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Introduction

The supermarket is continually evolving to meet the needs of consumers and there are currently several forces at work that are driving store-wide changes and make this an opportune time to embrace health and wellness at retail, especially in the fresh departments of the store.

**Health and wellness is becoming an equal, if not a more important, value in food purchase decisions.** Research shows that today’s shoppers are seeking fresh, natural and minimally processed foods with beneficial ingredients that help fight disease and promote good health.

According to the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (2015), Chronic diseases and conditions are responsible for 7 of 10 deaths among Americans each year, and they account for 86% of our nation’s health care costs. It’s simply more expensive to get sick than it is to stay well. But healthy means more than just personal wellness to many shoppers. Environmental health is also part of the equation and retailers must be ready with products, programs and answers to meet the range of consumer needs.

**Consumer shopping behaviors are changing as options for purchasing food evolves along with technology.** Center store categories are already migrating online and this migration is expected to continue.

While shoppers may be willing to buy household items, canned and shelf stable goods online, the benefit and experience of shopping in the fresh departments of a store can be a big draw. Seeing the healthy vibrant colors in a produce department and having an engaged team member talk about the benefits of freshly prepared meal ingredients are impossible to replicate online. In addition, instore sampling can solidify the concept that nutritious can also be delicious! Providing these opportunities along with educational wellness programs will provide fresh departments a key point of differentiation that can drive sales while helping consumers enjoy healthful family meals.

**Convenience remains a key driver of food sales for busy shoppers.** Deli/fresh prepared food is the fastest growing area in the fresh perimeter of the store and incorporating healthier choices and wellness messaging can accelerate sales growth.

Shoppers are interested in seeing fresh selections that feature locally-sourced ingredients, and options to meet specific dietary needs. The fresh departments of the supermarket can provide not only the advantage of delicious convenience, but also affordability and health.

Although the supermarket is full of healthier food choices, fresh departments are especially well positioned to provide the food selections, education and guidance consumers desire. This report provides insights for implementing and executing profitable programs that meet consumer needs and highlights exemplary examples of fresh health and wellness initiatives at retail.
SECTION I

Fresh Health & Wellness Programs – Key Elements for Driving Sales and Loyalty
Start with Consumer Needs!

Understanding your customers’ needs is a must for building strategic health and wellness programs in fresh departments. The right products and programs will drive business success as you appeal to wellness-minded shoppers and offer timely solutions.

Initiatives should:

1. **Begin with consumers general interest in eating healthier.** According to the 2017 FMI Supermarket Trends report, 49% of shoppers surveyed are somewhat concerned about the nutrition content of the food they eat, while 29% are very concerned. In addition, 45% of shoppers surveyed see their primary store as an ally when it comes to their wellness journey. Food retailers and fresh departments in particular, have the opportunity to offer convenient and nourishing meal ideas for families that focus on basic healthy eating principles. For example, incorporate colorful fruits and vegetables into your deli, hot foods case and meal kits; ensure whole grain choices are prominently promoted; and educate shoppers on healthful ways to prepare lean meats, poultry and seafood.

2. **Provide seasonal solutions.** One good way to address general interest in healthy eating is to provide seasonal solutions. Consumer health behaviors and needs change over the course of the year. By getting into the shopper mindset retailers can create programs and provide meal options that are timely and solve for seasonal events where there is a big focus on food and spending.

   **Spring** – The spring season brings warmer weather, and parties! Easter, Cinco de Mayo, Mother’s Day, and graduation celebrations all bring family and friends together and have shoppers looking for party planning ideas. There are plenty of opportunities to entice shoppers with prepared foods and fresh products that offer a healthy twist to meet their needs. Customers are also looking for light and healthy fare to prepare for swimsuit season and spring provides an opportunity to promote nourishing plant-based deli salads, seafood recipes and healthy grab-n-go options.

   **Summer** – Fresh, local fruits and vegetables, nourishing grab-and-go snacks for road trips and grill-ready foods will be top of mind for shoppers during the warm summer months. Along with the right products, make sure store employees know how to answer questions such as how to grill meat, poultry and seafood and make suggestions for healthy meal accompaniments such as fresh deli salads and produce items.

   **Fall** – The fall season offers many opportunities to promote the healthy offerings your store has available. From nourishing, ready-to-go lunches to tailgating options. It’s also a perfect time to promote National Family Meals Month™ (September) by communicating the fresh options you have available to make mealtime easy, affordable and healthy.
**Holidays** – During the busy holiday season customers are looking for assistance as they plan get-togethers for family and friends. Parties, holiday brunches and celebratory meals all require special foods and shoppers are willing to pay for products that help ease their burden of planning and preparation. This is an excellent time of the year to promote fresh fruit and vegetable trays, simple appetizers using items from your deli, and recipes for roasts. Shoppers will also be looking for options for healthy, quick weeknight meals.

**Winter** – After the holiday season shoppers are thinking about getting their budgets and diets back on track. Dietitian approved meal kits, fresh deli salads and simple, nutritious, budget-friendly recipes will be appreciated as the new year starts. In February the biggest game in football takes place and many of your shoppers will be throwing or attending a party where food will be the focus. Seize this chance to guide shoppers toward fresh food offerings that reinforce your store’s health and wellness strategy.

**Address special dietary needs.** It is not unusual for a shopper, or a member of their family, to have a dietary restriction whether for health reasons or by lifestyle choice. Understanding current dietary trends will allow you to incorporate choices into your fresh programs that meet consumer needs while significantly increasing customer loyalty. In addition, more people are managing chronic diseases than ever before, and given the link between diet and disease, supermarket pharmacies and fresh departments can work together on programs to help individuals shop the total store more healthfully.

### Diabetes Friendly

**The opportunity** - More than 100 million U.S. adults are now living with diabetes or prediabetes, according to a 2017 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 30.3 million Americans – 9.4 percent of the U.S. population –have diabetes. Another 84.1 million have prediabetes, a condition that if not treated often leads to type 2 diabetes within five years. Type 2 diabetes can be controlled or prevented by a healthy lifestyle including diet.

**Fresh solutions** - Individuals with diabetes can eat most foods but need to focus on portion control to manage weight while including foods, such as healthy fats, colorful fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean meat, seafood and poultry, and low-fat dairy.

### Heart Healthy

**The opportunity** – Cardiovascular disease accounts for nearly 801,000 deaths in the United States. That’s about 1 in every 3 deaths in the U.S. according to the American Heart Association’s 2017 Heart Disease and Stroke statistics. A healthy diet and lifestyle are the best weapons for preventing heart disease.

**Fresh solutions** - Similar to diabetes, the diet focuses on weight management and includes fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, skinless poultry and fish, nuts and legumes.
**Weight Management**

**The opportunity** - According to the CDC over 70% of adults are overweight or obese and most of these individuals are seeking help with weight loss and/or management.

**Fresh solutions** – Fresh produce, lean meat, poultry, seafood and whole grains are all nutrient-rich foods that add variety taste to healthy, calorie controlled meal plans.

**Food Allergies and Intolerances**

**The opportunity** – The incidence of food allergies and intolerances is on the rise. The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention reports that the prevalence of food allergy in children increased by 50 percent between 1997 and 2011 and “free from” claims such as nut free, dairy free and gluten free are prevalent on many new food products.

**Fresh solutions** – Offer allergen free classes or online educational guidance from a Registered Dietitian to help direct shoppers to key departments and products that meet their dietary needs. For example, all produce, most dairy and any plain meat, poultry and seafood items are naturally gluten free so these fresh departments are important to the gluten free shopper.

**Vegetarian/Plant-Based Eating**

**The opportunity** - A 2017 *Nielsen global survey* found that 39% of consumers are actively seeking more plant based foods. This rise in plant-based eating can be largely credited to consumers’ growth in concerns regarding *animal welfare, overall health* and *sustainability*.

**Fresh solutions** – The produce department is a top destination for the shopper looking for plant based options. In addition, tofu, meat alternatives, beans, nuts and seeds are often sought out as protein sources.

**“Clean Eating”**

**The opportunity** - While there is no true definition for “clean eating” it represents an uprising of organic food consumption and health-conscious eating as more shoppers seek foods free from “negative” ingredients (hydrogenated fats, artificial colors, etc.).

**Fresh solutions** – Organic produce and meat/poultry options are very important to these shoppers. Use signage that provides guidance and highlights product attributes.

Retail deli and prepared food has a reputation for lacking nutritional attributes. As you incorporate healthier choices it will be important to communicate offerings to engage health-conscious shoppers. In addition, share your initiatives with local hospitals and health influencers so they can promote your solutions to their patients and clients.
Environmental Health – The wellness interests of today’s shoppers go beyond nutrition and encompass several environmental issues as well. In the meat and seafood department, for example, it is not uncommon for customers to ask about the use of hormones, antibiotics, animal welfare and sustainable sourcing, while pesticides, GMOs and place of origin concerns arise in produce. Overall, fresh departments must also be prepared to discuss ingredient transparency, social responsibility and traceability as these issues will continue to grow in importance to consumers. While some of these issues may have been raised through various media outlets and may not always be based on fact, retailers need the tools to address these concerns with empathy and science-based information that instill trust.

SmartLabel™ is a tool that gives consumers a way to access more detailed product information about a wide range of food, beverage, household, pet care and personal care products. It is fast and easy to use, with a consistent digital format that shares accurate data directly from the manufacturer in real-time. SmartLabel™ goes beyond the label and has more detailed information such as ingredient definitions, sourcing practices, third-party certifications, social compliance and sustainability programs, usage instructions, advisories and safe handling instructions as well as company/brand information.

SmartLabel™ complements the way consumers shop today and enables them to get all the information they want to know about what they are purchasing – when they want to know it. Encourage shoppers to visit www.smartlabel.org for more information.

Make health the convenient choice. For today’s consumers, an on-the-go lifestyle leaves less time to prepare traditional meals they may have grown up with and they are seeking out food channels for convenient meal options. Retailers that understand consumer health needs and shopping patterns can set their stores apart and can better compete in this arena.

Prioritizing speed can help draw in consumers that may consider a trip to the grocery store too time consuming!

Do your stores make it easy for customers to shop for and select healthy food?

IDEA STARTERS

Create a company statement regarding your store’s mission to provide a wide selection of products to meet consumer needs. Post this on your store website and also include links to science-based, unbiased information for consumers.

IDEA STARTERS

Provide simple recipes and meal plans featuring fresh foods.

Provide recipe-ready produce packs for stir-fries, kabobs, soups, etc.

Sell dietitian approved meal kits in store and/or for delivery to augment in-store offerings.

Conduct demos showing how to create an easy family meal recipe.

Provide a healthy grab-and-go case for snacks.

Provide a separate checkout for prepared foods.

Have a Registered Dietitian conduct a healthy fresh food tour for consumers that highlights quick, affordable and nourishing options.

Provide pre-shop assistance with meal planning apps.

Provide easy recipe and meal prep guidance in the meat/seafood department.

Consider having this available as a virtual tour through your website or on social media.

Promote a healthful meal of the week via social networks.

Offer a well-organized grab-and-go case for healthier lunch options.

Create a meat bunker recipe display with all ingredients.

Offer on-line purchasing with links to healthy recipes.

Visually show easy assembly, nourishing meal options (i.e.: rotisserie chicken, healthy deli salad, bakery whole grain rolls).

Communicate how to select, store and prepare a key produce sale item.

Offer a variety of healthy deli-prepared options that require no additional prep-time near the front of the store.
Communicate to gain trust and promote choice.

Consumers often feel a sense of frustration when it comes to food and nutrition information. Not only does the science change and evolve, but they are also bombarded with fearmongering health messages through mass media that cause confusion and mistrust of the food industry. This fear inducing misinformation affects the food choices consumers make and can lead to lower intake of not only the denounced food but also the entire related category. Negatively portraying food can lead to consumers avoiding healthful choices such as fruits and vegetables, lean meats, certain seafood items and other fresh choices. Shoppers need to feel confident that they are purchasing safe and healthy foods for themselves and their families and retailers need communication tactics that build trust while promoting choice. Properly trained employees and/or retail health professionals can create these trusted relationships and provide shoppers with the solutions they desire.

Use the expertise of a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist:

Many supermarket chains are hiring Registered Dietitian Nutritionists at the corporate, regional or store level to provide a source of credible food and nutrition information. Dietitians provide “educational-selling” techniques that eliminate customer confusion, build trust and help drive sales. Dietitians can make tailored nutrition recommendations that apply to real life through food purchasing. This can be especially helpful for consumers who are diagnosed with a condition that has deep ties to what they eat, such as diabetes or Celiac disease. In addition, when a dietitian provides basic education on food selection, storage and preparation, customers gain the confidence needed to create a variety of meals at home to meet their family’s needs. The dietitian and retailer become a trusted source of information for shoppers and customers will reward your store(s) with their loyalty as they seek your ongoing guidance for food advice and meal solutions.

Have Well Trained Employees

Fresh food departments can be very busy and the customer can often be overlooked as employees are preparing foods, filling cases and stocking produce. However, engaging with customers when they are seeking out fresh food is important. As customers are looking at produce, meat, or prepared foods they often want and need advice on ingredients, cooking times and recipes. Properly trained staff can deliver those ‘special touches’ that inspire allegiance like helping a shopper pick out the perfect steak to grill or suggesting products for a healthy heat and eat dinner. These “educational selling” opportunities provide customer guidance, increase shopper loyalty and drive sales.

Are your fresh department employees able to?

- Suggest nourishing meal ideas to “upsell” customers
- Offer seasonal tips on selecting and storing produce
- Guide shoppers to the right meat or seafood item and offer cooking suggestions
- Advise on food safety tips for prepared foods to go
- Direct shoppers to helpful store resources such as web recipes, meal planning guides and nutrition information

Registered Dietitian Nutritionists can:

- Understand and align with customer values
- Gain trust and help clarify food misinformation
- Answer questions about new food products
- Provide cooking demonstrations
- Develop healthful meal kits
- Suggest merchandising options for healthy grab-and-go cases
- Offer shopping guidance for special diets
- Communicate healthy meal ideas in-store, via the website or in traditional or social media
- Provide community outreach to amplify fresh messages
- Train fresh team members on educational selling techniques and resources to ensure employees are knowledgeable and approachable
- Work with public relations on positive, consistent food communication
Setting up for success

The Opportunity - Fresh food departments can play a big role in helping consumers meet their wellness goals while successfully growing the bottom line. According to a 2017 Nielsen report, top-performing U.S. fresh retailers are experiencing stronger growth across total store sales—4% total store growth in 2016, compared with only 1% total store growth in bottom-performing fresh counterparts. In addition, top-performing grocery retailers also derive a larger portion of their sales from the fresh departments. As more consumers seek out options for healthy, convenient products, it will be critical to leverage the fresh departments and the variety within them to provide a healthy meal experience customers will want to come back for.

Tips for Leveraging Health & Wellness to Increase ROI in Fresh Departments:

(link to appropriate partners on website)

Prepared Foods/Deli:

- **Stay current on food and nutrition trends** - While you don’t need to jump into every food fad, there may be key food trends that customers are hearing about and seeking – from ethnic cuisines to ancient grains.

- **Start small** – You may not be able to incorporate a large prepared foods hot case right now but could add a healthy touch to your chicken program by adding some colorful vegetable side dishes.

- **Promote both nutritional attributes and convenience to the non-cooks** - This combination is what many families are seeking from your prepared foods offerings. Include healthier options for ready-to-eat, heat-and-eat and meal kits.

- **Family favorites are still important** – Offer gourmet homestyle dishes with a healthier twist that consumers may not typically prepare at home.

- **Leverage a nutrition professional** - If your store employs dietitians, involve them in recipe analysis and the creation of healthier options. Add signage to products indicating “Dietitian’s Choice” for those better-for-you items.

- **Merchandise solutions** – When customers are shopping your prepared foods cases for a quick dinner idea be sure they can clearly see healthy solutions.

- **Train employees to sell** – Employees should engage shoppers by asking how they can help them and be prepared to provide valuable advice for selecting nourishing, time-saving meal options and cooking tips.
**Meat/Poultry/Seafood:**

- **Provide basic seasonal guidance** – Help shoppers navigate the meat/poultry and seafood cases based on their seasonal needs. Offer American Heart Association Heart-Check recipes in February, for example, and provide seasoning options for grilling lean steaks in the summer months.

- **Environmental issues matter** - Consumers say they are willing to pay more for products that align with their personal beliefs, so retailers should be sure to stock products that align with these consumer priorities, like grass-fed beef or cage-free eggs. These issues are predicted to only become more important to consumers.

- **Have convenient, healthy selections** - Consumers are willing to pay more for convenience and health, so offer pre-seasoned meat, poultry and seafood, or pre-made kabobs with fresh vegetables as a way show the store’s value while exposing consumers to the kinds of tastes and ingredients they may not put together themselves.

- **Merchandise total recipes** – Use a meat case to highlight an easy recipe. Use the refrigerated case for the fresh meat/seafood item and any perishables. Add wing shelving units to hold shelf-stable ingredients. Simply add a sign with the recipe and/or recipe cards.

- **Offer cooking demos instore and online** – Demos boost sales while helping shoppers acquire new recipe ideas that are easy, nutritious and quick to prepare. Highlight key fresh items, provide a total meal solution and ensure easy access to all ingredients instore to build basket size. When developing online cooking demos remember to keep them brief (less than 5 minutes) to boost consumer engagement.

**Produce:**

- **Promote local** - Increasingly, consumers want to know precisely where their food comes from and want to promote local farmers. Make sure they can clearly see what local produce items are available and have a transparent definition of what “local” means to your company available on your website.

- **Display complementary items together** – Fresh fruits and veggies for smoothies, guacamole ingredients or build-a-better salad components all provide shoppers with additional ideas to drive sales.

- **Include weekly produce solutions with pick up or delivery services** – Millennials and families with small children have busy schedules and often do not have the time to plan and shop for healthy meals and snacks. Offer a fresh produce snack box or a weeks’ worth of vegetables and fruits for meal accompaniments. Include storage tips and simple recipes.

- **Give produce a prominent place in meal kits** - Meal kits allow busy consumers to cook and eat healthy meals at home. They also provide perfect portions and help avoid waste.

- **Promote specific health benefits** – Most consumers know fruits and veggies are good for them but highlighting key benefits that help individuals prevent or manage a disease state condition is especially important to baby boomers who may be dealing with age-related health concerns.

- **Capitalize on the plant-based eating movement** - Opportunities exist with meat-eating consumers who increasingly identify as “flexitarian.” They are looking for occasional vegetarian meals and will welcome ideas for grilled portabella mushroom burgers or a tofu and vegetable stir-fry.
Bakery:

- **Provide nutrition information** – Having nutrition information available helps customers balance their choices and provides transparency.

- **Have healthier options available** – Whole grain choices and products made with ingredients that offer nutritional benefits are important to the health-conscious shopper. Ensure labeling and signage highlight the attributes to help increase sales.

- **Offer different portion sizes** – Customers want an occasional treat but may be looking for options to help with portion control. Keep smaller sizes and packages of regular and indulgent choices available and ensure they are made with high-quality ingredients.

- **Offer high protein products** – The trend toward higher-protein products is important to shoppers, especially with breakfast and snack items. Start by adding some high-protein muffins and/or cookies to your bakery mix.

- **Include locally sourced products and ingredients** – Customers appreciate the opportunity to support local farms and businesses and research from the American Bakers Association found that 62% of shoppers try to purchase local products when possible.

- **Offer allergen free choices** – Food allergies are on the rise which means more people will be searching for allergen-free bakery products.

**Measurements for Success:**
Each individual retailer must determine what health & wellness offerings fit their customer base and what they can execute successfully with engaged, knowledgeable labor. The goal is to minimize shrink and obtain your desired gross margin. Continue to refine your product mix and measure the ROI of both the products and services you offer in your health and wellness fresh programs:

*Products:*
- Can be easily measured and provide a tangible sales result
- Can be promoted through demos and merchandising displays
- Can be the focus of store tours, social media, recipes and educational classes

*Services:*
- Are more intangible but build customer loyalty as you provide personalized solutions
- Includes in-store guidance and education, cooking classes, meal planning assistance, community outreach and personal consults.

*Opportunities for quantifying the ROI of health and wellness in fresh departments includes:*
- Increased customer loyalty
- Higher sales of better-for-you products
- Bigger basket size or increased trip frequency
- Fee for services
- Vendor funding for programs

*Sources: Nielson FreshFacts, 2017*  
*American Bakers Association ELDC, Sept. 19, 2014*
SECTION II
Profitable Partnerships and Resources
Establishing relationships with key partners is crucial to successfully accomplishing all the potential health opportunities within fresh departments at retail. Possible partners include commodity groups, vendors, health organizations, and local health influencers. These collaborations are extremely valuable and can provide products, resources and connections that can strengthen and amplify your efforts. By selecting partners that share your mutual goals of offering healthy products, educating consumers and driving sales, you will create a scenario where everyone wins!

**Tips for establishing profitable partnerships in fresh:**

1. **Have a clear sense of your health and wellness mission/vision and goals for the year.** Whether you work off a seasonal promotional calendar or have specific disease management programs you want to implement in the upcoming year, being able to clearly define your goals allows you to have a productive discussion with partners on how they can help you achieve your vision.

2. **Based on your goals, identify the fresh departments, product categories and brands that you want to focus on and seek out partners who can provide the resources you need.**

3. **Leverage vendor or commodity expertise as they can provide knowledge on a variety of topics related to food products or categories including consumer insights, shopper purchase decisions, POS data analysis, and more that when utilized can enhance your retail health and wellness initiatives.**

4. **Clearly define specific accountabilities for all participants and establish timelines for execution and follow-through.**

5. **Define what success will look like and track progress.**

6. **Nurture and strengthen the relationship with ongoing communication and evaluation.**

*All partnerships evolve and grow over time. Keep them strong by discussing what is working and what can be improved. Make sure you are able to document the ROI of the partnership. Keep asking questions - Does the association with this organization help you reach more customers and drive sales and loyalty?*
Below are examples of partnership opportunities and resource support available to help implement successful, customizable, health and wellness programs that drive fresh sales.

**Seafood Nutrition Partnership**

Seafood Nutrition Partnership (SNP) is the leading 501(c)3 non-profit organization in the U.S. building awareness of the health and nutritional benefits of seafood. SNP is addressing the country’s public health crisis through education outreach programs that inspire Americans to incorporate more seafood and omega-3s into their diets for improved health as per USDA Dietary Guidelines.

**Resources for Retail:**
SNP has many resources available for health & nutrition leaders to encourage consumers to add more seafood to their diets. Resources include:

**Retail Dietitian Communications Toolkit:** Materials include tips for guiding a supermarket tour of the seafood counter, frequently asked questions, talking points for how to buy seafood and easy cooking techniques, and sample social media messages.

**Recipes & Cooking Videos:** Recipes include a variety of delicious, easy, budget friendly seafood dishes. The Eating Heart Healthy recipes average $10 to feed a family of four.

**Infographics, Fact Sheets & Kids’ Activities:** From pregnancy to children and throughout the life cycle, the benefits of seafood are depicted on numerous materials available for your use.

**The Healthy Heart Pledge:** Pledge takers are supported with coupons, tips and recipes to help them eat seafood twice a week.

**Ready to use Presentations:**

**Eating Heart Healthy:** An interactive cooking and nutrition workshop. The program is offered in a 1-session and 4-session format.

**Seafood in Schools:** Five lessons with a focus to teaching kids the importance of health and nutrition and how to make healthy decisions for optimal wellness throughout their lives.

**Dietary Guidelines for Americans:** This presentation includes key messages from the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, highlights the seafood recommendation, and provide ways health and nutrition professionals can help individuals make healthy shifts to their diet.

Contact: Ms. Andrea Albersheim, Director of Communications, andrea@seafoodnutrition.org
National Cattlemen’s Beef Association

The National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) is a contractor of the Beef Checkoff and manages research and promotion programs on behalf of America’s farmers and ranchers with oversight from the Cattlemen’s Beef Board and USDA. One of the checkoff programs NCBA manages is the “Beef. It’s What’s for Dinner.” brand which promotes the purchasing, preparation and enjoyment of all things beef from the pasture to the plate.

Resources for retail:
For beef checkoff resources visit BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com which combines resources from 8 previous websites into one location. You’ll find:

- Nutrition information
- Retail and foodservice innovation ideas
- Supply chain and production information
- Recipe collections, consumer-friendly guides to beef cuts and culinary resources

For additional information or specific inquiries, submit a request via the Contact Us link found at the bottom of the home page under resources. By sending inquiries through the website retailers can direct the request to the appropriate person at NCBA or with the state beef councils for follow up.

Contact: Cheryl Hendricks, RD, chendricks@beef.org, 303.850.3372

The North American Meat Institute (NAMI)

NAMI created a Product Center with a guide to prepared meat products that are classified as low/reduced sodium, low/reduced fat, American Heart Association Certified, natural and organic: http://www.meatpoultrynutrition.org/productcenter - the guide is a helpful for working with shoppers on options that can fit into a variety of dietary patterns. The Product Center catalogues more than 1500 products in 12 prepared meat categories including bacon, bologna, corned beef, ham, hot dogs, jerky/snack sticks, pastrami, roast beef, salami, sausage and sliced turkey. It is designed to be easily searchable by category and brand. The majority of products also include a link to the brand’s website where users can find additional details including full nutrition profiles and more information on where to buy them. In addition, each category page features general nutrition information and links to more resources about each particular product.

NAMI also has an updated version of its popular MyMeatUp app, the first-of-its-kind free mobile app aimed at helping shoppers, particularly millennials — individuals between ages 18 and 35 — become informed, confident purchasers of meat and poultry. MyMeatUp 2.0 includes a new “Where does my meat come from?” feature, which allows users to search the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) establishment database for information about where the product was produced. The app also features the unique cuts of meat guide, which visually displays the most common retail beef, veal, pork and lamb cuts. By selecting a specific part of an animal, consumers can view images of common retail cuts, along with corresponding explanations, creative recipe ideas and proper cooking methods. Shoppers interested in learning more about claims made on meat and poultry product labels can use the app’s searchable glossary of definitions for “natural,” “grass-fed,” “antibiotic-free” and “no hormones added,” among others. In addition, consumers can view the industry topics section that addresses antibiotic use in animal agriculture, animal welfare practices, environmental concerns and nutrition facts in succinct list formats.

Contact: Eric Mittenthal, NAMI Vice President, Public Affairs, President, National Hot Dog & Sausage Council, emittenthal@meatinstitute.org, 202.587.4238.
National Turkey Federation

The National Turkey Federation is the organization of America’s turkey farmers and the companies who bring turkey to market. They offer broad resources about all turkey – its taste, convenience in preparation, nutrition and versatility of cuts.

Resources for retail:
Online, the ServeTurkey.org website offers a Resources section with one-pagers and infographics:

- For display, we offer insights on customer decision-making [http://bit.ly/turkeychoice](http://bit.ly/turkeychoice)

Contact: Keith M. Williams, VP, Communications & Marketing, 202.730.9639

National Pork Board

The National Pork Board provides guidance and best practices for incorporating health into the fresh sections, like the fresh meat department, of the supermarket.

Resources for retail:
- New labels that align pork and beef cut names to ease consumer confusion. Labels are consumer friendly, show pork cut characteristics and provide helpful preparation methods.
- Pork Collector Cards - to provide retailers assistance when communicating the health benefits and preparation techniques for various cuts of pork to consumers. The cards will showcase an image of a fresh, lean pork cut with a descriptor, preferred cooking method and a recipe.
- Additional materials, toolkits, factsheets and recipes to promote the health profile of pork and inspire consumers to embrace its versatility with healthy recipes. For resources visit: [http://www.porkandhealth.org/NutritionMaterials](http://www.porkandhealth.org/NutritionMaterials)

Contact: Adria Huseth, RDN, LD, CPT, Manager Nutrition Communications & Research, ahuseth@pork.org, 515.223.2632
Produce for Better Health

Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH) is a non-profit education foundation and a leader in fruit and vegetable education and nutrition marketing. Since 1991, Produce for Better Health Foundation has been working hard to achieve its core purpose:

Motivating people to eat more fruits and vegetables to improve public health

If you company is not a licensee you may want to consider this as only Fruits & Veggies—More Matters’ licensees can use the logo.

Resources for retail:
PBH has several marketing toolkits available for retail use if you are a licensee. Kits include:
• Seasonal marketing kits
• Social media posts
• POS material
• Store tour program promoting all forms of fruits and vegetables
• Web content
• Monthly ad copy
• Spanish materials

For a list of all retail resources visit - [https://pbhfoundation.org/pri_sec/retail/mar_tools](https://pbhfoundation.org/pri_sec/retail/mar_tools)

Contact: Carrie Casey, Strategy & Operations Senior Director, ccasey@pbhfoundation.org, 302.235.2329

Produce for Kids

Produce for Kids believes in creating a healthier generation. As a cause-marketing organization, Produce for Kids creates programs that provide easy, fun and inspiring recipes, tips and resources. Since its creation in 2002 by Shuman Produce Inc., Produce for Kids has raised more than $6 million to benefit children and families.

A partnership with Produce for Kids can help drive sales and educate consumers on fresh produce by providing:
• Easy, family-friendly, registered dietitian-approved recipes to encourage more meals at home
• Resources for families on ways to include more fruits & vegetables in their meals
• Tips on how to select, store and prepare fruits and vegetables
• In-store signage promoting the sale of produce
• Merchandising ideas and best practices to drive incremental market basket items
• Materials for in-store events, demos and samplings to help produce department associates engage with consumers
• Opportunities to give back to the local community
• Digital support with a dedicated microsite, social media support, blogger support and targeted e-newsletters

Contact: Amanda Keefer, Director of Marketing Communications, amanda@produceforkids.com
Produce Marketing Association/Sesame Workshop Partnership

“eat brighter!” is an innovative, consumer-facing marketing initiative that allows producers, suppliers, distributors and retailers of fresh produce to promote fresh fruits and vegetables with some of the most popular Sesame Street character images, including Big Bird and Elmo for a one-time fee. Their goal is to give the produce industry a unified message that aims to increase the consumption of fresh produce. The PMA partnership with Sesame Street Workshop and the Partnership for a Healthier America (PHA) gives the industry the tools to drive change.

With “eat brighter!”, retailers can add a spotlight on the products they sell to create awareness and build consumer demand. Featuring Sesame Street characters in the produce department will appeal not only to children, but also to parents and caregivers.

For more information: https://www.pma.com/events/eat-brighter

Grain Foods Foundation

Formed in 2004, Grain Foods Foundation (GFF) is a group of thought leaders and advocates for ALL grain foods and believes everybody needs grain foods to enjoy a happy and healthy life. Committed to nutrition education programming that is firmly rooted in science, GFF is a strong advocate for our members, and a resource for consumers and the media who want to learn more about the role of grains in a well-balanced eating pattern. GFF offers research-based information and resources to members, partners, influencers, policymakers and consumers through a comprehensive communications campaign, conferences, webinars, research tools, social media and more. GFF is committed to bringing fact-based information and common sense to the consumer. For more information, visit grainfoodsfoundation.org.

Resources:
GFF has many resources available for nutrition communicators, clinicians, and other health influencers to remind all consumers that grains are the foods we love that love us back. These include:

- Healthy Aging microsite: a hub for all information about grains and healthy aging, including infographics, FAQs, and recipes
- Research: a meeting place for those interested in science-based, peer-reviewed studies going deeper about the essential role grains play in the diet
- Online infographic library: Need tools for your in-store RDs to use to promote the bread aisle, the pasta aisle, and the general place of grains in a healthy diet? Here you go: resources galore!
- Pro-grain takes on popular diet and nutrition literature: Book and other media reviews – more tools for your in-store RDs
- Meal plans: Healthy, everything-fits plans for enjoying all that grains can bring to your diet; for some folks, these plans are at calorie levels that could even help with weight loss.

Contact: Erin Ball; Director, PR and Science; eball@grainsfoundation.org
**Partnership for a Healthier America**

Partnership for a Healthier America’s mission is to leverage the power of the private sector to bring lasting systemic changes that improve the food supply, increase healthy choices, increase physical activity and contribute to a culture of health. In 2010, PHA was created in conjunction with – but independent from – Former First Lady Michelle Obama’s Let’s Move! effort. PHA identifies, accelerates and celebrates voluntary business practices that improve or increase choice or lead to new norms and behavior around food and physical activity.

**Resources for Retailers**

**Access PHA’s Healthier Food and Beverage Product Calculator.** PHA and the National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS) released a healthier product calculator that allows retailers, manufacturers, and distributors to easily identify packaged foods and beverages that meet PHA’s Healthier Food and Beverage Product Criteria. PHA’s Healthier Food and Beverage Product Criteria are based on the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and national expert recommendations. As the science evolves, PHA may update the calculator to align with new evidenced-based guidance. The current criteria consider both the product’s nutrient quality, including factors such as sodium content, and the product’s primary ingredients, such as whole grains or fruits and vegetables. Distributors, retailers and manufacturers can leverage the calculator to identify healthier options.

**Explore partnership.** If you’re interested in partnering to transform your retail environment to improve the nutritional quality of food and beverages and foster demand for more nutritious food and beverages, please reach out to Adrienne Weil (contact information below).

*Contact: Adrienne Weil, VP of Partnerships, aweil@ahealthieramerica.org*
American Heart Association

The AHA’s Healthy For Good™ program is a revolutionary movement to inspire consumers to create lasting change in their health and their life, one small step at a time. The approach is simple: Eat smart. Add color. Move more. Be well. A retail toolkit will soon be available so supermarkets can integrate these important messages and solution-based materials into their health and wellness programs.

Resources for retail:
- Eat Smart Month: www.heart.org/eatsmartmonth
- Add Color: www.heart.org/addcolor
- Holiday Healthy Eating Guide: www.heart.org/holidayhealthyeating
- Grocery Guide: https://recipes.heart.org/Articles/2129/Grocery-Shopping-on-a-Budget
- Heart-Check: www.heartcheck.org

Contact: Dorothea K. Vafiadis, MS, FAHA, National Director, Healthy Living dorothea.vafiadis@heart.org, 202.785.7952

American Diabetes Association

Diabetes Food Hub

The Diabetes Food Hub is a brand new digital cooking and recipe destination. Consumers will find thousands of tasty recipes and can search with ease for the perfect diabetes-friendly meal. Cooking tips, tricks, and techniques are also provided from diabetes food experts. Customized recommendations can be made to fit likes and dislikes and the innovative meal planning tool has complete nutrition information and the ability to build shopping lists. Backed by the diabetes nutrition experts at the American Diabetes Association.

Visit www.DiabetesFoodHub.org

What Can I Eat?

What Can I Eat? is an exciting and innovative nutrition focused diabetes self-management support program for adults living with type 2 diabetes and their families and caregivers. It is the first program of its kind pairing ADAs renowned diabetes Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes with evidence based nutrition and behavior change strategies aiming to simplify the basic components of making the healthy choice easier for people with diabetes.

The program curriculum:
- Provides a turnkey, up-to-date, and validated nutrition education program and materials for patients or clients with type 2 diabetes.
- Incorporates evidence-based concepts aligned with globally recognized guidelines: the American Diabetes Association Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes.
- Includes training by the American Diabetes Association for facilitation by a dietitian with complete tools and resources that can be customized to meet the unique needs of your retail community.
• Addresses health related disparities and social determinants of health to meet people “where they are” and improve their confidence in and ability to make healthy eating a way of life.
• Provides data analysis and outcomes validation by the Association, to provide data to show that your investment in the program is making an appreciable difference in the health status of individuals and your community.

**Custom Publishing with the American Diabetes Association**

ADA books meet the highest standards of clinical and nutritional diabetes care. To be published, all ADA books must comply with the American Diabetes Association’s *Standards in Medical Care in Diabetes*. This is particularly true of our diabetes-friendly, health-conscious cookbooks. Offering a wide range of cuisines, our cookbooks present well-tested, tasty recipes that are easy to prepare and nutritionally complete.

ADA Books can
- Produce custom cookbooks, mini-cookbooks, brochures, and recipe cards
- Sources for custom cookbooks can be either an existing cookbook or use recipes from a variety of our cookbooks
- Produce custom cookbooks to support any promotional topic, whether event-focused or long-term
- Help save money producing valuable and customer-appreciated giveaways
- Offer flexible project sizes: from 5,000 to 500,000 units, or more
- Provide brand alignment with the premier diabetes health association

**Employee engagement** through organizational participation in the ADA’s annual engagement days and team-building physical activities promotes health and wellness, encourages healthy living, and improves organizational well-being

• Alert Day is March 27 – Alert Day focuses attention on raising awareness of prediabetes. 1 in 3 people have prediabetes, and 90% of them are unaware of their risk.
• Get Fit Don’t Sit is May 2 – The first Wednesday in May, GFDS is an opportunity to engage companies and organizations in promoting wellness and increasing physical activity throughout the day.
• National Healthy Lunch Day is September 19 – NHLD was created to promote good nutrition as part of a healthy lifestyle and to help people make healthy food choices.
• American Diabetes Month is November and speaks directly to our constituents and to rally them to increase attention for diabetes – and how it must be stopped.

*Contact: Sacha Uelmen RDN, CDE, Director, Nutrition, Scientific, Medical & Mission Division*  
suelmen@diabetes.org, 703.299.5518
National Family Meals Month™ campaign

Family meals eaten at home have been proven to benefit the health and wellness of children and adolescents, to fight obesity, substance abuse and to make families stronger—creating a positive impact on our communities and our nation as a whole. Food retailers and fresh departments are uniquely positioned to make family meals at home easier to accomplish. The family meal movement will culminate in September with National Family Meals Month™ but can be promoted year-round.

To obtain a retailer toolkit visit: https://www.fmi.org/family-meals/toolkits/retailer-toolkit.

Vendor and Commodity Resources

Vendors offer an abundance of resources to help retailers promote healthy options and drive sales. Reach out to your suppliers to determine what expertise they may have available to help you implement and advance your wellness initiatives and fresh sales.

Here are a few examples:

Center Store Partnerships to Drive Fresh Purchases – Campbell Soup Company

Shoppers want to eat fresh foods, but they also need help preparing them within their time-strapped schedules. Center store foods can help shoppers be more successful at preparing fresh items conveniently and deliciously. Campbell partners with retail customers on specialized programs and develops digital and print resources that help inspire and empower shoppers to prepare fresh foods at home. Campbell’s Global Nutrition team develops resources such as nutrition communication kits, nutrition education handouts, coupon programs, blog posts, and recipe collections that encourage consumers to shop across the aisles. These resources are tailored for specific retail health and well-being partnerships and some are available on demand at www.campbellanutrition.com. Partnerships between retailers and center store manufacturers can help shoppers prepare delicious, wholesome recipes from their increased fresh purchases.

Contact: Lindsay Watts, RDN, Sr. Nutrition Communications Analyst, Lindsay_Watts@campbellsoup.com, 856.342.6361

healthyAisles® - Technology by Vestcom

Vestcom’s healthyAisles® nutrition program is the leading shelf-edge nutrition and wellness communications solution for supermarket and drug channel retailers in the United States. Beyond a core nutrition and lifestyle attribute database – which includes more than 70 FDA and USDA approved claims -- our healthyAisles support team offers expert communications guidance, as well as in-store signage and related campaign solutions.

Retail Wellness & Health Campaign Solutions:
The healthyAisles solution is powered by Vestcom, the leader in shelf-edge and shopper marketing solutions for retail. Any nutritional communications or campaigns may be incorporated into our suite of shelf edge solutions:

Shelf Edge Nutrition & Lifestyle Attributes: Retailers can build their own shelf-edge wellness program by choosing desired nutrition and lifestyle claims from our library of 70+ attributes, spanning both center store as well as fresh departments. These attributes may be displayed via shelf tags, shelf strips, in-store promotion signage, and on e-commerce platforms.
**Themed Content & Signage Campaigns:** The healthyAisles team can work with your corporate dietitians, marketing and advertising departments to create custom content and signage to support your promotional campaign. Examples of relevant events include: American Heart Month, National Family Meals Month, Build a Better Lunch Box (for back to school), and launch or relaunch of a retailer’s shelf-edge nutrition program.

**ISMAds®:** Integrated Shopper Marketing Ads are the perfect in-store vehicle for extending your wellness-themed campaign to the shelf edge as part of the retail price label. This allows for guaranteed campaign compliance, in addition to increased shopper awareness and incremental sales lift.

*Contact: Monica Amburn, Senior Director of Health & Wellness, mamburn@vestcom.com*

### Kellogg’s

Kellogg’s offers resources for cross promotion activations with fresh departments including programs for lower income populations.

- Example: Display and recipe program showing ways to use cereal to make lean meat “go further” or to prepare it better.

- Example: Seasonal produce signage incorporating versatility into Fresh Flavors for fall campaign.

*Contact: Melanie Hall MS, RD, Manager, National WIC Partnerships, Kellogg Nutrition Activation Team 269-961-2475 office; melanie.hall@kellogg.com*

### Hormel/Jennie O

Jennie-O offers a variety of consumer-friendly recipes and turkey preparation tips to assist retailers with promoting solutions for year-round turkey consumption. They also provide seasonal menu plans and recipes to help shoppers with solutions during key food related holidays and times of the year: Fresh Summer Menu, Christmas Appetizer Party, Easter Brunch Menu, Fun-n-Fast Lunchbox ideas and of course Thanksgiving resources can be used to promote fresh as well as total store sales.

*Visit: www.jennieo.com*
Smithfield Foods

Smithfield Foods is a global food company with popular brands including Smithfield, Eckrich®, Nathan’s Famous®, Farmland®, Armour®, Farmer John®, Kretschmar®, John Morrell®, Cook’s®, Gwaltney®, Carando®, Margherita®, Curly’s®, Healthy Ones®, Morliny®, Krakus® and Berlinki®. Smithfield Foods is committed to providing good food in a responsible way and maintains robust animal care, community involvement, employee safety, environmental and food safety and quality programs.

Resources for retail:

Retail Dietitian Fresh Box: Direct mail box that includes Smithfield Fresh Pork Recipe Brochures, Why Fresh Pork – Heart Healthy Protein and Protein Comparison Handouts and a Meat Thermometer

American Heart Association Certification Material: Smithfield has developed seasonally relevant in-store recipe tear pads geared towards inspiring consumers with heart healthy recipes featuring the American Heart Association Shield including several fresh, lean pork cuts. Additionally, they have created retailer digital toolkits complete with online banner ads and social media ideas geared towards educating and inspiring consumers pre-shop.

Additional Available Materials: Toolkits, factsheets, recipes, recipe photography, recipe videos and cooking videos to promote the health profile of Fresh Pork and inspire shoppers and consumers to embrace its versatility.

Visit www.smithfieldfoodsbalance.com for additional information

Contact: Erin Thacker, MA, RDN, Smithfield Foods Nutritionist, ethacker@smithfield.com, (757) 357-1653

Local health influencers

Whether you employ Registered Dietitian Nutritionists or not, there is still great value in collaborating with community health influencers. These individuals are looking for resources to help keep their patients and clients well and your store(s) can provide needed solutions in terms of healthy food options and pharmacy services. The benefits of partnering with local health influencers is the amplification of your wellness messaging, potential new customers and increased sales of better-for-you products.

Several retailers have actually developed specific educational store events for local medical professionals to demonstrate how their stores can partner in patient care. Local dietitians, physicians and nurses attend the programs and leave with an understanding of the products, and resources available to support a healthy lifestyle and manage disease states. Other chains provide health influencer training focused on how to conduct store tours and cooking demos. Local health professionals then feel comfortable using your store location(s) for tours to educate their patients about total store health and wellness solutions as they promote your fresh department offerings, own brand products and pharmacy services.
The bottom line is that most health professionals welcome the chance to collaborate with a retail community partner to improve health outcomes for patients and clients and will promote the products and services you provide to make healthy living easier.

**Community Partners**

Many local businesses, churches, physician offices, fitness centers and other community organizations are seeking out ways to improve the health of their employees and members. Connecting with these local entities is a great way to promote your store(s) as a destination for healthy food choices and to showcase the resources and products you provide to make a healthy lifestyle easy and affordable. If you have a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist on staff they can provide presentations and demos for key businesses and organizations that help increase store traffic and drive sales for better-for-you products. Partnering with these groups can also help you advance other fresh services such as party planning or catering.

**Internal partners**

When it comes to partnering for success with your health and wellness programs it’s important to remember internal departments that can help promote your products and services:

**Marketing/Advertising** – Provides ad support for meals, recipes and seasonal promotions; assists with community health and wellness activation through sponsorships and events; ensure there is a wellness support strategy for traditional and social media; secures partnerships with local health organizations.

**Merchandising/Operations** – Execute better-for-you product displays; maintain shelf tags for educational navigation; ensure store employee engagement; visually promote healthier meal ideas.

**Public Relations/Communications/Community Relations** – Ensure health and wellness is included in retail publications; create consistent wellness internal and external messaging; track trending topics and everyday solutions; provide press releases on new corporate and retail health initiatives; assist with community activation and strategic wellness partnerships.

**Human Resources/Training** – Ensure that wellness training is part of new employee on-boarding programs so the culture of health is instilled from the beginning. Help employees see the connection between their work and the H&W mission of the company; communicate the services, resources and products that can assist the employee and their family with their wellness journey, and assist with reinforcing how employees can serve as health ambassadors for customers as they shop your store(s).

**Labeling/Regulatory** – Making nutritional claims or health statements on labels, signs or in educational materials requires the oversight of regulatory experts to ensure compliance. It is a good rule of thumb to engage this department at the beginning of your program planning to provide proper guidance.
SECTION III

Health & Wellness in Fresh – Examples of Excellence
Shoppers are seeking options in fresh departments that align with their healthy lifestyles and there are vast opportunities to show how fresh foods can provide the convenience and nutrition attributes shoppers are seeking. Many retailers are finding creative ways to successfully incorporate health and wellness into their fresh departments from better-for-you products to strong partnership programs. By addressing customer’s wellness needs and providing key guidance you can also advance your fresh departments and make them shine as a destination for healthy food and meal solutions. Below are examples of excellence in fresh health and wellness programming:

**Providing general healthy eating guidance**

**Helping Families Eat Better Program**  
*Village Supermarkets ShopRite of Livingston, NJ*

Developed by ShopRite Registered Dietitian Nutritionists this weekly recipe program’s objective is to provide shoppers convenient, affordable, healthy and delicious recipes every week. To truly make this a convenient experience, the Dietitian team created central locations in each store for shoppers to pick up a copy of the weekly recipe and all necessary ingredients to execute the dish.

**Helping Families Eat Better Demo**

ShopRite dietitians created the program HFEB to show new weekly recipes and to help shoppers achieve one stop shopping.

**USDA Food Insecurity and Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grant**  
*The Kenny Family ShopRites of Delaware.*

Retail Dietitian, Cassandra Umile, RD, LDN, secured a FINI grant that provides a $2 fresh fruit and vegetable voucher for every $5 a SNAP beneficiary spends. The grant also funds in-store nutrition education in the form of store tours and weekly produce picks. ShopRite will also partner with Delaware farmers to highlight as much of their local delicious Delaware produce as possible. They see this program as a great opportunity to increase fresh produce consumption among people who otherwise couldn't afford it. Ultimately, they look to continue to expand the program to all six of their stores.
Providing special dietary solutions

**Nourishing Your Gut program**  
*Weis Supermarkets*

Identifying their customer’s interest in products for gut health, Dietitians at Weis Supermarkets created this program to help educate shoppers on natural food sources of probiotics and prebiotics. Many products from fresh departments are highlighted including, apples, onions, yogurt, kombucha, tempeh and whole wheat bakery bread. The program communicates the gut health benefits of foods consumers eat regularly to help encourage consumption. Sampling and educational signage help to promote products and the natural/organic sections of the store are also included. In store Dietitians also provide gut health store tours and ensure store employees are knowledgeable about the program. When the program kicked off Weis reached over 20,000 individuals with a Facebook live segment and a series of social media posts showing product signage. This is educational selling at it’s best and Weis is able to promote their stores as the source for many healthy choices. In addition, their Pharmacy departments are involved and provide a “prescription tear pad” listing food products to promote better gut health products along with an appropriate product coupon.

**Eating Healthy with Diabetes™**  
*Safeway and Albertson’s*

Safeway and Albertson’s help customers with diabetes stay healthy by providing guidance in the aisles. Their in-store Pharmacists partner with local Registered Dietitians to enhance individual diabetes care plans with education and tools that make food shopping easier. The program begins with a Registered Dietitian leading a guided walking tour of our store including produce, meat, and other areas. During the tour, shoppers learn about carb counting, fiber, reading food labels and mindful eating. Pharmacists wrap up the tour with information about glucose meters, group classes, vaccinations, injecting techniques, A1c testing and other services available for people with diabetes. The program provides both food and pharmacy solutions to customers while driving total store sales.
In-store health & wellness guidance

**Build A Better Basket with Health Tags**  
*United Supermarkets*

Shopping for healthy food can be a challenge. From health conditions to food allergies, customers need guidance in the aisles to help them navigate the many food products in both the dry grocery and fresh departments.

United Supermarkets Build a Better Basket with Health Tags program is designed to help customers find the foods they need for their personalized health and wellness goals. Products can receive up to 3 of the most important health tags linked to that item so shoppers can quickly identify foods that are helpful for specific health conditions and preferences.

**Dietitian Pick of the Month**  
*Hy-Vee*

Developed in 2009, and still going strong the Dietitian Pick of the Month program focuses on introducing customers to new healthy foods, while focusing their 250 in store dietitians on one food message for the entire month. This allows Hy-Vee to collectively show the impact on sales. The Pick of the Month is often a fresh item such as produce and the dietitian team incorporates product messaging into social media, monthly newsletters, TV, online videos, cooking classes and store tours. Sales are always tracked and are typically increased and sustained over time. The very first two products featured in the program were chia seeds and Greek yogurt, which were new products in 2009. They remain big sellers in Hy-Vee supermarkets today.
Engaged employees

A Healthy Community Starts with a Healthy Employee

Wegmans

At Wegmans, customers know they can find health and wellness support. But the dedication they have to promoting a healthy lifestyle for their customers extends to their team members. Wegmans believes that in order for their employees to take care of customers, they should have the ability to take care of their health, too. The health coverage options and wellness programs ensure all employees are living better, more fulfilling lives.

Team member wellness program services include blood pressure wellness, free flu shots, tobacco cessation programs, and even a yearly, free, onsite health screening that covers BP, cholesterol, weight, and BMI. They offer coaching and guidance from their pharmacists and dietitians, on-site yoga, Weight Watchers at Work meetings, fitness discounts and more! Since the inception of their wellness program services, Wegmans data shows that employees have reduced their blood pressure and body mass index (BMI).

Moreover, their “get-moving” employee initiatives don’t just stop within the walls of Wegmans. They inspire residents of nearby communities to be more active through our “Passport to Family Wellness” program. City recreation programs, fitness programs and park conservancy groups have teamed up with Wegmans to distribute a pocket-sized “passport” for families looking to explore local nature trails. Hundreds of people have taken their “passports” with them and discovered new ways to improve their health.

Wegmans’ mission is to be a dependable resource to wellness and hope to inspire health and wellness all over the country, starting with the continued care of their employees.

Wellness Champions

Raley’s Family of Fine Stores

Raley’s has launched an internal team of “Wellness Champions” to serve as designated leaders in helping to inspire and engage all of their team members around wellness and this small group of individuals is having a big impact! A passion for health and nutrition is beginning to shine in just about every location Raley’s operates. Numerous team members have publicly shared their personal wellness stories - inspiring all of our team members to begin educating themselves. Raley’s continues to grow this team, sharing knowledge and building a unique culture that embraces health and wellness. This type of collaboration helps Raley’s team members further connect to their health and wellness mission, and encourages customers to make better food choices. It is all part of what Raley’s calls their “Let’s Begin” program. It’s the start of their efforts to change the way the world eats, one plate at a time and to share with customers the idea that one small positive health change can support their personal goals for a healthier life.
Meal planning, meal kits and prepared foods

**Dietitian Choice Dinner and Lunch Kits**  
*Coborn’s*

Midwest grocery operator Coborn’s Inc. offers delicious, healthier dinner and lunch kits with their CobornsDelivers online shopping service. Coborn’s chefs and dietitians develop fresh family dinner meal kits and school lunch kits that shoppers can add to their regular online orders, getting household essentials delivered right along with their dietitian-designed, same-day-packed meal kit orders. The popularity of meal kits is expected to rise as busy families with tight time budgets find a way to fit healthy, adventurous, homemade meals into busy days. CobornsDelivers is responding to customer demand with seven dinner menus designed by its staff dietitians, each feeding four at a price of between $4 and $7 per person. Packed with full-color recipe cards, CobornsDelivers *To The Table* meal kits are a simple solution to dinnertime, offering a wide variety of proteins and inclusion of meat-free and gluten-free options. The School Lunch Kits are packaged in sturdy brown bags and the dietician-designed lunches include whole grains, lean protein, dairy, and fruits and vegetables to give kids a midday energy boost.

**Website meal planner**  
*Hy-Vee*

Hy-Vee offers balanced meal ideas with healthy side suggestions and complete nutrition facts on their website. Many of the recipes promote fresh seafood, meat, poultry and fresh fruits/vegetables. Customers can choose the recipes they want and can also create a shopping list with all ingredients by just clicking a Print & Shop tab. Recipes meet the seasonal needs of shoppers while promoting new culinary ideas with fresh products.
Successful partnerships

**Lean Beef: Packed with Protein – Eat Well to Stay Well**
*Kroger*

State Beef Councils partnered with Kroger to encourage shoppers to “beef up on the benefits of protein” during National Family Meals Month. The Little Clinics inside Kroger, distributed “Lean Beef: Packed with Protein” booklets to every patient during the month of September, which contained information on the nutritional benefits of beef along with easy to prepare beef recipes. Kroger Nutrition Techs and Dietitians completed 17 educational events and beef demos across their regions to promote The Beef Council booklet program. Customers were encouraged to use #krogerdietitianpicks and tag @BeefItsWhatsforDinner on social media and the regional dietitians also created several social posts about the program. The promotion also included a beef prize package to a lucky winner engaging on social media.

The Beef Council also sponsored 30-minute personal shopping sessions for Kroger customers during the month of September, which involved a 1:1 active shopping session with a retail dietitian, putting booklet tips into practice while also answering individual questions from shoppers according to their unique needs.

**Kids Eat Right Program**
*AM, Inc.*

AM Inc., which operates three supermarket stores on the northwest side of Puerto Rico, conducted a successful community intervention program called “Kids Eat Right” with their retail dietitians. By establishing community alliances with school, churches, after school clubs and health care facilities, they were able to connect with hundreds of children in their community to offer activities where they promoted the development of culinary skills, eating more fruits and vegetables, and savvy snacking. A great way to train future shoppers on the benefits of healthy, fresh foods!

The program was launched during Kids Eat Right Month, in August. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation Kids Eat Right program provides many resources to assist dietitians in working with schools and communities to help kids eat better and move more.
Kwik Trip teamed up with Partnership for a Healthier America (PHA) and have made a number of changes to their stores based on the commitments they formed. Kwik Trip made more fresh fruit and fresh vegetables available in store locations, along with more whole grain items and low-fat dairy options. In addition, they created an Eat Smart guide that helps guests select smart choices and formed a Healthy Concessions program to create interest in selling better-for-you foods at concession stands. The program also supports a healthy lifestyle for employees. Bike racks are installed at new store builds (and rebuilds) and employees get a free piece of fruit for each working day. Kwik Trip also joined the Drink Up initiative through their PHA agreement to encourage guests and employees to drink more water.
SECTION IV
Health & Wellness in Fresh Moves Forward
The consumer-driven health and wellness movement will continue to shape the future supermarket as shoppers increasingly understand that the right food choices are fundamental to good health. Where consumers choose to shop and what they shop for will be linked to overall healthy living and sustainability. An aging population and rising health care costs will help fuel the shift to self-care and healthy food selections must be part of their prevention plan – staying well will simply be less costly than becoming ill.

While proactive wellness customers will lead the way, and are focused on real food with positive nutritional benefits, many shoppers still struggle with health decisions and are looking for guidance and direction. As consumers manage their health with food purchasing decisions, they will seek out those retailers who provide quality fresh products, healthy prepared food options and educational expertise to support their wellness journey.

Below are some key considerations and recommendations for moving wellness initiatives forward in retail fresh departments:

**Expand Your Health & Wellness Image:**

- Fresh departments are already seen as the healthiest part of the supermarket but shoppers will be looking for even more better-for-you options in the coming years. This will be especially important for the prepared foods section of the store because of its ability to also offer convenience to busy households. Quick, easy and healthier will be the winning equation!

- Help shoppers cultivate healthier eating habits by making health solutions visible with signage, product displays and information which can all be leveraged to enhance your store's wellness image.

- Integrate fresh department wellness initiatives with the total store. Collaborate with pharmacy services, provide “educational selling” programs, and offer meal planning and recipes that capture specific consumer wellness shopping occasions.
Address Personal Health Issues:

- Shoppers will look to retailers to address “my” health needs with accessible solutions and expertise across the store in food, pharmacy and fitness. Topics predicted to be of top interest in the coming years include foods to support brain health and the advancement of personalized genomics.

- According to the American Diabetes Association, 30% of adult Americans are prediabetic and more than 1.5 million people are diagnosed with diabetes each year. More customers will be managing diabetes and will look for food and beverage solutions at supermarkets. Fresh produce, whole grains, fiber and lean protein sources will be key to disease management.

- Educating and empowering shoppers in fresh departments will be important and can help retailers promote tasty and exciting options that are also nourishing. Stores need to clearly identify food solutions based on health concerns (gluten free, diabetes-friendly, heart-healthy, etc.) to help shoppers find products more easily and make choices that meet specific health needs.

- Assist shoppers before they come to stores by creating online platforms for customers to tailor their menus and build shopping lists. Integrate nutrition attribute programs so consumers can filter and identify food products appropriate for specific diet plans and tag recipes that meet particular health needs.

- Consumers will demand nutritional guidance in store. Post information or make it available for fruits, vegetables, meat, poultry, seafood and all prepared foods.

- According to the Hartman Group, customization is important to shoppers. Think about having a “coffee bar mentality” in a grocery food bar setting by offering affordable, freshly made meals that can be personalized to assist customers with their health and wellness goals. In addition, offering healthier meal kits provides personal flavor preferences while helping shoppers prep at home and enjoy family mealtime.

Go Beyond Nutrition to Include Environmental Health Initiatives:

- Sustainability issues will factor into consumers’ purchasing decisions, including not only what they buy, but also where they choose to shop. A food retailer’s commitment to green values will be seen in a positive light and fresh departments can help lead the way.

- Waste reduction efforts will continue to grow and expectations will be high. The environmental and economic costs of food waste are becoming more apparent both to shoppers and the food industry. You will see major retail waste reduction initiatives and again, fresh departments will play a prominent role in these efforts. As you put waste reduction programs into place make sure you communicate your efforts to shoppers.

- Consumers have embraced transparency and this will become even more mainstream in the coming years. “Transparency, social responsibility and traceability will continue to grow in importance in consumer shopping behavior,” said Mary Kay O’Connor, vice-president of education at the International Dairy-Deli-Bakery Association. Food retailers that excel in transparency and traceability will gain differentiation strategies to set them apart from retail competition.

The Menu Labeling rule developed by the US Food and Drug Administration went into effect in early May, 2018. The rule requires calorie labeling (and additional nutritional information upon request) for standard menu items at covered establishments. Covered establishments include those with 20 or more locations doing business under the same name, selling restaurant type foods and substantially the same menu items. FMI has developed a number of resources and an implementation guide that can be obtained at FMI.org/Menu-Labeling.

In addition FMI has created of reference signs for popular salad bar, rotisserie and bakery items:
- Salad Bar Nutrition Information
- Rotisserie Nutrition Information
- Bakery Nutrition Information
• With a variety of healthy, fresh food options becoming more accessible from supermarkets, food safety will be a top concern. Prepared food options, in addition to onsite food preparation stations, must deliver the fresh food that consumers want while keeping items consistent, profitable and safe.

**Establish Creative Collaborations:**

• The wellness segment of retail will continue to be a big part of industry collaboration. A recent article by Global Market Development Center entitle, “Consumers Hold Retailers Accountable for Their Health and Wellness Journeys” outlines a new GMDC whitepaper that emphasizes the importance of industry partnerships in meeting consumer health needs. As consumers demand improved health solutions, they have big expectations from industry leaders, who need to work together more closely to meet these needs.

• Seek out creative partnerships as ways to amplify health and wellness messages, product offerings and add credibility to your efforts. Investigate new educational programs being offered to retailers through national health organizations such as the American Heart Association and the American Diabetes Association. These resources can be incorporated into existing retail wellness curricula and customized to your operation.

• As the perimeter of the store grows more prominent in terms of meeting consumer health and wellness needs, retailers need more strategies to differentiate themselves. Engage fresh vendor support and work closely to create tactics that provide the healthy products and programs customers are seeking.

**Use Technology to Reach Tomorrow’s Shoppers:**

• Currently, 45.7 million consumers use their phone to search for health and wellness solutions and this number will only grow. Digitally engaged food shoppers will seek more fresh items, quick access to information and expect new experiences.

• In the coming years, retailers will see more competition from online and click and collect shopping services as well as new innovations in fresh store formats. To meet these challenges, retailers will need to expand flexibility and create new fresh features as they integrate digital technologies.

• Social engagement with shoppers is a priority and will be so for future customers. According to the Hartman Group, Generation Z, who makes up 23 percent of the U.S. population moves seamlessly between digital behaviors and real life and they are already highly proactive participants in health and wellness. For Gen Z, technology is fun, entertaining and useful. They are engaging with technology across all parts of everyday life. Outside of direct family, Gen Z is more likely than all other generations to look to their online social networks for advice on health and wellness.

• The number of individuals connected to wearable devices worldwide is expected to jump to over 830 million by 2020. As consumers continue to utilize these health and fitness trackers to monitor their daily food and fitness activity, it is feasible to see partnerships established between these companies and retailers to help monitor customer and/or employee progress while offering health solutions to meet goals.
• By 2020 there is predicted to be 55 million smart home devices. These will include affordable smart refrigerators, smart watches and other devices that will change the way consumers acquire food. How will your stores organize efforts to assist shoppers with their wellness goals and promote healthier decision-making both in store and digitally?

• Consumers will expect “eater-tainment” in grocery stores, especially in fresh departments. This concept will create more customized in-store engagement for all shopper segments and can be used to promote healthy food choices. As consumer shopping styles and needs continue to evolve, updated equipment and technology will be needed to support these progressions.

Create a Culture of Health & Wellness:

• To truly create a culture of health and wellness in fresh departments, team members must be engaged and deliver a positive shopping experiences around healthier foods. Include employees in all wellness initiatives so they can champion your strategies not only for customers but in their own personal wellness journey. The ability to suggest healthy food options and communicate how to select and prepare produce or lean meat/seafood items will create shopper loyalty and drive business success.

• Ensure your store projects an atmosphere of health and wellness. Lighting, packaging, and appealing signage that provides nutritional guidance can draw attention to your healthier product offerings and overall wellness initiatives.

• Consider using on-site health professionals to provide suggestions and advice. Some supermarket chains have employed Registered Dietitians who can offer guidance on food selection. If these experts aren’t available in store they can create the educational materials that provide in store and online wellness guidance. Expertise can help drive fresh sales as many of the products in these departments provide nutritional benefits to maintain health or manage a disease. For example, a study published in the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior found that an intervention that included brief shopping education by a nutrition educator resulted in greater purchasing of fruit and dark green/yellow vegetables.

As on-line shopping expands and the segment of wellness shoppers continues to grow, supermarket fresh departments will become the differentiator at retail. Providing not only healthy products, but wellness knowledge and expertise, will be essential for future success!