TOGETHER WE CAN SOLVE HUNGER

2016 Agency Capacity, Programs and Nutrition Learning Conference

Follow #ACPN2016
VT Fresh: Transforming the Food Environment at Local Food Pantries

CHRIS MEEHAN
VERMONT FOODBANK
BARRE, VT
Vermont Foodbank Network

153K VERMONTERS SERVED ANNUALLY

33% OF HOUSEHOLDS HAVE A MEMBER WITH DIABETES

46% OF HOUSEHOLDS HAVE A MEMBER WITH HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

72% OF HOUSEHOLDS PURCHASE INEXPENSIVE UNHEALTHY FOOD

2014 National Hunger Study Data.
**Chronic Food Insecurity**

1:4 Vermonters at risk of hunger & food insecurity

225 Food pantries and meal programs

10M Pounds of food distributed

= 1.2 M Visits annually
= 8.3 times per year

2014 National Hunger Study Data.
CDC State Indicators, Vermont 2013

Fruit and Vegetable Consumption for adults living at 185% FPL (about $3000/month for a family of three)

24% CONSUME VEGETABLES LESS THAN ONE TIME A DAY

41% CONSUME FRUITS LESS THAN ONE TIME A DAY
VT FRESH

INSPIRED BY BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS RESEARCH

Art by Eileen Maloney
Sharing the Joy and Beauty of Fresh Food
What would happen if the food shelf environment was set up to encourage people to CHOOSE more FRUITS and VEGETABLES?
What if fruits and vegetables were displayed in a more VISIBLE, ATTRACTIVE and even BEAUTIFUL way?
WHAT IF…

fruits and vegetable displays included
VIBRANT SIGNAGE
PRODUCE BANNERS
and
SHelf
labelS
like you might see at a FARMER’S MARKET?
What if the food shelf was filled with the COMFORTING and WELCOMING smells of sautéed onions and garlic?
And visitors had a chance to TASTE a particular vegetable they thought they didn’t like?
What would happen if this change in the FOOD ENVIRONMENT also created a space to CONNECT with one another, TALK about FOOD and SHARE ideas and STORIES about WHAT WE EAT and WHERE OUR FOOD COMES FROM?
BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS RESEARCH has offered us creative and intuitive strategies to “NUDGE” people in a way that makes FRUITS AND VEGETABLES THE EASIER CHOICE
WE HAVE LOTS OF FRESH PRODUCE

APPLES

ORANGES

TURNIPS

CARROTS

ONIONS

CABBAGE

BEETS
What are we learning?
Individuals are more receptive to adding foods that are healthier to their diet than they are to eliminating unhealthy foods.
People respond to SENSORY EXPERIENCES and immediate gratification
Displaying healthy foods PROMINENTLY draws attention to them and may increase their consumption.
An ATTRACTIVE presentation may influence choosing healthy food over unhealthy food.
Changing the PHYSICAL PLACEMENT of specific food items, to make them stand out can increase their consumption.
Simply providing people with a GREATER VARIETY of healthy foods increases the consumption of them.
Changing the CONTAINERS used to display certain foods, such as attractive baskets and bowls can influence someone’s choice to eat those foods.
Combining with ATTRACTIVE SIGNAGE draws attention to items and can increase selection of those items.
Fresh WINTER SQUASH

- Slice and roast at 375°F with oil/butter, salt and pepper for 30 minutes.
- Mash or puree as a side dish.
- Add to hearty soups or stews.
Food is a great way to CONNECT with people
An individual’s willingness to try something new and decide that they will like it is greatly influenced by the PEOPLE AROUND THEM.
This process of connecting people over food can INFLUENCE how likely they are to try NEW FOODS and recipes.
The power of WORD-OF-MOUTH ADVERTISING has an impact far greater than simply providing information about why we should make healthy FOOD CHOICES.
…food pantries have an untapped potential to make an even BIGGER IMPACT at an individual and community level.
6 Strategies

1. Produce Tastings & Cooking Demos
2. Displays
3. Procurement
4. Storage
5. Convenience
6. Signage & Point of Decision Prompts
## Program Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>food shelves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>425</td>
<td>cooking demos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5396</td>
<td>participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7936</td>
<td>contacts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MEASURED THE CHANGE IN TASTE PERCEPTION ABOUT ONE SPECIFIC VEGETABLE AND THE INTENTION TO EAT THE VEGETABLE AGAIN

31 types of vegetables demoed!
PROGRAM IMPACTS

ALL SITES DOCUMENTED SYSTEMS AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

AIMED AT INCREASING CONSUMPTION OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

175%

average INCREASE in PRODUCE DISTRIBUTED by sites over two year period
“ I never knew collard greens could taste so good! It’s great to get out of my normal routine of cooking meat and potatoes”.

– women, early 70’s
“We are getting rave reviews, the most important to me, are the comments about how it is making our recipients feel more at ease and more likely to come to the Foodshelf”

-Foodshelf Volunteer
Implementation Steps for New Partners

**IDENTIFY PARTNERS & RFP for MINI GRANTS**

1. Identify potential partners to work with for the program.
2. Prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) for mini-grants to support new partners.

**IMPLEMENT PROGRAM**

work with partners for approximately 3 years

1. Implement the program with selected partners.
2. Provide ongoing support and resources.

**BE INSPIRED and Share Best Practices Across the Network**

1. Share best practices and lessons learned with other partners.
2. Encourage collaboration and innovation among participating organizations.
3. Foster a network of support for food insecure communities.

**Food Insecure VT Fresh Program**

**VT Fresh Program**

**Vermont Foodbank**

Funded by the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

**Contact Information**

Vermont Foodbank

143 Allen Street

Rutland, VT 05701

(802) 774-1066

info@foodbankvt.org

**Project Description**

The Vermont Foodbank is implementing a new food security initiative in Vermont, with the goal of increasing access to healthy foods and improving nutrition outcomes in underserved communities. The program will focus on improving food access and promoting healthy eating habits through partnerships with community organizations.

**Implementation Steps**

1. **Identify Partners & RFP for Mini-Grants**
   - Identify potential partners to work with for the program.
   - Prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) for mini-grants to support new partners.

2. **Implement Program**
   - Work with partners for approximately 3 years.
   - Provide ongoing support and resources.

3. **Be Inspired & Share Best Practices**
   - Share best practices and lessons learned with other partners.
   - Encourage collaboration and innovation among participating organizations.
   - Foster a network of support for food insecure communities.
## MINI GRANTS

### Identify strategies and activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>SUPPORTING RESEARCH</th>
<th>Plan to implement in FY2015</th>
<th>STRATEGIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Improving the prominence and layout of produce displays</td>
<td>Yes or No?</td>
<td>Create prominent, well-integrated displays. Consider a &quot;market&quot; style display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>People consume more fruits and vegetables when they have more options to choose from</td>
<td></td>
<td>Create a variety of products, including produce.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Improving procurement and storage to increase the availability and variety of fruits and vegetables</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase the variety and availability of produce.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Convenience and accessibility is a significant predictor of fruit and vegetable consumption</td>
<td></td>
<td>Improve accessibility and convenience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Many people are interested in opportunities to eat a little better</td>
<td></td>
<td>Promote healthy food options that are client favorites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Provide</td>
<td></td>
<td>Promote produce with signage, posters, and other printed materials, including photos.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Follow #ACPN2016
### MINI GRANTS

Making it easy for sites to purchase signage and materials.

#### SIGNS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item and Web Site Link</th>
<th>Photo</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th># of items requested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slide-in Sign Holder Stands for 8.5 x 11 Signage (Floorstanding)</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Slide-in Sign Holder" /></td>
<td>These slide-in sign holder stands with optional wet-erase board. Either insert your own 8 1/2 x11 graphics or use the wet-erase board. Users can write their own messages with liquid chalk. The write-on surface is easy to clean using a damp cloth.</td>
<td>$18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes a 6-1/2” Diameter Weighted Plastic Delta Base</td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Base" /></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 x 26 A-frame Chalkboard, Black Wet Erase Surface, Double Sided - Black</td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="A-frame Chalkboard" /></td>
<td>Designed for use with liquid chalk. Double-sided, 18” x 26” blackboard for displaying messages back-to-back. Features metal hinges for long term use.</td>
<td>$68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquid Chalk Markers 8 Pack</td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Chalk Markers" /></td>
<td>Designed to be used on surfaces that are approved for liquid chalk. Creates bold strong lines of color — better than dry erase markers.</td>
<td>$19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### SHELF LABELS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item and Web Site Link</th>
<th>Photo</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th># of items requested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-1/2” Clip-On Deli Tags for Wet Erase Markers, 4.5” Clip</td>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Clip-On Deli Tags" /></td>
<td>Sign Clip Includes tag for Messages Tag is 4”x3” and clip is 4.5”x0.9”. Write-on display cleans easily with a</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>(for a set of 25)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Follow #ACPN2016
Identify Display and Signage Items

Be Inspired & Share
Best Practices

www.instagram.com/vtfreshprogram/

Follow #ACPN2016
CHALLENGES

Produce Availability & Quality

Staff & Volunteer & Time

Cardboard boxes just keep showing up!
THANK YOU
Thank you

CHRIS MEEHAN
CHIEF COMMUNITY IMPACT OFFICER
CMEEHAN@VTFOODBANK.ORG
VERMONT FOODBANK

MICHELLE WALLACE
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY HEALTH & FRESH FOOD INITIATIVES
MWALLACE@VTFOODBANK.ORG
VERMONT FOODBANK

ALL VT FRESH RESOURCES AVAILABLE AT:
www.bit.ly/allvtfresh