USDA’S PROPOSED REDUCTION OF WIC BENEFITS

International Dairy Foods Association

DECEMBER 2022
KEY FINDINGS

1. WIC beneficiaries rely on the WIC program to purchase milk and dairy products. Four-in-five WIC beneficiaries purchase dairy foods (78%) through the WIC program.
   - One-third of WIC beneficiaries prefer whole milk (34%) the most while one-quarter prefer 2% milk (28%) the most.

2. USDA's recent proposal to reduce the WIC benefit used to purchase milk and dairy products concerns WIC beneficiaries.
   - Three-in-four WIC beneficiaries (76%) are very concerned or somewhat concerned with the proposed reduction in benefits.

3. The proposed reduction to the WIC benefit used to purchase milk and dairy products by USDA will be a burden on WIC beneficiaries.
   - One-third of WIC beneficiaries (35%) say they will need to use non-WIC funds to purchase milk and dairy products and one-quarter (26%) express the reduction will make their shopping for milk and dairy products harder.

4. A significant portion of WIC beneficiaries will choose to opt-out of the program if USDA decides to reduce the WIC benefit used to purchase milk and dairy products.
   - One-fifth of WIC beneficiaries (20%) say they will not re-enroll in WIC and one-third (34%) say they are unsure if they will re-enroll in WIC if USDA reduces the benefit used to purchase milk and dairy products.
This poll was conducted between December 14-December 16, 2022 among a sample of 534 WIC beneficiaries. The interviews were conducted online and the data were weighted to approximate a target sample of WIC beneficiaries based on gender, age, educational attainment, race, ethnicity, and gender by age. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points.
Four-in-five WIC beneficiaries purchase *dairy products* (78%) through the WIC program.

Which of the following foods do you or your family purchase through the WIC program? Please select all that apply.

- **Dairy (milk, cheese, yogurt)**: 78% selected, 22% not selected
- **Fruits (apple, orange, berries, melon)**: 75% selected, 25% not selected
- **Vegetables (broccoli, corn, carrots, greens)**: 68% selected, 32% not selected
- **Grains (bread, pasta, rice, breakfast cereal)**: 67% selected, 33% not selected
- **Protein (red meat, eggs, beans, fish, chicken, pork)**: 57% selected, 43% not selected
- **None of these**: 11% selected, 89% not selected
One-third of WIC beneficiaries prefer *whole milk* (34%) the most and one-quarter prefer *2% milk* (28%) the most.

If you or your family purchase milk through the WIC program, which type of milk do you most prefer? Please select just one.

- **Whole milk**: 34%
- **2% milk (also called reduced-fat)**: 28%
- **1% milk (also called low-fat)**: 13%
- **Lactose-reduced or lactose-free milk**: 7%
- **Skim milk (also called non-fat)**: 5%
- **Something else, please specify**: 5%
- **None of these**: 8%

*Products not offered in WIC food packages.*
Three-in-four WIC beneficiaries (76%) are *very concerned* or *somewhat concerned* with USDA's recent proposal to reduce the WIC benefit used to purchase milk and dairy products.

As you may know, the USDA recently proposed changes that would reduce the WIC benefit for purchasing milk and dairy products. How concerned are you, if at all, with USDA's recent proposal to reduce the WIC benefit used to purchase milk and dairy products?
If USDA decides to reduce the WIC benefit used to purchase milk and dairy products, one-third of WIC beneficiaries (35%) say they will **need to use non-WIC funds** to purchase milk and dairy products.

If USDA decides to reduce the WIC benefit used to purchase milk and dairy products, which of the following describes how the proposed reduction will affect your shopping for milk and dairy products? Please select all that apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Selected</th>
<th>Not Selected</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I will need to use other non-WIC funds to purchase milk and dairy products</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It will make my shopping for milk and dairy products harder</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It will make me go shopping less frequently for milk and dairy products</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It will make me change brands that I usually purchase for milk and dairy products</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will need to purchase less milk and dairy products</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>85%</td>
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<tr>
<td>It will make me go to different stores than I usually shop at for milk and dairy products</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of these</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WIC PURCHASES

PROPOSED WIC BENEFIT REDUCTION

RE-ENROLLING IN WIC PROGRAM
If USDA decides to reduce the WIC benefit used to purchase milk and dairy products, one-fifth of WIC beneficiaries (20%) say they will not re-enroll in WIC and one-third (34%) say they are unsure if they will re-enroll in WIC.

If USDA decides to reduce the WIC benefit used to purchase milk and dairy products, will you re-enroll in WIC?
Four-in-five WIC beneficiaries (80%) personally do *almost all or most* of the grocery shopping.

Within your household, how much of the grocery shopping do you personally do?

- **80%**: Almost all of the grocery shopping
- **57%**: Most of the grocery shopping
- **23%**: About half of the grocery shopping
- **14%**: Not too much of the grocery shopping
- **4%**: None of the grocery shopping
- **2%**: None of the grocery shopping
Breakdown of key demographics among WIC beneficiaries.

**Gender**
- Male: 41%
- Female: 59%

**Age**
- 18-34: 59%
- 35-44: 25%
- 45-64: 13%
- 65+: 3%

**Ethnicity**
- White: 57%
- Hispanic: 38%
- Black: 25%
- Other: 18%

**Education**
- < College: 85%
- Bachelors degree: 8%
- Post-grad: 7%

**Community Type**
- Urban: 38%
- Suburban: 33%
- Rural: 29%

**Region**
- Northeast: 15%
- Midwest: 19%
- South: 44%
- West: 21%

*Percentages calculated as N size out of total respondents (N = 534).*