

SNAP-Ed Toolkit

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The State Nutrition Action Council: Farmers Market Initiative

California Department of Social Services CalFresh Healthy Living

Overview

The State Nutrition Action Council: Farmers Market Initiative (SNAC) is policy, systems, and environmental change intervention designed to:

- Increase knowledge of Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) programs available at farmers markets
- Increase knowledge of locally grown fruits and vegetables and how to use, cook, and store them
- Increase the use of Market Match and CalFresh redemption vouchers to support low-income shoppers in maximizing their purchasing power

In 2018, SNAC focused on increasing low-income shoppers' utilization of their food and nutrition program benefits at local Farmers Markets, and in 2019, SNAC expanded its Farmers Market Initiative (FMI) into additional counties and markets, as well as added an on-site navigator component. The navigator model was tested at three markets, and the CalFresh Healthy Living (CFHL) Navigators were found to address barriers to shopping at farmers markets, including lack of knowledge and comfort using food assistance benefits. CFHL Navigators provided support to shoppers by distributing materials, promoting accepted FNS benefits, providing information on how to use FNS benefits, explaining Market Match, and providing interactive nutrition and health education activities on-site at the market for six consecutive weeks. **Target Behavior:** Healthy Eating, Food Insecurity/Food Assistance **Intervention Type:** PSE Change

Intervention Reach and Adoption

SNAC targets low-income Californians at farmers markets that accept the USDA food and nutrition benefit programs (SNAP, WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)). The SNAC Farmers Market Initiative was implemented in six counties with 19 participating farmers markets in 2019. An additional 15

organizations and partners, including social service offices, WIC offices, local health departments, and other community organizations participated in the initiative by disseminating marketing materials and promoting information about using SNAP/EBT at Farmers Markets and about the Market Match program. The campaign was leveraged at community events, during one-on-one interactions, on social media, and at markets. In 2019 alone, 10,479 promotional materials were distributed, reaching 30,419 low-income Californians. **Setting:** Farmers markets, Other: SNAC partners – extension offices, social service agencies, local health department, department of aging, WIC **Target Audience:** Pregnant/Breastfeeding Women, Parents/Mothers/Fathers, Adults, Older Adults **Race/Ethnicity:** Special focus on Latino, Asian, Black or African American, and White communities.

Intervention Components

SNAC includes the creation and distribution of marketing materials, outreach to farmers market managers, support and coordination with local agencies implementing FNS programs, and onsite CFHL Navigators. The materials provide an increased awareness of local farmers markets, Market Match, and FNS benefits that can be used. The CFHL Navigator provides support to shoppers by distributing materials, promoting accepted FNS benefits, providing information on how to use benefits, explaining Market Match, and offering interactive nutrition activities at the market. Nutrition activities at the market drive shoppers to the market and provide the opportunity for engagement. To promote the initiative and implement these activities, coordination with local partners is an essential component of the program. Promotional materials and a local agency representative and/or a CFHL Navigator at the market are also a core component as they help increase FNS benefit redemption rates.

Intervention Materials

SNAC intervention materials include:

- Get More at the Farmers Market campaign guide
- Get More at the Farmers Market trifold brochure
- Get More at the Farmers Market poster
- Get More at the Farmers Market flyer
- Get More at the Farmers Market postcard

All material listed above are located on the [CalFresh website](#). Documents are listed under Get More at the Farmers Market Toolkit under the Additional CalFresh Toolkits tab.

Intervention Costs

Materials available at no cost.

Evidence Summary

To evaluate SNAC, feedback sessions were held at a WIC clinic with English and Spanish speaking participants that tested messages and materials. Based on the feedback, brochures were printed with both English and Spanish text, which helps participants and their families translate and understand the content fully. The design of the materials was updated to include feedback from WIC participants, which included a picture of a family shopping at the market, brighter pictures of produce, and increased brightness and contrast in the brochure to ensure ADA compliance. The results of the study demonstrated that among all SNAC FMI intervention markets for which redemption data was obtained (n=16), distribution and redemption of benefits increased in 2019 compared to 2018. On average, monthly CalFresh redemption increased by nearly 19% and monthly Market Match redemption increased by nearly 22%. Most notably, the average number of both new and repeat Market Match customers per month increased in 2019 by 28% and 20%, respectively, and markets with an onsite navigator observed a higher percent change in CalFresh transactions and Market Match customers. Markets with an onsite navigator experienced a 402% increase in CalFresh redemption for 2019 compared to 2018, with market managers reporting face-to-face interactions as the most helpful resource for explaining benefits to patrons. Based on the successes of the six-week pilot—it is also recommended to refine and expand the CalFresh Healthy Living Navigators Program in 2020 and scale it throughout the state in 2021. The unintended benefits of the intervention include:

- The success in building partnerships, accomplishing shared goals, and strengthening an already robust pilot initiative in the second year
- The agriculture community rallied their support around the initiative

The challenges include:

- SNAC faced difficulty with identifying and recruiting the intended comparison population because, although the identified comparison site served a low-income and food insecure population, many people accessing food were not currently receiving benefits and had not received them in the previous six months

Evidence-based Approach: Practice-tested

Evaluation Indicators

Based on the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework, the following outcome indicators can be used to evaluate intervention progress and success.

	Readiness and Capacity – Short Term (ST)	Changes – Medium Term (MT)	Effectiveness and Maintenance – Long Term (LT)	Population Results (R)
Individual				
Environmental Settings	ST7	MT5		
Sectors of Influence		MT8		

ST7: Organizational Partnerships

- ST7a: 19 unfunded partners (markets), 15 local FNS partners, and 34 local organizations that regularly

meet, exchange information, and identify and implement mutually reinforcing activities that will contribute to adoption of one or more organizational changes or policies

- ST7b: 19 markets as cooperators, 15 local FNS partners cooperators, 34 local cooperators

MT5: Nutrition Supports

- MT5e: Number of promotional efforts for SNAP bonus programs at the markets (i.e. posters, recipe cards that feature seasonal fruits and vegetables, taste tests) and at community partner organizations (i.e. distribution of customizable flyers and brochures outlining how to use benefits at the market, postcards, social media posts)
 - 10,479 promotional materials distributed in all farmers market events (n = 177 events)
 - Brochures: 2898
 - Posters: 114
 - Flyers: 1610
 - Postcards: 1633
 - Tote bags: 640
 - Senior FMNP Flyers: 2516
 - Recipe Cards: 737
 - Cookbooks: 76
 - WIC Nutrition Education Materials: 255
 - MT5f: Reach - Number of low-income Californians (i.e. CalFresh participants) who encounter the farmers market on a regular basis and are assumed to be influenced by it. If data source available, also track WIC and Senior Nutrition Program participants.

MT8: Agriculture

- MT8b: Two markets in San Joaquin began offering Market Match and were selected to participate in this pilot as a result. This intervention supported a 10.5% increase in intervention markets accepting market match

Evaluation Materials

SNAC include:

- Key Informant Interview Guide
- Market Managers Consumer Intercept Survey
- Comparison Intercept Survey
- Farmers Market Promotional Efforts Activity Log Tracker
- Farmers Market Promotional Efforts: Social Media Activity Tracker
- Redemption Tracking Log

To access evaluation materials, please contact Amy DeLisio.

Additional Information

Website: The SNAC Toolkit can be found on the All Resources page of the [Center for Wellness and Nutrition website](#) in the Toolkits section. **Contact Person(s):** Amy DeLisio Phone: 916-265-4042 Email: Amy.Delisio@wellness.phi.org