

Appendix: Methodology for Estimating WIC Participants as a Percent of U.S. Population Subgroups

Figure 12 illustrates the percentage of various U.S. population subgroups estimated to participate in WIC. A number of calculations were required to develop the estimates.

Infants:

The percentage of infants participating in the program was estimated by dividing the average number of infants participating in WIC per month in calendar 2006 (2,093,967 from USDA, 2007a) by the estimated number of births in the United States in 2006 (4,265,996, from Hamilton et al., 2007).

Children:

The percentage of children participating in the program was estimated by dividing the average number of children participating in WIC in calendar 2006 (3,987,749 from USDA, 2007a) by the estimated number of children under age 5 as of July, 1, 2006 (20,417,636 from U.S. Census Bureau, 2007) after subtracting the number of infants born in the United States in 2006 (4,265,996 from Hamilton et al., 2007).

Pregnant women:

The percentage of pregnant women participating in the program was estimated by multiplying the average number of women participating in WIC in calendar 2006 (2,043,836 from USDA, 2007a) by the share of pregnant women in WIC in April 2006 (.447 from Bartlett et al., 2007) and dividing it by the number of births in 2006 (4,265,996 from Hamilton et al., 2007) times .75 (since women are pregnant 9 months).

Postpartum women:

The percentage of postpartum women participating in the program was estimated by multiplying the average number of women participating in WIC in calendar 2006 (2,043,836 from USDA, 2007a) by the share of breastfeeding or postpartum women in WIC in April 2006 (.553 from Bartlett et al., 2007) and dividing it by the number of births in 2006 (4,265,996 from Hamilton et al., 2007) which served as the proxy for the number of postpartum women in 2006. Note that the denominator consists of all postpartum women (up to 1 year after birth) in the United States while the numerator consists of all breastfeeding women (up to 1 year after birth) in WIC and all postpartum women in WIC (up to 6 months after birth).