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NUMBER: 21-20
FOR RELEASE: Immediate

DATE: May 28, 2021
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WIC Participants Receive an Increase in Benefits

Stanislaus County - Beginning June 2021, participants of the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program will see a temporary increase to their benefits for the purchase of fruits and vegetables. This benefit, provided by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, provides families with a temporary increase in their monthly WIC fruits and vegetables benefit to \$35 to provide additional relief during COVID-19. Currently, children ages one to five receive \$9 per month, and, pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women receive \$11 per month. The increase takes effect June 1st and is expected to last until September 2021.

“WIC provides families access to healthy food options and promotes healthier eating patterns. The increase in funding will provide some much-needed assistance during this pandemic,” said Heather Duvall, Stanislaus County WIC Program Director. “These supplemental funds help improve food security and ensure families have access to nutritious foods, during a time when healthy food choices are challenging for families to make.”

The fruits and vegetables benefit has a significant impact on the dietary quality of WIC families. Eating a diet high in fruits and vegetables reduces the prevalence of chronic disease and strengthens the immune system. This increased benefit will allow families enrolled in the WIC program to buy and consume more healthy fruits and vegetables.

WIC families can also combine their fruits and vegetables benefit with WIC Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program checks for even more purchasing power at Farmer’s Markets. The checks are issued in addition to regular WIC benefits between May and November and can be used to buy fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits, vegetables and herbs from WIC farmers, farmers’ markets, or roadside stands. The Stanislaus County WIC program will be distributing Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program booklets at the Modesto and Turlock Certified Farmers’ markets later this summer.

Stanislaus County WIC program has a long-standing history of improving the overall health and nutrition of its participants with nutrition education, breastfeeding support, vaccination information, and health care referrals. During 2020, the program provided services to 16,936 participants, an increase of 2,647 participants from 2019. In addition to pregnant and postpartum women, the program also supports children under the age of 5 who live with foster parents, fathers, and grandparents with healthy foods to supplement their diets and nutrition education, so they can continue to make healthy choices for their families.

For more information, visit <http://www.schsa.org/PublicHealth/programs/wic/>.

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