

INFANT FORMULA SHORTAGE

CONNECTICUT AGENCY ACTIONS & UPDATES

Recent actions have had a positive impact on the availability of infant formula in CT. The federal government continues to bring in formulas from abroad. In addition, the FDA continues to review and approve new imported products as safe and nutritionally adequate, with formula produced in Spain, the UK, Germany, and Australia recently approved for importation. The CT Food Association is still reporting that less than half of their orders for formula are being filled, but has seen a steady rise week-over-week in the percentage of orders being fulfilled. Connecticut state agencies are continuing to work together to support families with young children.

FEDERAL ACTIONS & UPDATES

The Biden-Harris Administration is working with manufacturers to ramp up production, and with retailers to ensure that infant formula is safe and available for families across the country. These are the key efforts from the federal levels:

- ◆ The Abbott formula plant in Sturgis, Michigan, resumed production of EleCare formula on July 1 after a three-week shutdown caused by flooding from severe storms. A previous months-long closure of the plant had helped to drive a nationwide baby formula shortage. Abbott has said it will restart EleCare production, followed by specialty and metabolic formulas, now that it has reopened.
- ◆ Operation Fly Formula will transport Bubs Australia infant formula from Australia to Ontario, California, and Columbus, Ohio, via flights on July 10 and 21 respectively. These two deliveries will include in total approximately 318,000 pounds of Bubs Organic Infant Formula S1; Bubs Organic Follow On Formula S2; Bubs Supreme Infant Formula Supreme Follow On Formula; Bubs Goat Milk Infant Formula S1; Bubs Goat Milk Follow On Formula S2; which equals the equivalent of approximately 4.7 million 8 oz. bottles. The product will be available through national and regional retailers.
- ◆ There are six Operation Fly Formula flights currently scheduled for the week of July 11, projected to import approximately 8 million 8 oz. bottle equivalents of infant formula to the United States. By July 17, Operation Fly Formula flights will have completed 48 flights and imported more than 55 million 8 oz. bottle equivalents of infant formula.
- ◆ July 11: A flight arrived from Switzerland to Newark Liberty International Airport, carrying Nestle Alfamino/Alfamino Jr. infant formula.
- ◆ July 11: A flight arrived from Germany to Newark Liberty International Airport, carrying Nutricia/Dannone Neocate Jr. infant formula.
- ◆ July 12: A flight will arrive from Singapore to Chicago O'Hare International Airport, carrying Enfamil infant formula powder.
- ◆ July 13: A flight will arrive from the United Kingdom to Newark Liberty International Airport, carrying Nutricia/ Danone Neocate infant formula.
- ◆ July 14: A flight will arrive from Singapore to Chicago O'Hare International Airport, carrying Enfamil infant formula powder.
- ◆ On July 17 and 22, Operation Fly Formula will transport Kendamil baby formula from England to New York, NY. These two deliveries will include in total approximately 200,000 pounds of Kendamil EU Classic First Infant Milk Stage 1 and Kendamil EU Organic First Infant Milk Stage 1, the equivalent of approximately 3.1 million 8 oz. bottles. The product will be available at Target stores.

RESOURCES

The latest update from the White House can be found at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/formula/>

Families looking for safe substitutes for speciality formulas can refer to the North American Society For Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology & Nutrition (NASPGHAN) Tools for Infants and Children Affected by Formula Shortages: <https://naspghan.org/recent-news/naspghan-tools-for-hcps-affected-by-formula-recall/>

Connecticut has created an infant formula fact sheet with tips, guidance, and resources. This has been shared statewide and utilized by families: ctoec.org/news/infant-formula-shortage-tips-and-resources-for-ct-families

For further information about federal actions, the public is encouraged to visit: hhs.gov/formula

For additional information on the infant formula supply:

<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/infant-formula-supply>

For WIC's full list of formula substitutes, visit <https://portal.ct.gov/dph/WIC/WIC>.

Refer to this new consumer education resource from the AAP on imported formula:

https://downloads.aap.org/HC/ImportedFormula_FB.jpg

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DPH

WIC continues to add new formulas to their formula list to allow wider choices, with over 90 new formula products now available to participants.

Local agency staff are working with families and providers to identify options and find stores with available products.

WIC has added language to their website about carefully reading instructions before mixing to ensure families know that there are differences when using imported formulas.

Gerber confirmed that their Germany imports – Nestle NAN Expert Pro, Nestle NAN Supreme Pro 1, and Nestle NAN Supreme Pro 2 – are only available through e-Commerce. This is due to limited supply and their ability to provide detailed instructions on mixing, which is different from domestic formulas.

WIC has provided a list of approved substitutes for the recalled Similac products if the Similac product you normally purchase is not available. For WIC's full list of formula substitutes, visit <https://portal.ct.gov/dph/WIC/WIC>.

The WIC Program has added two new imported formulas to our formulary: Bubs Supreme A2 Beta Casein Protein Stage 1 (0-6 months) and Bubs Supreme A2 Beta Casein Protein Stage 2 (6-12 months). These are a good substitute for Similac Total Comfort, which has been widely unavailable (as well as other domestic comparable products). We have heard these products will be distributed through Walmart and have added the products in preparation for their arrival on shelves.

WIC and non-WIC families have been looking for specialty formulas, including Nutramigen, Puramino, and Similac Alimentum. Unfortunately, these products are seemingly more difficult to find recently. We continue to provide as much support as we can to these families, but without product available, we are referring families to their health care provider for guidance when their usual formula or an appropriate substitute is not available.

DSS

Serves 36,750 infants receiving SNAP

Status: SNAP is flexible on formula brand and can be purchased online

DSS is working in partnership with CT Food Association to provide the following updates:

Similac Advance 12.4 oz. will remain widely available. Customers should be able to find in stores and warehouses reliably. This is Similac's highest volume powdered formula item and the highest volume powdered under the WIC umbrella in Connecticut. A customer can purchase up to 4 units of Similac Advance (we have a purchase limit of 4 right now).

Disruptions to Similac's supply chain have caused retailers and consumers to shift demand to alternative brands like Mead Johnson's Enfamil, Gerber Good Start, and Private Labels - this unexpected demand has resulted in supply shortages on these brands. Mead Johnson has only made their limited supplies of product available to states where Enfamil is a primary WIC brand. They expect to begin loosening these restrictions in the next 2-3 weeks.

Special dietary items like Similac "Alimentum," "Neosure," and "Advance Pro," continue to be in short supply. Unfortunately, these can only be manufactured in Abbott's Sturgis facility, which had restarted on June 4, but suffered significant storm damage last week that took the plant offline again.

The rebound of formula supply will be contingent on how fast Abbott can restore their Sturgis factory and begin production of those specialty formula items.

Based upon historical demand and current projections, Abbott has ample existing supply of EleCare, and most of its specialty and metabolic formulas to meet needs for these products until new product is available. These products are being released to consumers in need in coordination with healthcare professionals. Parents or caregivers in need should contact their healthcare professional or contact Abbott at +1-800-881-0876 for additional information.