Farm To Work

Texas Department of State Health Services and the Sustainable Food Center of Austin

Overview

Farm To Work is a PSE change intervention that increases access to fresh fruits and vegetables in the work environment by providing a weekly opportunity for purchase and delivery of fresh produce from local farmers. The program’s primary focus is to promote individual and group behavior change by modifying the work environment to increase access, availability, purchases, and use of healthy fruits and vegetables from local farms. Employees are provided a weekly or biweekly opportunity to order and receive a basket of local fresh produce delivered to the worksite; they can place an order for a basket as often as they like. NOTE: Activities must be in approved worksites where more than half of employees are low-wage workers. Target Behavior: Healthy Eating, Food Insecurity/Food Assistance Intervention Type: PSE Change

Intervention Reach and Adoption

The Farm To Work program intends to increase availability and consumption of fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables among worksite employees. It was implemented in 45 worksites in Texas including DSHS offices, multiple other state office buildings, City of Austin sites, universities, and private worksites. All employees are invited to participate. While the racial/ethnic representation of employees taking part in the Farm to Work program is not known, it is reasonable to estimate that most participants live in and around Austin, Houston, or San Antonio – the three areas where the intervention is offered. Setting: Worksite Target Audience: Pregnant/Breastfeeding Women, Parents/Mothers/Fathers, Adults, Older Adults Race/Ethnicity: All

Intervention Components

Farm To Work is a partnership between worksites and their local farmers. It is supported by Sustainable Food Center, located in Austin, (SFC), the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), and WebChronic LLC. These partnerships create markets for local farmers to sell nutritious, sustainably grown produce directly
Intervention Materials

Worksites interested in learning more about Farm to Work can download the Farm to Work Toolkit (PDF, 2.2 MB) (and also the Toolkit Supplement, PDF, 2.2 MB), which compiles all the tools, sample documents, and other resources that were developed to successfully implement Farm to Work at the Texas Department of State Health Services.

Evidence Summary

The Farm to Work program began in November 2007 as a collaborative effort between the nonprofit Sustainable Food Center, the Texas Department of State Health Services, the Web development company WebChronic Consulting LLC, and Naegelin Farm. The program provides a weekly or biweekly opportunity for employees to order a basket of produce online to be delivered to the worksite by a local farmer. A 5-year participation trend analysis, including seasonal variation and sales trends, was conducted using sales data from November 2007 through December 2012. The total number of baskets delivered from November 2007 through December 2012 was 38,343; of these, 37,466 were sold and 877 were complimentary. The total value of sold and complimentary baskets was $851,035 and $21,925, respectively. Participation in the program increased over time and was highest in 2012. The Farm to Work program increased access to locally grown fruits and vegetables for employees and created a new market for farmers. Increased program participation indicates that Farm to Work can increase employees’ fruit and vegetable consumption and thus help prevent chronic diseases in this population. See the following for additional information: Thi CA, Horton KD, Loyo J, Jowers EM, Rodgers LF, Smiley AW, et al. Farm to Work: Development of a Modified Community-Supported Agriculture Model at Worksites, 2007-2012. Prev Chronic Dis. 2015;12:150022 Classification: Emerging

Evaluation Indicators

Based on the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework, the following outcome indicators can be used to evaluate intervention progress and success.
Center TRT developed an evaluation logic model and evaluation plan for a program similar to the Farm to Work program reviewed by the Center TRT. The logic model is intended to guide the evaluation process (as opposed to the planning process); the evaluation plan focuses on the implementation and effectiveness of a Farm to Work program at increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables in the work environment. The evaluation addresses the reach, adoption, extent of implementation and effectiveness of a Farm to Work program in changing environments and behaviors related to healthy eating. The evaluation is a pre-post design with no comparison group. This evaluation plan provides guidance on evaluation questions and types and sources of data for both process and outcome evaluation. Evaluation materials for Farm to Work can be found on the Center TRT website. The Texas Department of State Health Services created several materials for its evaluation that are also available. These tools can be downloaded from the Farm to Work Toolkit.

**Additional Information**

**Website:** The Farm To Work website (http://www.dshs.texas.gov/CWWObesityF2W/?terms=farm%20to%20work) includes a description of the program and links to additional resource documents and videos. **Contact Person(s):** Obesity Prevention Program Texas Department of State Health Services MC 1944 P.O. Box 149347 Austin, TX 78714-9347 Email: BringingHealthyBack@dshs.state.tx.us Sustainable Food Center of Austin 2921 E. 17TH St. Bldg. C Austin, TX 78702 Email: Andrew@sustainablefoodcenter.org Phone: (512) 236-0074