce Changes to Women, Infants and Children Food Packages**  
*New Foods will Provided Better Nutrition to Mothers and Children*

(Las Cruces) – Starting October 1 the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) food packages will change to better reflect individual preferences and help families maintain a healthy and balanced diet. This is the first change to the WIC food package since the program began 35 years ago.

With the new food package, families will be able to use their WIC benefits to buy fresh fruits and vegetables, legumes, tofu, soy milk, baby food and whole grain foods that include tortillas, bread, oatmeal, brown rice and barley. The WIC program will also increase the amount of food provided to mothers who breastfeed their babies full time to better promote and support the establishment of successful long-term breastfeeding. The federal government adjusted the food package to provide more appropriate levels of nutrition to pregnant women and growing children.

“This new food packages that reflect better nutritional standards are a welcomed addition to the WIC program because childhood obesity is one of our greatest public health challenges,” said Health Secretary Alfredo Vigil, MD. “We’re confident that WIC families will be able to enjoy a wider choice of foods as they improve their nutritional intake.”

The current foods that can be purchased with WIC benefits are eggs, cheese, beans, lentils, cereal, milk, juice, infant formula, infant cereal and tuna and carrots for exclusively breastfeeding women. All current foods will still be part of the WIC food package, but there will be a reduction in the amount of juice, eggs, cheese, and infant formula that can be purchased.

WIC is a federally funded nutritional and education program that makes supplemental food available to pregnant and breastfeeding women, infants and children up to 5 years of age. WIC offices around the state provide one-on-one and group counseling and education sessions for mothers interested in breastfeeding. The Department of Health’s WIC program serves approximately 67,000 mothers and children every month.

For more information about WIC or to find an office in your area, call 1-866-867-3124 or go online to [www.nmwic.org](http://www.nmwic.org).