

DNPAO State Program Highlights

Improving Retail Access for Fruits and Vegetables



State-Based Programs

The Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Program (NPAO) is a cooperative agreement between CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity (DNPAO) and 25 state health departments. The program goal is to prevent and control obesity and other chronic diseases through healthful eating and physical activity.

DNPAO Target Areas

The state programs develop strategies to leverage resources and coordinate statewide efforts with multiple partners to address all of the following DNPAO principal target areas:

- Increase physical activity
- **Increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables**
- Decrease the consumption of sugar sweetened beverages
- Increase breastfeeding initiation, duration, and exclusivity
- Reduce the consumption of high energy dense foods
- Decrease television viewing

Strategies Related to Fruit and Vegetable Consumption

DNPAO developed six guidance documents to provide assistance and direction regarding each of the principal target areas. The guidance document developed to address increased access to and availability of fruits and vegetables includes the following strategies:

- Promote food policy councils as a means to improve the food environment at the state and local levels
- **Improve access to retail venues that sell or increase availability of high-quality fruits and vegetables in currently underserved communities**
- Include or expand farm-to-where-you-are programs in all possible venues
- Ensure ready access to fruits and vegetables in worksite food service and in food offered at meetings and events
- Support and promote community and home gardens
- Establish policies to incorporate fruit and vegetable activities in school curricula
- Include fruits and vegetables in emergency food programs



Improving Retail Access

Food can be sold at a variety of retail venues in a community, including supermarkets, grocery stores, convenience stores, corner stores, and specialty food stores (e.g., fruit and vegetable markets). To increase fruit and vegetable consumption by community members, it is important to improve access to these venues and to increase the availability of high-quality, affordable fruits and vegetables sold at these locations.

These goals may be achieved in a variety of ways, including 1) attracting new food stores to underserved areas through financial incentives, 2) improving public transportation to these venues or influencing business owners to provide transportation for customers, 3) upgrading the facilities at existing stores to enable them to carry all forms of fruits and vegetables, and 4) increasing the supply of and shelf space dedicated to high-quality, affordable fruits and vegetables at existing stores.

State Activities Improving Retail Access

Michigan

Increasing Access to Local, Affordable Fruits and Vegetables through the Local *Quality Dairy*

To increase access to healthy foods in low-income and underserved neighborhoods, the Michigan Department of Community Health has provided technical assistance to a local health department. The efforts included partnering with local farmers and a chain of convenience stores, called *Quality Dairy*, to increase the selection of unprocessed produce. Every year, *Quality Dairy* also collaborates with Michigan State University Extension to sponsor 3-4 nutrition education events in the store parking lot, including cooking/food preparation demonstrations, food tastings, and newsletters. As a result of this state activity, hundreds of local residents now have access to fresh and locally grown produce, customers are offered opportunities to enhance their nutrition knowledge and skills, and local farmers have an additional outlet to sell their products.

Future plans include expansion to other *Quality Dairy* stores and also a pilot of the program with rural convenience stores.

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Minnesota

Expanding Access to Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Through WIC-Authorized Corner Stores

The Minnesota Department of Health (DOH) partnered with the Institute of Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP), a Minneapolis-based nonprofit organization, to help WIC-authorized corner stores meet recently enacted minimum stocking requirements for fresh fruits and vegetables. IATP has had success working with businesses in the produce and prime distribution arenas to make produce more accessible to corner stores, including a line of "right-sized" fruit and vegetable products that are designed for the needs of smaller retailers. In addition to these efforts, the Minnesota DOH and IATP developed a new promotional campaign for fresh fruits and vegetables that includes posters and point-of-sale materials available in four languages.

In a recent independent study by IATP, 78% of WIC-authorized corner stores participating in the study reported that their sales of fresh fruits and vegetables increased since 2009 changes in the WIC food package. Sixty-percent reported that they are selling a wider variety of produce, and 77% of the store owners also believed the new promotional materials that were developed were effective in promoting the purchase of fruits and vegetables.

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New York

Taste 'n Take Program

With funding provided through New York's Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program, the Taste 'n Take program provides a weekly bag of fresh produce to individuals and families residing in low-income housing in Troy, Albany, and Schenectady, New York. Through sample tastings, participants are introduced to various types of produce and informed of new ways of preparation.

After one year of Taste 'n Take, the program was transformed into a Veggie Mobile Market site, which now provides access to fresh produce at a reasonable cost by bringing the produce market to customers in urban areas that would otherwise lack access to high-quality, fresh produce.

Since program implementation in 2007-08, the amount of funds raised and pounds of fresh produce sold has steadily increased. In 2007-08, 10,000 pounds of fresh produce were distributed, with revenue of \$7,646. In 2009-10, the project distributed 69,120 pounds of fresh produce, with revenue of \$31,000.

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Wisconsin

Fruit and Vegetable Access Pilot Intervention

In an effort to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables in communities, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services is currently funding a low-income community in Brown County to pilot an intervention. The community collected baseline data by using the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Audit Tool and the Perception of Access to Fruits and Vegetables Survey. Data from these assessments will guide the development of an intervention action plan. In spring 2010, the pilot intervention was designed and the Improving Access to Fruits and Vegetables in Wisconsin Communities Resource Kit was also tested. Additional plans include seeking other grant resources to expand the intervention to other areas.

Fourteen Carrot Gold Award

The Fourteen Carrot Gold Award recognizes excellence in the promotion of increased fruit and vegetable consumption in Wisconsin.

The award is a joint effort of the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, the

Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, and the Wisconsin Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Program. Every year, nominations are received and reviewed, and this year several community awardees addressed retail access to fruits and vegetables. An example of an award recipient is Kwik Trip, Inc., in La Crosse. This convenience store chain implemented the "Fruits and Vegetables in Convenience Stores" project, which improved the selection and lowered costs of fruits and vegetables in convenience stores.

Through this award selection, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services supported innovative efforts in improving access to and consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Healthy Foods Pilot Intervention

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services plans to implement a pilot intervention in restaurants and grocery stores to increase access to healthy foods, including fruits and vegetables. The state initiated a social marketing formative assessment with outside partners in the restaurant and grocery store industries. The information collected will assist the state team in developing a Healthy Foods Pilot Intervention Guide that will include restaurant and grocery strategies. The guide will be disseminated to local nutrition and physical activity coalitions in Wisconsin, as well as interested industry and organizational partners. Future plans include conducting a baseline assessment with a select community in 2010 and piloting the Healthy Foods Intervention in 2011.

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Need more information?

Visit the CDC DNPAO Website to learn more information about our funded state programs:
<http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/stateprograms/index.html>