Store Owner’s Guide
The Healthy Happens Here program was developed as part of Activate Allen County in 2014. Activate Allen County is funded by a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and one of our goals is to promote changes in the community to advance health and wellness through the prevention and reduction of obesity as well as increasing access to healthy foods. Increasing access to fresh, healthy foods is one solution to assist the community in reaching and maintaining a healthy weight, thus leading to reduced incidence of obesity.

We want to work with small stores within the county to increase the availability of fresh produce and healthy snacks in the store and also increase the visibility of these items to customers. Along with this, Healthy Happens Here will highlight healthy options within the store such as whole grain products, low fat dairy, low sodium canned goods, etc. with additional signage. We want to thank Meat City on Kibby Street for coming on board with us and being our pilot store in October of 2014!

On the following pages, you will find some further information about this program in general and specific details about the Healthy Happens Here program in Allen County. We hope that you will contact us to learn more about how you can be a part of something great in Lima/Allen County as we work together to make the healthier choice easier to make for the health of our community.
The problems of limited food access, obesity, hunger, and poor nutrition loom large in many low-income areas.

Elected officials, government staff, and even community members may question whether focusing on small food retailers are a big enough solution to these serious issues.

When making the case for a food retailer policy or program, it is important to provide evidence demonstrating the link between the retail environment and health. In this section, we provide a series of arguments for healthy food retailer interventions with supporting evidence. These arguments can be used in fact sheets, talking points, grant applications, and other program materials.

Low-income neighborhoods have more small food retailers than high income neighborhoods.

Low-income areas have more than twice as many convenience stores and four times as many small grocery stores as high-income areas.

Small food stores tend to sell little fresh produce, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products. These stores commonly sell highly processed foods that are high in fat and low in nutrients.

More than 40 percent of elementary school students in one study shopped at a corner store twice a day, often purchasing chips, candy, and soda.

Hispanic youth are more likely to attend schools with convenience stores and snack stores within 1,300 to 2,600 feet.

Small food retailers congregate near schools and attract schoolchildren.

A high number of convenience stores per capita is associated with higher rates of mortality, diabetes, and obesity.

Proximity to convenience stores within a neighborhood is associated with higher rates of obesity and diabetes. The impact of convenience stores on health is even greater in low-income neighborhoods.

Small food stores that do not sell healthy food have a negative effect on the diets and health of nearby residents.

African-Americans who live near a supermarket are more likely to meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommendations for fruit, vegetable, fat, and saturated fat intake. Each additional supermarket within close proximity increases fruit and vegetable consumption by over 30 percent.

People who live closer to stores that sell healthy food have better diets.

Pregnant women who live far away from a supermarket are more than twice as likely not to eat recommended amounts of grains, vegetables, fruits, folate, iron, and calcium.
DEAR STORE OWNER,

We are excited to share with you a potential business opportunity for your store! As we work to increase community access to healthy, affordable foods through neighborhood corner stores, we hope stores, such as yours, will participate in this community-supported project.

Your store has been chosen to be a Healthy Happens Here store because it is in a location that serves a population which will benefit most from this project. The Healthy Happens Here program has three steps. First, we will get to know your customers and store better. Second, in partnership with you, we will develop a plan and help you boost your store’s selection. Third, we will help you market your changes and better serve your customers. To get to know you better, we will perform the following three surveys:

**Store Owner Survey (This survey will take about 20 minutes)**

**Visual Store Assessment Survey:**
This survey determines what products you are already selling and will help us get to know your store better. This survey will take around 30 minutes and requires a surveyor to walk around the store looking at products. The surveyor will come during the slowest part of the day or when the store is closed pending owner preference.

**Customer Surveys (optional):**
These surveys will be conducted throughout the day (days and times at the owners discretion) and will ask regular customers to answer about 5 questions regarding the products sold at the store and may be helpful in determining what produce or healthy options customers would buy if stocked in your store.

Based on the survey results, we will work with your store to implement the Healthy Happens Here program at the level that works best for you. This means that the program will look different for different small stores. Types of assistance that may be available include marketing materials/signage, technical assistance, and educational resources. We anticipate that by becoming a Healthy Happens Here store, you will have the opportunity to increase sales and expand your customer base through the sale of healthier foods and produce. This type of program has shown success in increasing the sales revenue for neighborhood corner stores and in improving people’s access to healthy foods. Please find the enclosed materials attached for you learn more about the need for healthier corner stores and why this program is needed in Allen County.

If you are interested or want to learn more or have any questions, contact:
**Kayla Monfort with Activate Allen County at:**
Phone: 419-221-5035 (office)
Email: kmonfort@activateallencounty.com

We look forward to hearing from you soon!

Make the healthier choice easier to make for the health of our community.
Allen County Grocery Program

Tier 1: Stores Must Comply with ALL Requirements or meet WIC standards on inventory areas

Inventory Requirements:

**Dairy**
Stock at least 1 type of low-fat or skim cows milk, 1 plant derived milk and 1 type of low fat or non fat cheese or yogurt

**Protein**
Stock at least 2 varieties of canned beans with no added salt or fat and 1 variety of nut butter with no added sugar

**Grain**
Stock at least 1 variety of 100% whole grain or whole wheat bread

**Fruit**
Stock 2 varieties of canned and/or frozen fruit. Canned fruit must be packed in its own juice or water, frozen fruit should contain no added sugar. Stock 1 variety of fresh fruit.

**Vegetables**
Stock 2 varieties of canned and/or frozen vegetables with no added salt or fat. Stock 1 variety of fresh vegetables

**Beverages**
If fruit or vegetable juice is sold, 75% should be 100% juice with no sugar added. Offer at least 3 varieties of zero-calorie nonalcoholic cold beverage options, one being water.

**Snacks**
Offer at least 2 healthier snack options. This includes snacks that have: 200 calories or less and less than or equal to 7 grams of fat, 2 grams of saturated fat, 15 grams of sugar and 200 mg sodium per serving. High Fructose corn syrup should not be the first ingredient.

Enhancement Requirements:

**General Requirements**
Signs and visible prices should be posted on healthy products in the store as provided by the program. Fresh produce should be displayed attractively. Healthy foods sales will be tracked per agreed upon guidelines. There should be no major violations of tobacco, alcohol, signage, health or labor laws in the past year.

**Maintain Attractive Premises**
Provide adequate lighting, trash and recycling receptacles on premises. Prevent loitering and comply with state laws prohibiting littering. Maintain the cleanliness of all interior and exterior areas of the business premises, including shelf spaces.
Allen County Grocery Program

Tier 2: Stores Must Choose a Total of 3 Options and comply with Tier 1 Standards

Inventory Requirements:

Choose Two Requirements
(One being option number two)

- Offer at least 1 additional whole grain product other than bread or snacks (examples include: brown rice or oats)
- Offer 1 additional fresh fruit and vegetable variety
- Sell at least 1 variety of pre-cut fruit or vegetable snacks (for example: baby carrots or fruit cups)
- Offer at least 1 additional protein source of fresh, lean meat with no added sodium
- Reduce the number of unhealthy snacks (snacks that do not meet program criteria) by 20%

Enhancement Requirements:
(Choose one)

- Offer one sale, coupon or other discount per month on any product that meets the program requirements
- Display zero calorie beverages at eye level in coolers
- Place one healthy product, such as a fruit or snack at the checkout counter
- Display fresh produce at the front of the store, such that it is visible from the front door
- Price one bottled water option below the price of all other beverage options of the same variety and stock this option at eye level

Examples

Protein: Peanut butter-no added sugar, canned black beans– no added sodium
Grain: First ingredient on label is a whole grain product
Fruit: Peaches canned in their own juice, Fresh bananas, apples, grapes, pears
Vegetables: Green beans with no salt added, fresh carrots, lettuce, peppers, tomatoes
Dairy: 1% milk, skim milk, non-fat yogurt, reduced fat (2%) cheese, almond milk, soy milk
Snacks: small bags of baked chips, granola bars, low-fat cheese sticks
Beverages: water, diet pop, flavored water
STORE MARKETING MATERIALS

Foam board Indoor Display 11/2 x2’

Shelf Item Product Labels

Product Labels

Product Labels

Window Cling (required)

Window Poster

Yard Sign

Outdoor Banner 5x2’
Merchandising Tips

Use color
Make sure that displays are colorful and complement other items.
Use different colors to attract customer’s eyes.

Keep baskets looking full
Pile products high and to the front of baskets.
Lift products higher by using false bottoms, paper bags or other stuffing.

Rotate produce daily
Use baskets to pile and protect fruits and vegetables. Empty baskets can be used as filler.

Keep tomatoes on the vine
It is a cleaner presentation and may facilitate the customer purchasing the entire bunch.

Reminders
• Items that expire quickly should be shown just below eye level.
• Heavier items should be on the bottom shelves.
• Keep bags handy to make it easy to add additional items.
• Use bright signage with pictures and the word ‘fresh’.
• Change products seasonally and stay local when possible.
• For color and variety, place spices, hot sauces, and herbs adjacent to fresh food on shelves.

The average time it takes for a customer to walk in, purchase an item and depart is between 3 to 4 minutes.

(NACS Speed Metrics Research, 2002)
Merchandising Tips

Storage
Be sure to refrigerate items such as apples and peppers at night to lengthen their shelf life during the day.

Cross Merchandise
Create a “tonight’s meal” poster or display that identifies readily available items that will create a quick, healthy meal. For example, include a selection of seasonable vegetables with spices, herbs and healthy alternatives to complete the meal.

Other Ideas
• Stock complementary items together. For example, stock peanut butter next to apples or low fat dressings next to salad greens.
• Use small bags to create kits. For example, for a guacamole kit, avocados, onions, tomatoes, limes, and peppers would be placed in baskets next to one another. Use one price to sell these items as a “kit.”
• Have suggested recipes each month. For example, offer baked apple recipe in October, or a meatless chili recipe for colder months.

Why is merchandising important?
• Merchandising increases profit margins, a return on the space, and maximizes square footage impact.
• Attractive displays are very important to the selling of fresh products.
• Displays full of fresh products work to attract customers. Sales increase and product waste decreases.
• Merchandising is about understanding the way customers shop.
• Whether selling to a local audience or to a customer that is simply passing through, creative merchandising can make the difference in selling a product or having it sit on shelf.
Choosing Healthy Products for Your Store

Introduce healthy food options like these in your store.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruits &amp; Vegetables</th>
<th>Stock Mostly</th>
<th>Stock Moderately</th>
<th>Stock Minimally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fresh fruits and vegetables</td>
<td>• Canned or frozen fruits in 100% juice or light syrup, and vegetables with less than 290mg of sodium</td>
<td>• Canned or frozen fruit in heavy syrup, and vegetables with more than 290mg of sodium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dairy</th>
<th>Stock Mostly</th>
<th>Stock Moderately</th>
<th>Stock Minimally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Non-fat, skim or 1% low-fat milk foods such as milk, yogurt and cheese</td>
<td>• Whole milk foods such as milk, yogurt, cheese and flavored milk</td>
<td>• High-fat milk foods such as cream, butter, ice cream and cream cheese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grains</th>
<th>Stock Mostly</th>
<th>Stock Moderately</th>
<th>Stock Minimally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Whole grains are listed as the first ingredient</td>
<td>• Whole grains are not listed as the first ingredient</td>
<td>• Whole grains are not listed as an ingredient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meat, Fish &amp; Poultry</th>
<th>Stock Mostly</th>
<th>Stock Moderately</th>
<th>Stock Minimally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lean cuts of beef and pork and low-fat products such as fish, poultry and eggs</td>
<td>• Dark meat such as steak, ground beef and chicken or turkey with skin</td>
<td>• Processed meats such as bacon, deli meat, ham and sausage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following resources provided by The Food Trust, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
Choosing Healthy Products for Your Store

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stock Mostly</th>
<th>Stock Moderately</th>
<th>Stock Minimally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beans, Nuts &amp; Seeds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No sodium added dry beans, canned fish, nuts, seeds</td>
<td>• Low-sodium (less than 290mg) canned beans, canned fish, nuts, seeds</td>
<td>• High-sodium (more than 290mg) canned beans, canned fish, nuts, seeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snacks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fruits, vegetables and snacks with less than 100 calories per package</td>
<td>• Fruits, vegetables and snacks with 100–200 calories per package</td>
<td>• Fruits, vegetables and snacks with over 200 calories per package such as chips, candy or cakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No sugar added water, fat-free or 1% low-fat milk</td>
<td>• 100% juice, diet drinks, low-fat flavored milk</td>
<td>• Soda, fruit drinks, sweetened iced tea, lemonade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Healthy Tip: Try adding some of these products to your inventory, or switch less healthy options for healthier ones. For example, substitute peaches in heavy syrup with peaches in 100% juice.
Buying and Handling Fresh Produce

Produce will keep fresh longer with careful purchasing and handling.

Purchase
- Make a list of fruits and vegetables for your store.
- Start with small amounts of new foods to learn which sell best.
- Change your selection when seasons and prices change.
- Offer smaller pieces of fruit and vegetables for children.
- Many produce items, such as apples, avocados and oranges,
  are sold by size or count (the number of pieces in a box). Example: 100 count apples = 100 apples in a box = smaller apples 50 count apples = 50 apples in a box = bigger apples
- Higher counts mean the fruit is smaller because more fit in the box.

Inspect
- Examine produce, if possible, before buying. Look for bruises, dents or spoiled spots. Tell the vendor if you find these.
- Do not buy a fruit or vegetable if the core has black spots or the stem is soft.
- Look for mold on citrus and tropical fruit. If you see white on the skin, do not buy them.
- Fruits and vegetables should smell fresh. Produce that smells bad will not taste good.

Display
- First in, first out—display older produce in the front.
- Rotate your produce to maintain freshness.
- When unpacking produce, remove spoiled items.
Attractive displays will increase sales and help reduce food waste.

- Place produce, like bananas, at register to sell faster.
- Keep produce fresh and baskets full.
- Push produce to the front of the baskets and pile it high.
- Display prices for customers. This can help increase sales.
- Items that do not last long should be just below eye-level to sell fast.
- Items that last longer, like potatoes and onions, should go at the bottom.

Remember...

- Keep produce organized and well-stocked.
- Label items and show prices.
- Use baskets to organize and protect produce.
- Tilt baskets forward to make them look more full.
- Remove spoiled items daily.
- Catch customers’ attention with different color foods in a row.
- Never sell produce out of cardboard boxes.
- Use good lighting to attract customers.
Bring attention to healthy snacks, beverages and fresh produce with an attractive refrigerator display.

**What to Stock in Your Healthy Refrigerator**

- Water
- 100% juice
- Non-fat, skim or 1% milk
- Low-fat string cheese
- Eggs
- Greens (spinach, lettuce and collard greens)
- Low-fat yogurt
- Fruit salads and garden salads
- Apples and oranges

- Place healthy beverages, fruit salads and yogurts on top shelves.
- Place fresh produce on middle shelves.
- Clearly mark fresh produce and sale items with bright price cards.
- Place heavy items on the bottom shelf.
# Fresh Produce Temperature Guide

Use these temperature guidelines to reduce produce spoilage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruits</th>
<th>Refrigerate</th>
<th>Temp.</th>
<th>Shelf Life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apples</td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>2–3 weeks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blueberries</td>
<td>33–35°</td>
<td>1–2 weeks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantaloupe</td>
<td>40–50°</td>
<td>5–10 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherries</td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>5–7 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapes</td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>5–7 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honeydew</td>
<td>40°</td>
<td>5–7 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiwi</td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemons</td>
<td>40–50°</td>
<td>2–3 weeks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limes</td>
<td>40–45°</td>
<td>2–3 weeks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oranges</td>
<td>32–34°</td>
<td>2–3 weeks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pears</td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raspberries</td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberries</td>
<td>32°</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th>Refrigerate</th>
<th>Temp.</th>
<th>Shelf Life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asparagus</td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans (Snap)</td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>5–7 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli</td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>5–7 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots</td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>2–3 weeks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cauliflower</td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collard Greens</td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumber</td>
<td>36–40°</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggplant</td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettuce</td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peppers</td>
<td>36–40°</td>
<td>1–2 weeks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinach</td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Squash</td>
<td>36–40°</td>
<td>5–7 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruits</th>
<th>Do Not Refrigerate</th>
<th>Temp.</th>
<th>Shelf Life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bananas</td>
<td></td>
<td>60–65°</td>
<td>5–7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapefruit</td>
<td></td>
<td>58–60°</td>
<td>1–2 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mangos</td>
<td></td>
<td>55°</td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaches</td>
<td></td>
<td>65–70°</td>
<td>5–7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pineapple</td>
<td></td>
<td>60–70°</td>
<td>5–7 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avocados</td>
<td></td>
<td>65–70°</td>
<td>5–7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garlic</td>
<td></td>
<td>32–35°</td>
<td>30–60 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onion</td>
<td></td>
<td>55–60°</td>
<td>30–60 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes</td>
<td></td>
<td>55–60°</td>
<td>30–60 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet Potatoes</td>
<td></td>
<td>55–60°</td>
<td>10 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomatoes</td>
<td></td>
<td>55–60°</td>
<td>5–7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watermelon</td>
<td></td>
<td>55–60°</td>
<td>7–10 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Squash</td>
<td></td>
<td>55–60°</td>
<td>30–60 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yucca</td>
<td></td>
<td>55–60°</td>
<td>5–7 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tip**

Some items, like apples, pears, oranges and peppers, can be displayed at room temperature. This will shorten their shelf life. If you display these items at room temperature during the day, be sure to refrigerate them at night.
Ethylene in Fruits and Vegetables

Correctly store fruits and vegetables to reduce food waste.

**What is ethylene?**
Ethylene is a gas released by some fruits and vegetables that causes produce to ripen faster. Some fruits and vegetables are more sensitive to ethylene than others.

**Why should I care?**
Fruits and vegetables that are stored incorrectly spoil quickly. This could mean lost profit for you.

**What can I do?**
- Do not store fruits and vegetables that produce ethylene with those that are sensitive to ethylene. For example, do not store bananas and apples next to each other. This applies to produce that is refrigerated and not refrigerated.
- Do not store produce in bags or sealed containers. This will trap the gas and cause the produce to ripen faster.

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**Ethylene Sensitive**
- Apples
- Asparagus
- Avocados
- Bananas
- Broccoli
- Cantaloupe
- Collard Greens
- Cucumber
- Eggplant
- Grapes
- Honeydew
- Kiwi
- Lemons
- Lettuce
- Limes
- Mangos
- Onions
- Peaches
- Pears
- Peppers
- Squash
- Sweet Potatoes
- Watermelon

**Ethylene Producers**
- Apples
- Avocados
- Bananas
- Cantaloupe
- Kiwi
- Peaches
- Pears
- Peppers
- Tomatoes

**Not Ethylene Sensitive**
- Blueberries
- Cherries
- Beans (Snap)
- Garlic
- Grapefruit
- Oranges
- Pineapple
- Potatoes
- Raspberries
- Strawberries
- Tomatoes
- Yucca