



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Mary Coppola
mcoppola@unitedfresh.org
202-303-3425

Statement of Tom Stenzel, President and CEO, United Fresh

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, Medicine Review of WIC Food Packages: Improving Balance and Choice, Final Report

"United Fresh Produce Association is very pleased that the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's (NASEM) *Review of WIC Food Packages: Improving Balance and Choice, Final Report* recommends significantly increasing the cash value voucher (CVV) for fruits and vegetables in WIC Food Packages by \$4 to 24/month, depending on the participant. Increasing fruits and vegetables will better align WIC Food Packages with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, meet nutrient gaps for potassium and fiber, and promote and support breastfeeding.

The Report specifically recommends that fully breastfeeding WIC mothers receive a \$35/month CVV for fruits and vegetables, partially breastfeeding WIC mothers receive a CVV for \$25/month, mother and child dyads receive \$15/month, and that the CVV for all WIC children be increased. The NASEM Report also recommends that a fruit and vegetable CVV be offered instead of juice and jarred infant foods.

These recommendations are part of a comprehensive 10-year review conducted by the NASEM to ensure WIC Food Packages are aligned with current nutrition science, meet nutrient gaps, and provide more culturally appropriate foods.

In comments to the National Academies' Committee to Review WIC Food Packages, United Fresh recommended increasing the value of the fruit/vegetable CVV for children and breastfeeding mothers and providing a CVV for fruits/vegetables as an option to replace juice and jarred infant fruits and vegetables.

More than a decade ago, United Fresh and the National WIC Association (NWA) collaborated to ensure that the National Academies' 2005 recommendations to include fruits and vegetables in WIC resulted in policy change. Today, more than 8 million WIC mothers and children benefit from receiving fruits and vegetables as part of the WIC Food Package. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have attributed the recent decrease in early childhood obesity rates to changes made in WIC Food Packages, including the addition of fruits and vegetables. Studies show that while WIC participants have increased their consumption of fruits and vegetables they still eat less than recommended for good health.

United Fresh will work with the NWA and the USDA to update the WIC Food Packages to ensure that WIC continues its transformative role in improving healthy eating choices for our nation's at risk mothers, infants and children."

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About United Fresh Produce Association

Founded in 1904, the United Fresh Produce Association brings together companies across every segment of the fresh produce supply chain, including growers, shippers, fresh cut processors, wholesalers, distributors, retailers, foodservice operators, industry suppliers and allied associations. We empower industry leaders to shape sound government policy. We deliver the resources and expertise companies need to succeed in managing complex business and technical issues. We provide the training

and development individuals need to advance their careers in produce. Through these endeavors, we unite our industry with a common purpose – to build long-term value for our members and grow produce consumption. For more information, visit www.unitedfresh.org