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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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New contractor for WIC mail-order food distribution in Alaska

Alaska only state providing supplemental nutrition by mail to rural areas

ANCHORAGE — On Feb. 1, 2013, a new contractor will begin mailing nutritious foods to rural families that qualify for the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program of the Alaska Division of Public Assistance, through the U.S.D.A.

Alaska Independent Retailers' Strategic Alliance (AIRSA LLC) replaces the former contractor, Fred Meyer, which provided the Mail Order Vendor (MOV) service for nearly three decades.

The MOV service provides supplemental nutrition by mail to women, infants and children under age 5 in areas where they are unable to shop for the approved food products locally.

The types of food provided by the program will not change, but some brands and varieties will be different. For instance, many of the new products will be Safeway Select brand. There will be no changes to infant formulas, types of cereal or eggs.

Approximately 1,800 Alaskans receive WIC foods via the MOV service each month. The foods include milk, whole grains, juices, canned fish, beans, peanut butter, eggs, vegetables and fruits, and infant formula and infant foods to eligible participants who have a nutritional deficiency. WIC also provides nutrition education to participants.

Although AIRSA will begin mailing MOV packages on Feb. 1, 2013, some WIC participants will experience a brief delay (up to 10 days) in receiving their MOV supplemental food packages.

Alaska is the only state in the nation operating the WIC mail-order distribution service.

For questions about mail-order distribution or eligibility for WIC, contact the program office at 907-465-3100, by email at wic@alaska.gov, or visit the participant website at: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/nutri/wic/participants/wichowtoapply.aspx>.

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