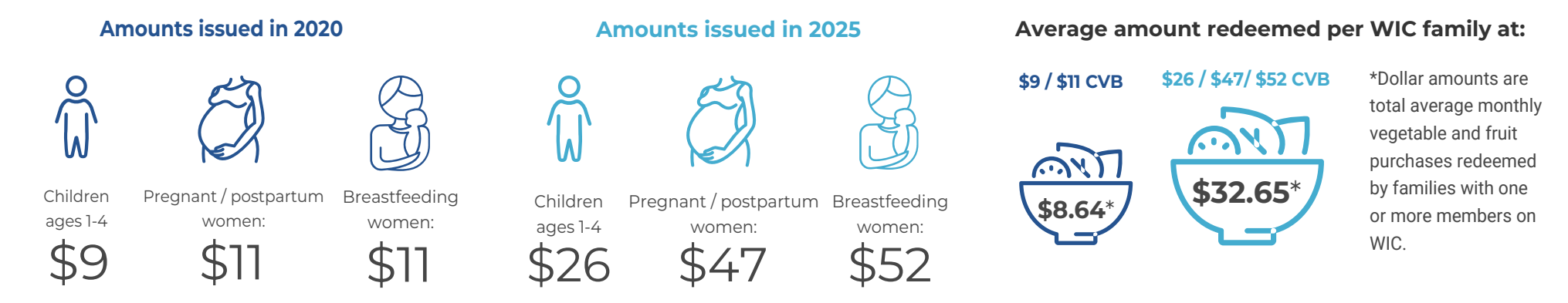


Increased WIC vegetable and fruit benefits continue to be critical to ensure access to healthy foods for WIC families

What is the Cash Value Benefit for vegetables and fruits?

In their 2017 report, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine's Committee on the WIC Food Package recommended that the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) increase WIC benefits to ensure families could purchase at least half of their recommended daily amounts of vegetables and fruits with WIC funds. This recommendation was implemented in 2021, and the Cash Value Benefit (CVB) for vegetables and fruits increased from \$9/month for children and \$11/month for women to levels enabling the purchase of 50% of monthly dietary needs for vegetables and fruits. In 2025, that amount is \$26/month for children, \$47/month for pregnant and postpartum women and \$52/month for breastfeeding women. This change to the WIC food package has been one of the most impactful changes leading to better access to healthy foods for WIC families in all of WIC's 50 year history. Research has shown that these changes have led to substantial increases in both the average dollar amount spent and the variety of purchased vegetables and fruits as well as increases in household food security and vegetable and fruit intake.

Figure 1: Total average monthly dollars redeemed by a household for vegetables and fruits prior to and after the increase.



Why more funding for vegetables and fruits matters:

Families have greater access to healthy foods with the increased CVB. As shown in Figure 1, families redeem an average of \$32.65 per month with the current CVB amounts, compared to just \$8.64 when benefits were \$9/\$11 per month. This higher redemption translates into more fruits and vegetables in the home, greater variety in children's diets (Figure 2), and significantly higher household food security (HFS), meaning families have enough food to feed their families (Figure 3). Studies have also shown that the enhanced CVB is associated with significantly higher produce intake among children not meeting recommended intake amounts, and helps retain families in the WIC program, keeping them connected to nutrition education and health services.

Figure 2: Average number of different vegetable and fruit types redeemed by CVB amount

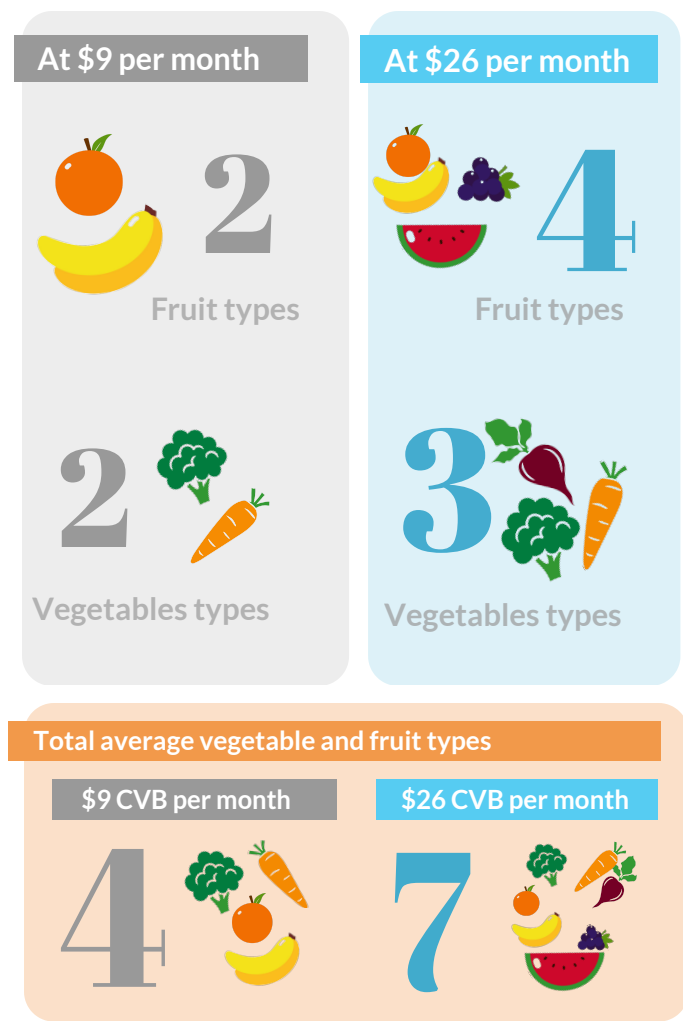
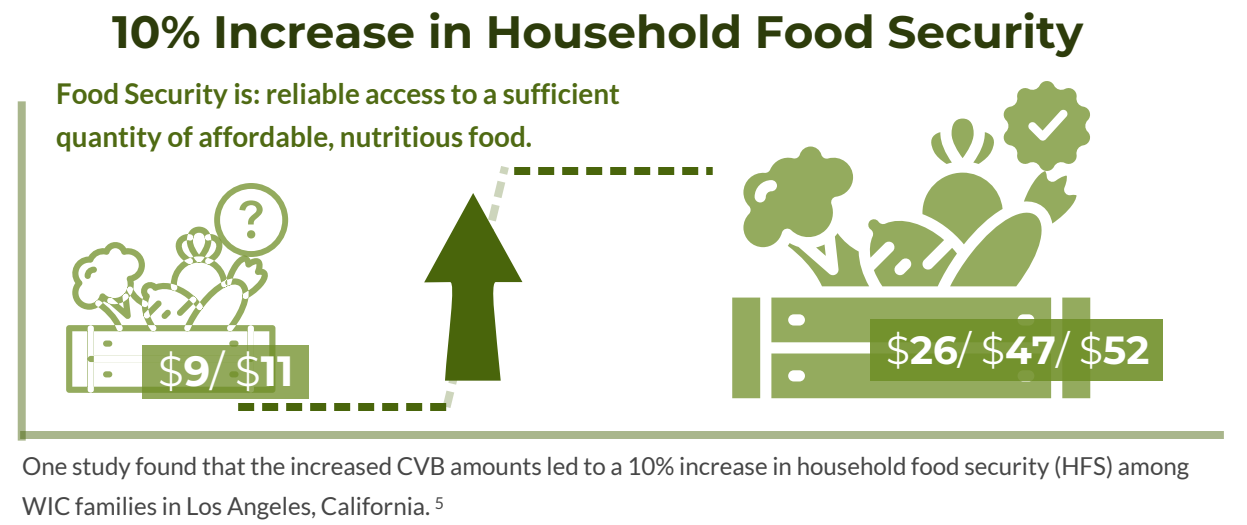


Figure 3: CVB amounts associated with increases in food security



WIC benefits have impacts far beyond WIC families. WIC supports families in every state, so investments in vegetables and fruits for WIC families are investments in farmers, vendors and communities across the U.S. Increased investments in the WIC CVB for vegetables and fruits equate to increased dollars paid to farmers and local vendors, sustaining and supporting access to high quality produce in all communities. The evidence is clear that nutrition policy that supports the purchase and consumption of vegetables and fruits is a key strategy for improving health across the U.S.

An increase in the CVB extends beyond WIC families:



WIC Authorized Vendors benefit from increased access to vegetables and fruits.



WIC Authorized Farmer's Markets benefit from WIC families shopping for fresh fruits and vegetables



Families of all backgrounds have increased access to healthy foods