

## **I (A). VENDOR MANAGEMENT**

**GOAL:** To investigate a minimum 5% of the Program's authorized vendors for compliance with federal regulations during the federal fiscal year.

**METHODOLOGY:** The compliance liaison, under the direction of the unit supervisor, manually selects vendors for investigation based upon participant and local WIC office complaints and high-risk reports generated from the Food Delivery Portal, Store Tracking and Redemption System (STARS), and/or Crossroads Management Information System. Investigation priority is determined according to the severity of the possible infractions to the program.

The State Agency (SA) will also develop policy and procedure as well as tools to institute inventory audits as a method of compliance investigations. Technical assistance will be sought from other states as recommended by the regional office through technical assistance site visits and/or review of approved procedures and tools.

**EVALUATION:** Regional office approval of the inventory audit policies, procedures and tools will be secured to initiate use of inventory audits for compliance investigations. The number of compliance investigation letters will be recorded to track the most common state violations or customer service issues. This information will inform quarterly newsletter items as well as state standards.

**STATUS:** The 5% minimum requirement was met in FY2023. The SA continues to utilize Policy 8.09, as well as the Compliance Buy Investigation Standard Operating Procedures, with revised reporting form and notification template letter. Written notification was mailed following every investigation regardless of result.

The development of inventory audit policy and procedure is ongoing.

**This goal of developing policies and procedures for implementation of inventory audits is ongoing for FY 2024.**

## **I (B). VENDOR MANAGEMENT**

**GOAL:** To begin using an electronic signature platform for vendor agreements and applications.

**METHODOLOGY:** The Vendor Manager will research external platforms as well as continue to work with the Crossroads contractor to assess the best method to distribute documents, have vendors sign electronically, and receive and store documents without the need for paper mailings.

**EVALUATION:** Once the electronic platform has been decided upon, the Vendor Management Unit will assess the timeliness and ease of distributing and receiving documents and will poll vendors for feedback.

**STATUS:** **DocuSign was chosen as the electronic platform. Pilot occurred successfully in January 2023 and rollout continues as each region renews its agreement.**

**This goal is ongoing for FY 2024.**

## **I (C). VENDOR MANAGEMENT**

**GOAL:** To modernize the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) so that participants can purchase fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits and vegetables from authorized farmers via electronic benefit transfer (EBT) through CDP's Farm Market Direct program.

**METHODOLOGY:** The Vendor Management Unit, the WIC Program Specialist, and the Food Insecurity Partnership Liaison will work with CDP to implement the Farm Market Direct program with all WIC participants and farmers' markets participating in the WIC FMNP during FY 2023. This will be a fully mobile and electronic solution for transacting FMNP benefits, eliminating the need for a banking contract and paper vouchers.

**EVALUATION:** Successful implementation of the electronic solution will be assessed by review of four indicators: number of participant users, number of farmer users, benefit dollars issued, and benefit dollars redeemed.

**STATUS:** **The electronic solution has been fully implemented and the 2023 FMNP season started on June 1.**

**This goal is ongoing for FY 2024.**

## **I (D). VENDOR MANAGEMENT**

**GOAL:** To authorize farmers as WIC vendors and allow participants to purchase fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits and vegetables with their regular monthly CVB through CDP's Farm Market Direct program.

**METHODOLOGY:** The Vendor Management Unit will work with CDP to add CVB functionality for all WIC participants at authorized farmers' markets to the existing QR code solution within the Farm Market Direct program.

**EVALUATION:** Successful implementation of the electronic solution will be assessed by review of three indicators: number of participant users, number of farmer users, and benefit dollars redeemed.

**STATUS:** **This is a new goal for FY 2024.**