This poster analyzes food expenditure and shopping patterns among households in the Niños Sanos, Familia Sana study. Niños Sanos, Familia Sana targeted Mexican-heritage children ages 3-8 and their families in California’s Central Valley. One community (Firebaugh) received the intervention package, while another community (San Joaquin) served as a comparison. The intervention package included: a $25/month voucher to purchase fruits and vegetables, nutrition education for children and parents/guardians, and physical activity instruction for children. Baseline data was collected in 2012, prior to the start of intervention. The intervention phase of the project occurred between September 2012 and July 2015. Researchers used grocery-store scanning systems, receipts, and surveys to collect data on food expenditure and shopping patterns. This poster specifically uses grocery store scanner data and surveys to assess voucher purchases and changes in food expenditure among participant households from baseline through intervention.

**Data and Methods**

Voucher purchases were limited to the local grocery store, Firebaugh Supermarket, for ease of implementation and data tracking. Participants in the intervention group were given electronic voucher cards and loyalty cards that were linked to the point of sale scanning system at Firebaugh Supermarket. Loyalty cards were used to track purchases made by participants. Voucher cards were automatically reloaded each month. The list of fruits and vegetables that families were able to purchase using their voucher matched the list of foods approved for the California WIC Cash Value Voucher. Overall food at home expenditure was measured annually via surveys that were administered to both the intervention group and comparison group. Surveys also collected information on shopping patterns and household attributes. Descriptive and regression analyses were used to determine changes in purchasing patterns over time and between communities. The sample used for food expenditure and shopping patterns was limited to households with survey data available for each year from baseline through intervention (intervention n=154; comparison n=95). The sample for voucher spending was allocated to dark green and red/orange vegetables—approximately 55% of total expenditure per year. A low percentage of voucher spending was allocated to dark green and red/orange vegetables—7% and 9% respectively. The top three items purchased were bananas, apples, and tomatoes. Approximately 20% of purchases were good potassium sources and 30% of purchases were good fiber sources. Twenty five percent of voucher purchases occurred within 2 days of fund distribution, 50% within 7 days. Spending did not vary significantly over time.

**Results**

**Voucher Spending:** Households spent the majority of their voucher on fruits—approximately 55% of total expenditure per year. A low percentage of voucher spending was allocated to dark green and red/orange vegetables—7% and 9% respectively. The top three items purchased were bananas, apples, and tomatoes. Approximately 20% of purchases were good potassium sources and 30% of purchases were good fiber sources. Twenty five percent of voucher purchases occurred within 2 days of fund distribution, 50% within 7 days. Spending did not vary significantly over time.

**Overall Expenditure:** Meat accounts for approximately 35% of overall food at home spending and is the largest subcategory. Fruits/vegetables and dairy account for another 20% and 14% of spending, respectively. Approximately 10% of spending is allocated to grains, snack foods (including chips and cookies), and non-alcoholic drinks. Expenditure did not vary significantly over time or between communities.

**Shopping Patterns:** Households do the majority of their food shopping at either large chain grocery stores or super stores (such as Costco and Walmart). Each community only has one small independent grocery store, therefore households typically shop infrequently (once or twice a month) and travel long distances to their preferred store. Sixty percent of households travel more than 40 miles for the majority of their food shopping. The average distance traveled to shop was 19 miles. Spending did not vary significantly over time.

**Conclusions**

Intervention households purchased a wide variety of foods with the fruit and vegetable voucher. The top three most frequently purchased items, bananas, apples, and tomatoes contribute important nutrients to participants’ diets. However, comparisons between communities and over time suggest that the voucher did not significantly impact overall food expenditure. Furthermore, household characteristics were not significantly associated with spending patterns in multivariate regression analyses. Assessment of shopping patterns suggests that access to stores may be an important factor in determining food expenditure patterns. Households prefer to shop at larger chain stores which likely have higher quality, greater variety, and lower prices than local independent establishments. These types of stores are farther from home and infrequent shopping may influence the types of food households buy. Future analyses will use also receipt data to measure the impact of the voucher intervention. Receipt data will allow researchers to assess food spending in greater detail and may be more accurate than recall data.

**Acknowledgments**

Funding Source: AFRI
Program Name: Childhood Obesity Prevention: Integrated Research, Education, and Extension to Prevent Childhood Obesity
Program Code: A2101
Grant/Award #: 2011-68001-30167