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The Wic Fruit and Vegetable Cash Voucher: Does Regional Price Variation Affect Buying Power?

By Ephraim Leibtag, Aylin Kumcu

Bibliogov, United States, 2012. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 246 x 189 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides supplemental foods to low-income women, infants, and children at nutritional risk. Since October 2009, WIC packages have included a fixed-value voucher for purchasing fruits and vegetables. Although this should help increase fruit and vegetable consumption for all WIC participants, regional price variation could lead to different buying power-and nutritional benefits-across the country. Using 2004-06 Nielsen Homescan data, the authors examine the prices of fruits and vegetables (fresh, frozen, and canned) in 26 metropolitan market areas to determine how price variations affect the voucher's purchasing power. The authors find that the 20 most commonly purchased fruits and vegetables cost 30-70 percent more in the highest priced market areas than in the lowest, implying that WIC participants in more expensive areas might be able to purchase fewer fruits and vegetables than those living where these items are cheaper. The lowest priced market for fruits and vegetables was the Nashville, Birmingham, Memphis, and Louisville area, while the highest was San Francisco.



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