P110 Evaluation of the Nutritional Content of Foods Distributed to Clients at a Model Rural Food Pantry: A Pilot

Oyinlola Babatunde, PhD, MPH, RDN, babatundeo@ecu.edu, East Carolina University, Health Sciences Building, MailStop #668, Greenville, NC 27834; Chelsea A. Thompson; Irene Hatsu, PhD, RDN, Ohio State University; Kavitha Sankavaram, PhD, University of Maryland, College Park

Background (Background, Rationale, Prior Research, and/or Theory): Many low-income residents of rural areas frequently experience food insecurity, and patronize food pantries for food assistance. Many also live with chronic diseases, making the quality and nutritional content of the foods received important. However, the nutritional quality of foods available in pantries, depend on funds and possibly nutrition literacy of the providers.

Objective: Evaluate the quality and nutritional content of foods distributed at a model rural food pantry.

Study Design, Setting, Participants, Intervention: A cross-sectional study involving a private food pantry with two distribution days/month (a day for self-reported diabetics and another for all other registered members) in rural North Carolina. The pantry serves over 200 clients/month, with more than 60% of patrons being >50 years, female, and African Americans.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: We analyzed nutrition contents of boxes per distribution days at two time periods (4 days total). The foods were grouped according to Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) and MyPlate; foods nutrient content were compared with the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA).

Results: The pantry consistently provided foods from all food groups, except the “Dairy” group. Based on a 2,000 calories diet, content of food box distributed each time will last ≈6–13 days. Foods were mostly (≈70%) canned/prepackaged and ready-to-eat, few (≈5%) were frozen. Low-sodium and low-fat items were also available. Based on recommended daily servings, food boxes contained “Grains” to last 2–30 days, “Protein” ≈ 6 days, “Fruits” 9–12 days, “Vegetables” and “Dairy” ≈ 8 days. Fiber, potassium, calcium, vitamins A and C of the provided foods were below the % Daily Values when compared to RDA.

Conclusions and Implications: The model pantry provided variety of foods per DGA. However, the boxes are distributed once a month with limited servings for proteins, vegetables and dairy. Education on procurement and distribution of nutrient-dense foods is warranted. Future research will engage this pantry in adopting and testing the Choose Healthy Options Program (CHOP) procurement model to improve the nutritional quality of foods distributed to its patrons.

Funding: East Carolina University.

P111 Examining WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program Voucher Redemption in New Jersey

Renata Blumberg, PhD, blumbergr@montclair.edu, Montclair State University, 1 Normal Avenue, Montclair, NJ 07043; Yeon Bai, PhD, RDN; Pankaj Lal, PhD; Emily Fowler, BS; Paul Paez, BS

Background (Background, Rationale, Prior Research, and/or Theory): The Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) provides eligible recipients with vouchers to purchase fruit and vegetables directly from farmers. In New Jersey (NJ), redemption rates have been relatively low.

Objective: The objectives of this study are to: determine FMNP redemption rates at different WIC clinics and among demographic groups; identify barriers to redemption; and analyze other differences in redemption based on food procurement and consumption practices.

Study Design, Setting, Participants, Intervention: Five hundred and nine in-person surveys were conducted at two WIC clinics in northern NJ. One clinic was served by a weekly farm stand, and the other was served by a local farmer who stocked an on-site refrigerator with bags of produce.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: FMNP redemption rates, barriers to voucher redemption, and fruit/vegetable consumption and procurement patterns were analyzed using descriptive statistics and independent t-tests.

Results: Of the survey respondents, 65.42% indicated receiving FMNP vouchers in 2017. Redemption rates differed at WIC clinics: the site offering an on-site refrigerator with produce had a rate of 70.77%, but the site with the weekly farm stand had a rate of 61.32% ($P = .033$). At the latter location, self-reported servings of vegetables eaten daily on average were significantly higher among FMNP redeemers than non-redeemers (2.78 vs. 1.92; $P < .036$). The most significant barriers to redemption were that the closest farmers’ market was not open at convenient times and/or was located too far away.

Conclusions and Implications: Additional efforts to make FMNP voucher redemption more convenient in low-income communities are necessary to ensure an increased redemption rate.

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P112 Grocery Store Survival in Underserved Places: Some Lessons for Consumers and Nutrition Educators

Caroline Webber, PhD, RD, caroline.webber@wmich.edu, Western Michigan University, 1903 W Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5322; Thomas Frank, PhD, SUNY Cortland; Jamie Dollahite, PhD, Cornell University; Jeffery Sobal, PhD

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