

Vermont Fresh STRATEGIES

Vermont Fresh is a pilot program started in 2014 that aims to increase access and improve availability of fruits and vegetables at community food shelves. The program model combines research and evidence based approaches to:

- 1) Help change the FOOD ENVIRONMENT in community food shelves by increasing the prominence, convenience and availability of fruits and vegetables.
- 2) Facilitate preference change and increase knowledge, awareness and skills for selecting and preparing these foods through COOKING DEMOS and TASTE TESTS.
- 3) Reinforce core nutrition messages and affect fruit and vegetable consumption decisions by improving DISPLAYS, SIGNAGE and PROMOTIONS of these products.

In February 2014, all 11 VT Fresh pilot sites were surveyed about 43 strategies to accomplish these goals. 14 primary strategies were identified.

GOAL	SUPPORTING RESEARCH	PRIMARY STRATEGIES
		<i>80-100% of sites WANT to IMPLEMENT each of the listed strategies.</i>
<p>1</p> <p>INCREASE THE PROMINENCE OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES</p>	<p>Making fruit and vegetables prominent and highly visible is one of the most important strategies for increasing their consumption.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Create prominent, well-lit, attractive and well organized displays. ➤ Make displays highly visible and centrally located. ➤ Distribute samples of cut-up fruits and vegetables in an attractive or transparent bowl for tasting.
<p>2</p> <p>INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY AND VARIETY OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES</p>	<p>People consume more fruits and vegetables when they have more options to choose from.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Make fruits and vegetables a large share of food distributed. ➤ Increase the variety by offering different types of fruits and vegetables. ➤ Offer different forms – fresh, frozen, dried and canned. ➤ Improve storage capabilities including coolers, refrigeration and freezers, and other strategies to improve storage.
<p>3</p> <p>INCREASE THE CONVENIENCE OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES</p>	<p>Convenience and accessibility is a significant predictor of fruit and vegetable consumption.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Consider new and creative ways to schedule produce distribution days for increased convenience and accessibility. ➤ Pre-package fruits and vegetables for added convenience and accessibility.
<p>4</p> <p>PROVIDE TIMELY REMINDERS</p>	<p>Many people are interested in opportunities to eat a little better, but they need to be reminded at the right time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promote healthy eating with signage, posters and other printed materials – including photos. ➤ Promote healthy foods with shelf labels, color coding systems or highlighting healthy options that are client favorites. ➤ Feature a fruit or vegetable each day with special signage and recipes. Consider “VT Harvest of the Month Activities.”
<p>5</p> <p>FACILITATE PREFERENCE CHANGE</p>	<p>Up to ten taste tries may be needed to acquire a taste preference for new foods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide taste testing promotions and cooking demos to encourage consumption of different fruit and vegetable products. ➤ Display recipe cards with different suggestions on preparing items.