

Vendor Focus Group Questions

Welcome! Thank you for participating in our WIC vendor focus group today. We value your opinions and are looking forward to learning from you and hearing your ideas. We want to remind you that it is important to...

- Maintain confidentiality,
- Participate as much as possible, and
- Respect other opinions.
- Also, listening to each other is as important as talking and
- Differences of opinion are good

There is no right or wrong answers, and the point of our discussion is to explore a range of perspectives and experiences. This is basically a problem solving session, you are the experts and we are here to learn from you.

1. To get us started, we would like you to share your name, role/position, store, and your favorite fruit or vegetable. I will start, my name is _____ and I serve as the _____ at _____ and my favorite fruit/vegetable is _____.
2. Are all of you familiar with the WIC fruit and vegetable voucher programs? (If someone isn't, or has questions...respond). Think about WIC fruit and vegetable voucher usage at your store...experiences can be either as a manager or a cashier. Describe some encounters that come to mind.
 - After the group has some discussion summarize saying: "We have found that most of the vouchers for milk, cheese, eggs, cereal, juice, beans/PB, and whole grains are used. However, we have found that only about 76% of fruit and vegetable dollars that are given are being used. Many fruit and vegetable vouchers are used in partial amounts and some not at all. We know that full use of these vouchers will benefit both WIC participants and WIC vendors by improving fruit and vegetable intake and increasing revenue for stores."
3. Think about your experiences with WIC participants at your store, what do you think may prevent them from using the full amount of their fruit and vegetable vouchers? (Probing questions: Do you hear any comments

from WIC participants or from cashiers? What have you observed with WIC participants using these vouchers? Describe any barriers or challenges you see, hear about, or things you perceive to be barriers or challenges?)

4. We have conducted focus groups with program participants about the use of the vouchers. We asked them for ideas to improve full redemption rates and they did have some suggestions. We are handing out a summary of focus group findings to you now. It is a collection of main themes that came up throughout most of the focus groups and some quotes from different focus group members describing the themes we heard. The main ideas include: better labeling of WIC foods, making sure cashiers are properly trained, and making sure UPC codes are updated as needed.

What, are your thoughts about each of these ideas? Which of these ideas do you think your store would be willing and able to address to improve the full redemption rate of these vouchers in order to increase both your sales and the access for our WIC families to fruit and vegetables? (Probing questions: Which of these are most feasible for you? What do you feel would be most beneficial for stores? What is needed to support any of these improvements/changes?)

What other ideas do you have?

5. What could WIC do to help you in making any changes?
6. Considering everything we talked about today, what do you think the most important actions/improvements are that vendors can take to improve WIC fruit/vegetable voucher redemption in your stores?

Thank you so much for your time and great responses today. We will summarize all feedback and follow-up with you regarding our next steps.