

Marketing ideas for healthy food in remote community stores

A resource developed as part of the
Remote Indigenous Stores and Takeaways Project

January 2008

Acknowledgements:

- Mai Wiru Handbook, Food Part 1. (2005) Nganampa Health Council, Anangu Pitjantjatjarra Yunkatjatjarra (APY) Lands.
- Food For Thought, (1995) Territory Health Services.
- Tummy Rumbles Guidelines for Remote Area Canteens, (2005) NT School Canteen Association.
- The Public Health Bush Book, Vol 2 (1999) Territory Health Services.
- Samantha Butterworth and Christopher Toby, Green Label Program, Tropical Population Health Unit, Mt Isa.

Other resources available:

Guidelines for stocking healthy food in remote community stores.

Maximising the shelf life of fruit and vegetables.

Heart Foundation Buyers Guide for remote stores and takeaways.

Freight Improvement Tool Kit.

Healthy Fast Food - A resource for remote stores and takeaways.

Setting targets for ordering fresh fruit and vegetables.

'How healthy is your store' checklist.

'How healthy is your takeaway' checklist.

Marketing Ideas for Healthy Food - Tips to help you move your product

The following suggestions have been successfully used in remote stores to promote healthier food choices. As with any marketing strategy in remote community stores, applying some general principles will increase its effectiveness. These principles include:

1. Get the community interested and involved

- Discuss with store committee, staff and key community people.
- If possible, set up a community working group or link in with pre existing health groups. This will give the community more ownership and recognition as consumers.
- Create interest and raise awareness about the strategy and food and nutrition issues. Work with health staff to link into existing community health programs.

2. Decide on what you want to promote and who will be your key target group

- You may wish to promote a range of foods eg fruit and vegetables, or just a few individual items.
- Your target group could be the whole community, or just a particular segment of the community eg youth.

3. Use a variety of promotional activities to re-inforce your messages

- For example, a cooking demonstration could be combined with posters, recipe cards and shelf talkers to highlight particular foods.

4. Consider how you will evaluate your strategy

- An easy way to do this is to use sales data for the targeted food.
- Compare data for three months prior to start of the marketing strategy with data three months following.

5. Regular assessment of sales data

- Every six months – compare sales data to pre launch sales data.
- Report back to the community so that they can see how well the promotion is going.

Increase sales of healthy food = increase in healthy eating

Over the following pages a range of strategies is described to assist you in marketing healthy choices to your consumers.



The Shelf Talker Program

Shelf-Talkers, especially when linked to other health promoting strategies, have been shown to be a successful strategy for influencing purchasing behaviour.

The main benefits of shelf talkers are:

- they can be used to identify healthy products at point of sale
- they are suitable for people with low literacy
- they are cheap and easy to implement.

How to use shelf talkers in the community store

1. Shelf talkers / shelf labels

- Decide what type of shelf talker you want to use in the store. Examples include stickers, velcro labels and laminated labels to slip into the shelf. Discuss with the store management committee and staff and decide on the most suitable option. You could get the school children to design a label. Ask the teacher to include this as an activity leading up to the launch. This could also become an annual event where an award is given for the best shelf label.
- Decide what type of logo you are going to use and the colour. Some stores have used the colour green (eg Green = Good) and displayed it widely so that it is well recognised in the store.



Tips for making shelf talkers

- Keep the message simple.
- Organise the local school to develop some of the material.
- Enlist the services of the nutritionist or health staff.
- Use local language for maximum effectiveness.
- Use one colour (eg green) to identify the targeted foods.

The Shelf Talker Program

2. Photo displays

- Make a photo display of products so that customers can see what foods you are promoting.
- You can take the photos yourself, access them from the internet or use the actual products, placing them on a shelf or attaching them to the wall.
- Laminate your pictures so that they last longer.

3. Promotional materials

- Link your shelf talker program with other forms of promotions, for example pamphlets, water bottles, caps, T-shirts, shopping bags.

4. Store staff training

- Staff should be aware of the shelf talkers and their intention.
- Discuss with your staff and decide on roles and responsibilities for putting up the labels, displays and ensuring they are maintained.
- Check that 'shelf talkers' stay in the right places.

5. Setting up the display and shelf talkers

- Determine the location where the shelf talker will be most visible. This may mean that you move the targeted food to a different location in the store. Identify the high traffic areas and put the targeted food items there.
- There may also be an opportunity to include the targeted food as an "end of aisle" promotion.

6. Launch

- Gain as much exposure as possible for the launch of a promotion. You could use a well recognised community identity to be the voice.
- Consider what opportunities exist to keep the awareness momentum going in the form of a spin-off promotion or new products to feature.

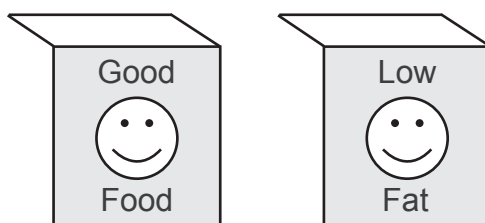
7. Maintenance of program

- Make sure that the shelf talkers remain on the correct products that they are promoting and the correct food images remain on display.

8. Ongoing promotion of the program

- A shelf talker needs regular updates.
- Have regular launches of foods with the shelf talkers.

9. Shelf talker promotions



Cooking Demonstrations

Cooking demonstrations are useful to promote new foods or to encourage people to cook familiar foods differently. They are also useful to:

- expose participants to healthier cooking methods, and
- motivate participants to use healthier products and recipes at home.

Materials needed:

- demonstration table
- kitchen utensils and equipment to produce recipes
- trays with pre-measured ingredients in containers (one tray per recipe)
- cap, gloves and aprons
- napkins, paper plates, spoons for tasting samples
- handouts - copies of recipes.

How to do a cooking demonstration

1. Choose healthy recipes based on the food items you want to promote - a nutritionist/health staff can assist with this.
2. Identify a person to undertake the cooking.
3. The demonstration should:
 - Increase the audience's understanding that healthy foods can be tasty foods.
 - Stress the relationship between nutrition and health, including diet and heart disease, diabetes and cancer.
 - Identify all the foods and how they are used in a recipe.
4. Include the recipe in the takeaway if possible, as well as providing recipes and table displays of the ingredients you have used.
5. Try to include bush foods in the cooking demonstration.
6. Ensure basic food safety and food hygiene practices are incorporated in the demonstration.
7. Only include foods that people have access to in your store
8. Only include foods that most people will be able to prepare with the facilities and cooking utensils that they have in their home, women's centre or other community facility.
9. Demonstrate the preparation of the recipe.
10. Discuss information about ingredients (such as history, nutrients and health claims) during preparation.
11. Provide tastes of the meal, recipes and purchasing details.
12. Prepare meal packs with the ingredients to make it easy to purchase the foods required for the recipe.
13. In the week(s) following the demonstration check to see if there is an increase in sales of the promoted product.

Food Tasting

- Identify a few helpers that can assist with preparing small samples of food for tasting.
- Decide on the food to be used at the tasting event. Link with other in-store promotions where possible eg 'shelf talkers'.
- Seek sponsorship from the company or supplier. You may be offered 'in kind' donations of produce or at discounted price. You do not know until you ask.
- Get the equipment needed well in advance; check it works.
- Decide on other activities you will have at the promotion. Order promotional materials (eg banners, posters, printed aprons/T-shirts).
- Provide some recipes that use the food you are promoting. Talk to the nutritionist for some advice. Test the recipes.
- Decide how you are going to provide food samples (eg on serviettes or paper plates). Determine supplies needed, availability and cost involved.
- Decide how the promotion will be evaluated, for example, looking at sales figures of the targeted items after the event is a good indication.

Shelf Position and Face Display

Mark shelving clearly to identify where the product is displayed. Colour the area differently using coloured contact or paper on the bottom of the shelf (when fully stocked the food item would cover this area). Customers do not like product placements to be changed. In community stores this becomes more important with poor literacy and eyesight. Positioning of shelving is important in marketing.

Note:

- The third shelf from the top (or the shelf closest to eye level) is the most visible and will attract the majority of sales. Including healthier items on this shelf will assist with their sale.

Shelf Position	Percentage of Sales
Top Shelf	10%
Second Shelf	20%
Third Shelf	32%
Fourth Shelf	23%
Bottom Shelf	15%

Give healthy products larger shelf space. Increase the face display of healthier lines over that of less healthy options.

Store Tours

A shopping tour is an educational tool that can highlight specific foods in the store. This may encourage customers to purchase healthier food, while also increasing your sales of these foods. Your local nutritionist or health professional may be able to assist with shopping tours.

Store tours involve:

- walking with people around the store
- pointing out specific healthy foods
- sharing information about why some foods are better than others
- showing people the best value for money
- asking questions about what people currently buy and their reasons
- answering questions about foods and their value
- listening to what people say.

A store tour can be used to:

- promote low sugar, low fat and low salt alternatives
- promote high fibre foods such as wholemeal bread, untoasted muesli or porridge
- help with literacy and numeracy
- help people recognise important information on labels, for example, where sugar, salt or fat appear on the list of ingredients (the higher the ingredient appears on the list the higher the proportion contained in the food).

Organising store tours:

- Arrange store tours for specific groups, such as people with diabetes, people who are overweight, children, mothers, grandmothers, men.
- Identify the best time to offer the tour.
- Decide who will conduct the tour. (Who can communicate best with the group and who is well informed about foods).
- Check with a nutritionist to make sure that your information is correct and to discuss suitable resources.
- Publicise the tour ahead of time so that people have a chance to attend.



Rewards Programs

A reward or loyalty program is a marketing tool that offers some reward or benefit to customers for purchasing a particular product. Reward programs are used to motivate customers to purchase more of a selected item. Examples exist with café loyalty cards. A coupon is provided and stamped every time a customer buys a targeted food item. When customers receive the designated number of stamps, they get a reward such as a food item, T-shirt or water bottle.

Introducing reward programs

- Select the healthy food you wish to target and the reward that you will offer.
- Consider how often a customer would normally buy the food and how long the reward program will be in place. Ensure the reward will not jeopardise your profits.
- Seek sponsorship from the company or supplier – you may be able to obtain some sort of discount which will cover the cost of the reward.

Consumers respond well to programs that have some combinations of the following:

- Aspiration value: rewards with emotional appeal exceed their cash value. This is an important value used in successful programs. A DVD or T-shirt for instance, has greater emotional appeal than free food, even though the two may have the same cash value.
- Relevance: must be usable within the context of the customer's day-to-day activity.
- Matching a reward program to the intended market. For example, there is no point offering discounted takeaway food when the incentive is aimed at improving nutrition.

Other Promotional Ideas

Increase the volume of product sold – Motivate customers to buy more of a particular food by offering savings on larger quantities (eg 20% mark up for purchasing 1kg oranges, 15% markup for purchasing 2 kg oranges. When customers purchase 2kg they should get a 5% saving, or be provided something to the value of 5% from this increased purchase).

Promotional posters – There are many posters available nationally that can help you to promote healthy foods in your store. When choosing posters, it is important to consider your target audience, so that the artwork, layout and colours reflect the tastes of your customers. Nutritionists will be able to assist you with accessing posters.

Prizes – Marketing the 'health benefits' of a food may not alone be enough to motivate customers to buy. Try offering other incentives. For example, offer prizes through "raffle-tickets" when customers buy healthy foods. Raffles can be drawn on slow days to encourage customers to re-visit the store. Often your suppliers can provide the prize(s) for these programs, for example a fruit and vegetable hamper.

Buy One Get One Free – Offer a free cup with a diet cordial or a vegie peeler with a bag of potatoes. Promote 'Meal Deals' in the takeaway by offering a sandwich or stew with a piece of fresh fruit and a bottle of water for free. These types of strategies can increase the turnover of fresh produce and reduce waste.

Stock portion controlled lines – Portion controlled foods that can be eaten that day/meal are attractive items to people that have poor storage facilities.

Store layout – The location of items within the store can influence the purchasing habits of customers. Consider placing healthy foods in the high traffic areas of the store. Appeal to impulse buying by placing ready to eat fruits and vegetables at the register.

To promote the healthier choice, locate the healthier items with other similar items eg diet cordial with normal cordial.

- place the product at eye level
- open up the facing of the product
- reduce the facing of other products.

Seasonal variations, sporting events and special holidays – Use these events as promotion opportunities. The following is a list of holidays and seasonal days and suggestions for promotions:

- Football grand final - Everyone wearing a team jersey gets a special price on green vegies.
- Easter - People in purple get a free bunch of grapes.
- Colouring competition for children - Encourage classes to make posters or have a colouring competition to promote a healthy food. Display in the store.

