Healthy Changes in Corner Stores: Successes and Next Steps

ALAMEDA COUNTY NUTRITION SERVICES
HEALTHY RETAIL REPORT
April, 2019

Healthy Living...for life!
THE OPPORTUNITY

The Alameda County Nutrition Services Healthy Retail Program’s goal is to reduce health inequities in Alameda County by increasing access to affordable healthy food options in local corner stores. Our work is rooted in supporting and recognizing store owners as community change agents.

WHO WE SERVE

Alameda County Nutrition Services celebrates the vibrant communities that contribute to our cultural richness and diversity. We recognize ongoing discrepancies between socioeconomic and racial groups that significantly impact residents’ health. To address health disparities, the Alameda County Nutrition Services Healthy Retail Team collaborates strategically with corner store owners in neighborhoods of greater need to help shift demand, increase access to and consumption of healthy foods, thereby reducing health inequities. Corner stores are valuable assets in our communities.

ALAMEDA COUNTY IN 2012

1. Nutrition Services recognizes disparities of health status related to lack of access and affordability of healthy options and predominance of unhealthy food and beverages in these communities. Source: Alameda County Health Data Profile 2014

2. Recent snapshot of our community’s health status. Source: Alameda County Health Data Profile 2014
THE STRATEGY

Since the inception of our healthy retail work in October 2013, Alameda County Nutrition Services has partnered with 13 stores to promote water and the consumption of fresh fruits, vegetables, and other healthy foods.

OUR APPROACH

Build meaningful relationships with store owners, customers, and community

Customize support based on each store owner’s unique needs

Recognize owners as Champions of Health and Change Agents in their communities

OUR SERVICE

- Conduct healthy Harvest of the Month food demos and taste tests to promote seasonal produce
- Provide nutrition education to increase the appeal and consumer demand of healthy food and beverages
- Change store environments to make healthy food and beverage options more visible and prominently placed
- Replace advertisements of alcohol and tobacco with health banners, posters, and messages
- Support cosmetic improvements to store environments such as new produce bins, shelving, and tiered basket stands
- Encourage pricing of healthy options to be more affordable
- Promote public health initiatives such as Rethink Your Drink and Healthy Snacking Statewide Days of Action

Nutrition Services Healthy Retail Team hosting a food demo and taste test with vetted healthy recipes
THE RESULTS

“We are selling more fruits and vegetables. Before I bought produce 2x a month and threw a lot away. Now I buy 6x a month and people are buying!” - Royal Store Owner

“I lowered price of fruit and raised price of chips and candy.” - Dallaq Store Owner

“Since 2014 I have bought better produce resulting in a 20% sales increase and a 75% decrease in food waste..” - Rancho Store Owner

OUR STORES’ SUCCESSES

Handmade Produce Bins built by owners of Royal (left) and Jim’s (right)

Ashland’s Super Mercado La Raza Before & After: Unhealthy to Healthy Advertising

Jim’s Before & After: Fruit & Veggie Banner
THE FUTURE

WE STILL HAVE WORK TO DO

We can do more to improve these 2017 numbers for communities such as East Oakland.

**East Oakland Adults**
- **37%** Drink soda 3x per week, compared to 39% in Alameda County
- **19%** Consume fruits & vegetables 3x/day, compared to 30% in Alameda County

**East Oakland Children & Teenagers**
- **48%** Drank sugar-sweetened beverages yesterday, compared to 31% in Alameda County
- **79%** Ate less than 5 servings of fruits & vegetables yesterday. Similar across Alameda County (77%)

Next Steps

- Survey owners & customers to assess how to improve services, products, & shopping experience for customers
- Invest in what store owners identify as important
- Ensure healthy, affordable, and fresh food options are available in low income areas while sustaining revenue for the small retail business owners

The future can be bright. Sustainable healthy changes such as this in our corner stores are achievable with continued community engagement, support, and recognition of store owners as agents of positive change in their own communities.

**Before & After: Rancho Market & Produce (2014 → 2018).**
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**Our Partners**

- **Dallaq**
  6901 Lion Way, Oakland
- **Food Town Supermarket**
  6421 International Blvd. Oakland
- **Gazzali’s**
  7838 International Blvd. 7000 Bancroft Ave. Oakland

- **Holly**
  7900 Holly St. Oakland
- **Jim’s**
  8137 MacArthur Blvd. Oakland
- **Lucky**
  247 E. 18th St. Oakland

- **Rancho Market & Produce**
  1950 Fruitvale Ave, Oakland
  **Royal**
  7615 MacArthur Blvd. Oakland
  **Super Mercado La Raza**
  16411 E. 14th St. Ashland

- **Super Mercado Mi Tierra**
  9520 International Blvd. Oakland
  **Zavala**
  98th and Bancroft, Oakland

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