



Healthy Concessions Pilot Program

Brief Summary

Overview

In 2017, Cobb & Douglas Public Health teamed up with Harvester Christian Academy for the Healthy Concessions Pilot Program designed to offer healthier food and drink options to students and patrons at their school event concession stands. In the mindset of Harvester's Healthy Body, Healthy Mind, Healthy Spirit, incorporating healthier options into the concession stand sales aligns with the focus that *performance matters* on the field, in the classroom, and for any student group or activity success.

Key Findings

Taste tests were conducted on three separate occasions: at two different sporting events and during a focus group with 9th grade health class students. We defined the most popular items as being those items that all had a "yes" at 75% or above for being liked by participants and for likeliness to be purchased if offered at the concession stand. **The most popular items were Zesty Ranch Veggie Straws, Grilled Chicken Sandwich, Skinny Pop Popcorn, Sea Salt Veggie Straws, Cheese, Fruits, and Nuts Trio, and Fruit and Nut Granola Bars.**

Notably, the Black Bean Burger had mixed reviews. The Black Bean Burger was only offered at the football game for taste testing where 5 individuals tried the item and completed the survey. However, an additional 14 people sampled the black bean burger but did not complete a survey. Of these participants, 17 out of the 19 reported liking the burger but we did not have all responses regarding their likeliness to purchase the item. Students at the focus group listed the black bean burger as one of the least popular items they would consider purchasing.

We defined the least popular items as being items that scored less than 75% "yes" for being liked by participants and for likeliness to be purchased if offered at the concession stand. **The least popular items were the categories for Chips and Salsa, Hummus with Chips or Veggies, Natural Jerky, Zero Calorie Beverages, and Freeze Dried Fruit.**

While a variety of items were popular and were likely to be purchased if offered, **food preferences were found to depend on the type of sporting event** (see Figure 1). At the first taste test held during volleyball camp, respondents reported being more likely (80% or above "yes") to purchase Grilled Chicken Sandwiches, Cheese Sticks, All-Natural Bottled Fruit Juice, All-Natural Bottled Teas, Trail Mix, Snack Bars, and Baked Chips. At the second taste test during a home football game, respondents reported being more likely to purchase Grilled Chicken Sandwiches, Turkey Burgers, Trail Mix, and Baked Chips. Respondents at the third taste test during a focus group, reported being likely to purchase Baked Chips, Berry Propel Water, and Watermelon Propel Water.



Would you buy this item if it was offered at the concession stand during sports games/events?

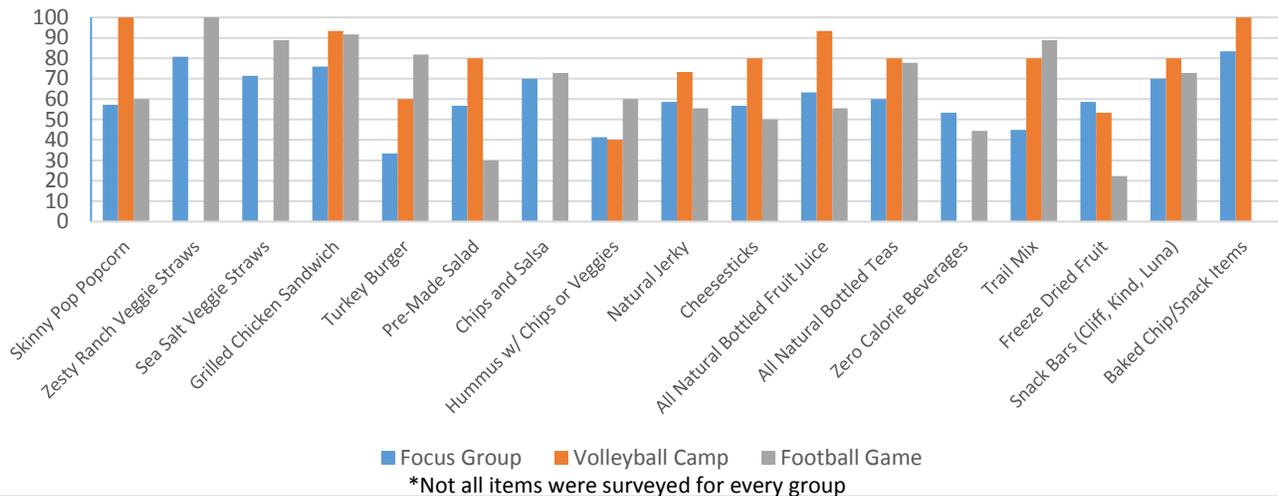


Figure 1: Comparison of likeliness to purchase among the three taste test.

Please note that there are some discrepancies in participants' responses. For example, although zero calorie beverages as a category were ranked as a least popular item. The students at the focus group ranked the Flavored Propel Water options as highly liked and likely to purchase.

Key Recommendations:

- Place healthier items in prominent view
- Market and advertise new menu items
- Price new menu items competitively with old items
- Include Booster Club as stakeholders

Recommendations

To boost sales generated by new menu items, it is recommended to market and advertise new menu items by having them listed as first choices on the menu and having them physically placed in prominent view such as up front and at eye-level. Some less healthy food options had deals and discounts. Ensure similar pricing options are made available for the new healthier options. Booster Club volunteers are the individuals who will be prepping and running the concession stands. Therefore, including the Booster Club as stakeholders and decision makers could help to increase their buy-in and likeliness to market the healthier options.

Ultimately, increasing healthy concession options will assist in decreasing caloric intake, increasing consumption of healthy foods, and decreasing the number of overweight and obese individuals within the community.