



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WIC Families Urged to Redeem Checks for Free Produce

PITTSBURGH – The Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) is reminding Women, Infants and Children (WIC) families that the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) checks they received must be used before they expire on November 30, 2015. Additionally, individuals applying for WIC benefits need to do so before September 30, 2015 in order to be eligible for FMNP checks.

The checks, worth \$20 in free produce, are redeemable for Pennsylvania-grown fresh fruits and vegetables at participating Farmers' Markets and Farm Stands in Pennsylvania. More than 60 locations are in Allegheny County and listed on the Health Department's WIC web site at www.achd.net/wic.

Health officials strongly suggest that WIC families use all of their checks before Thanksgiving, since most Farmers' Markets close for the season a week before the holiday.

The new PA WIC Food list will go into effect on October 1, 2015. Among other changes, it will include the addition of whole grain pasta to the whole grain category and the option of selecting a 32 ounce container of yogurt as a WIC allowable dairy product.

Also available in the fall will be produce usually associated with the season: apples, beets, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, squash, grapes, kale, kohlrabi, leeks, onions, parsnips, pears, plums, potatoes, pumpkins, rutabagas, sweet potatoes, turnips, yams and zucchini. The remaining summer fruits and vegetables will still be available.

WIC is a federally funded program for pregnant or breastfeeding women, postpartum mothers, and children under the age of five. Program eligibility is based on income and nutritional risk.

The 2015-16 income limits for eligibility start with an annual gross income of \$21,775 for a family of one; \$29,471 for 2; \$37,167 for 3; \$44,863 for 4; and \$52,559 for 5. Unborn children are counted when the woman is pregnant. Allegheny County residents with family sizes larger than 5, should contact the Health Department directly for benefits information.

Besides Farmers Market produce during the summer and fall, WIC provides a wide range of regular year-round food including infant formula, dairy products, juice, cereal, peanut butter, and whole grains

including bread, tortillas, oatmeal, and rice. WIC also provides tofu, jarred baby foods, dry or canned beans; canned tuna, sardines, and pink salmon; and fresh, frozen, and canned fruits and vegetables.

For more information about WIC and how to apply for benefits, please call the Allegheny County Health Department WIC Program at 412-350-5801. If this number is a toll call or you live outside the County, please call the statewide WIC toll-free number, 1-800-WIC-WINS (1-800-942-9467).

PA WIC is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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