

# HOW TO BE A SLAQ-ER:

## *Retail Edition*

### Training for California Local Health Departments

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<https://ucanr.edu/sites/slaq>



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# Objectives of Training

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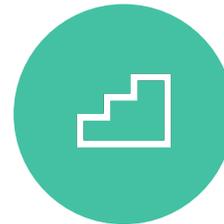
Introduce the assessment tool



Orient you to the data collection process



Provide opportunity to answer questions



Next steps



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# What's a SLAQ?

- Site-Level Assessment Questionnaire
- Developed by NPI, in partnership with CDPH
  - 3 “learn” settings, 1 retail
  - reviewed by subject matter experts
  - Currently piloting with LHDs
- Comprehensive assessment of policies and practices at each site
- For use in evaluation and planning
- Measure change over time



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# Purpose of the Retail SLAQ:

- Assess the extent to which the store supports healthy eating and active living behaviors
- Builds off of CX3 Retail Food Availability and Marketing Tool
- SNAP-Ed oriented, while covering healthy retail strategies more generally
- Meets assessment criteria in the LHD Funding Application Package and IWP Blueprint for small retail stores



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# General Definitions

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SLAQ

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Small store

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Point-of-decision

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Marketing: The 4 Ps

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Healthy vs. unhealthy

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”Smart Snack” compliant

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*Section specific definitions will be covered later on*



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# Definitions

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**SLAQ** = *site-level assessment questionnaire; Retail SLAQ is 1 of 5 developed by NPI; currently piloting and testing all SLAQs*

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**Small store** = *a food retail store with 3 or fewer registers; aligns with USDA reporting categories*

*e.g. convenience stores, liquor stores, 7-11, mini-marts, smaller, ethnic grocery stores/markets*

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**Point-of-decision signage** = *signs and labels placed right by a product, designed to influence a customer to select that product (also called point-of-purchase or point-of-sale signs)*

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**Marketing:** *includes the 4 Ps: product, placement, price, promotion*

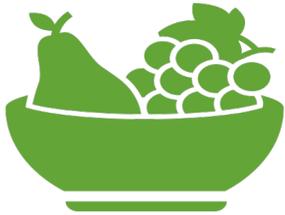
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# Definitions: Healthy vs Unhealthy



## Healthy

**foods** = *fruits and vegetables, whole grains, foods with minimal or no added fat or sweeteners, snacks that meet the Smart Snacks criteria*

**beverages** = *no added sugar, no added caffeine*

**promotion** = *images, ads, or messages to encourage purchasing healthy foods (e.g. MyPlate, “We sell fresh produce!” etc.)*



## Unhealthy

**foods, beverages, other products** = *cigarettes/tobacco, alcoholic beverages, sugary drinks, foods with high amounts of sugar, fat and/or sodium*

**promotion** = *images, ads, messages to encourage purchasing unhealthy foods/products or unhealthy behavior (e.g. Super Size, all-you-can-eat)*



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# Common names for added caloric sweeteners



High fructose corn syrup



Sugar



Sucrose



Corn syrup



Crystalline fructose



Fructose



# Examples of caloric sweeteners in ingredient lists

**Nutrition Facts**  
Serving Size 8 fl oz (240ml)  
Servings Per Container 4

Amount Per Serving	% Daily Value*
<b>Calories 50</b>	
<b>Total Fat 0g</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium 110mg</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Potassium 30mg</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate 14g</b>	<b>5%</b>
Sugars 14g	
<b>Protein 0g</b>	

NO FRUIT JUICE  
**INGREDIENTS: WATER, SUCROSE SYRUP, GLUCOSE-FRUCTOSE SYRUP, CITRIC ACID, NATURAL GRAPE FLAVOR WITH OTHER NATURAL FLAVORS, SALT, SODIUM CITRATE, MONOPOTASSIUM PHOSPHATE, RED 40, BLUE 1.**  
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**formula 50**  
 grape

ingredients: vapor distilled/deionized water, **crystal-line fructose**, natural flavor, citric acid, ascorbic acid (Vitamin C), vitamin E acetate, fruit and vegetable juice (color), magnesium lactate (electrolyte), calcium lactate (electrolyte), niacin (B3), monopotassium phosphate (electrolyte), pantothenic acid (B5), pyridoxine hydrochloride (B6), cyanocobalamin (B12), folic acid.

enjoy cold. drink better water.  
 the inside is natural, the outside is plastic.  
 ME 5¢ DEP • CA REDEMPTION VALUE

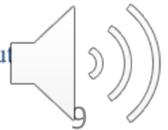
**Nutrition Facts**  
 Serving Size 8 fl oz (240 mL)  
 Servings Per Container 2.5

Amount Per Serving	% Daily Values*	
<b>Calories 50</b>		
<b>Total Fat 0g</b>		<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium 0mg</b>		<b>0%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate 13g</b>		<b>4%</b>
Sugar 13g		
<b>Protein 0g</b>		
	per serving	per bottle
Vitamin C	20%	50%
Vitamin E	20%	50%
Vitamin B3	20%	50%
Vitamin B6	20%	50%
Folic Acid	20%	50%
Vitamin B12	20%	50%
Vitamin B5	20%	50%

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.  
 contains less than 1% juice  
 not a significant source of calories from saturated fat, cholesterol, dietary fiber, vitamin A, calcium or iron



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# Flavored water: unsweetened vs artificially sweetened

## Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 Can

Amount Per Serving

**Calories 0**

% Daily Value\*

**Total Fat** 0g 0%

**Sodium** 0mg 0%

**Total Carb** 0g 0%

Sugars 0g

**Protein** 0g

Not a significant source of other nutrients

\* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

INGREDIENTS: CARBONATED WATER, NATURAL FLAVOR.



## BLACK RASPBERRY

Succulent flavor that makes for one sweet experience. We call it Black Raspberry, but you can call it delicious.

[Buy Sparkling ICE online](#) | [Nutrition Facts & Ingredients](#)

Serving Size: 8 fl. oz. (240ml)		<b>Contains 3% juice</b>
Servings Per Container: About 2		
<b>0 Calories Per Serving</b>		<b>Ingredients:</b> Carbonated Mountain Spring Water, Natural Flavors, Blackberry Juice Concentrate, Malic Acid, Potassium Benzoate (To Ensure Freshness), Sucralose, Green Tea Extract, Red #40, Biotin 1% Trit. (Maltodextrin), Niacinamide (B3), D-Calcium Pantothenate (B5), Vitamin B12 0.1% (Mannitol), Vitamin D3, Pyridoxine HCl (B6).
<b>Total Fat</b> 0g	0%	
<b>Sodium</b> 0mg	0%	
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 0g	0%	
<b>Protein</b> 0g	0%	



# POP QUIZ!



# Which ones are counted as sugary drinks?

1



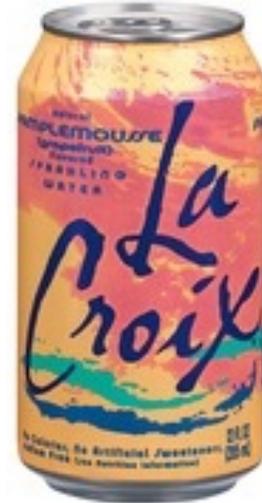
2



3



4



5



6



7



8



# Added Caffeine



- Caffeine
- Green tea extract
- Guarana (Paullinia cupana)
- Guarana seed extract
- Yerba mate extract

• If caffeine is added to a product, it must be included in the listing of ingredients required on food product labels. Caffeine that is not added—i.e., caffeine that is naturally present in the product, such as caffeine naturally occurring when you brew tea or coffee, or in chocolate—does not need to be listed as an ingredient.



# Smart Snacks

USDA Smart Snack standards for K-12 schools

Two main rules:

- “1<sup>st</sup> ingredient rule”: first ingredient must be whole grain, fruit, vegetable, dairy or protein
- “35/10/35/200” rule - nutrient standards:
  - Total fat is  $\leq 35\%$  kcals
  - Sat fat is  $\leq 10\%$  of kcals
  - Sugar is  $\leq 35\%$  by weight
  - Total kcals  $\leq 200$  per package
  - Sodium is  $\leq 200$  mg





# OVERVIEW OF RETAIL SLAQ



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# General Overview



**What:** store observations and interview



**Where:** 1 per recruited and engaged store



**When:** once at “baseline” and annually thereafter



**Who:** conducted by trained LHD staff; interviewee should be store manager or owner who is familiar with day to day practices



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# How long will the Retail SLAQ take?

On average...

- 30 minutes for observation
- 20 minutes for interview

- Many items will not apply to any given store
- Time required will vary widely: smaller stores will usually take less time than larger ones; stores that have never had any healthy retail programming will also take less time

*Observations will go faster if you are already familiar with store layout and inventory*



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# Completing the Forms: General Guidelines

- For this year, use paper forms to complete
- Some questions are “check all that apply” some are “check one only” ( vs )
- When completing store information box on front page,
  - Site ID can be found on the SLAQ website
    - » Same as ID used in PEARS
  - Do not record personal names (i.e., names of store staff)
  - Confirm whether store is SNAP and/or WIC vendor with store staff
- Can add additional questions to any of the sections, but please do not modify the SLAQ questions themselves



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# Observation Guidelines

- Observation sections (A-K) should be completed in the same day
- Only document what is actually offered/observed *that day*—not what is “usually” offered
- It is OK to ask about information which can not be observed or to verify the observed information
  - Example: it can be hard to tell which products prices are posted for or when prices aren’t posted at all
- When asking clarification questions, take a neutral stance; do not lead with a specific answer
  - Example: Those slushies are full of sugar, aren’t they?  
Instead, try: Do you know what ingredients were used to make these?



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# Trouble choosing a response

- Some of the responses are subjective in nature or the situation you're observing doesn't quite match response options available
- If you are struggling to choose a response write in an explanation on the back of the page and take a picture
  - include the section letter and question number you are referring to, e.g. B-6
- Need to include enough information for you to recall and decide later or for us to make determination
- This will also help us figure out which questions need revision



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# When to use write-in spaces

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- If you are unsure what category it goes into
- None of the categories listed seems appropriate
- Use space on back to describe in detail
  - Include section letter and question number
  - Full brand and product name
  - Take a picture (if applicable)



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# QXQ REVIEW OF SLAQ



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## Sections A-D: Location, location, location!

A. Store entrance

B. Checkout

C. End-caps

D. Free-standing Displays

*Areas of the store with the most prominent placement opportunities; designed to move product and entice impulse buys*



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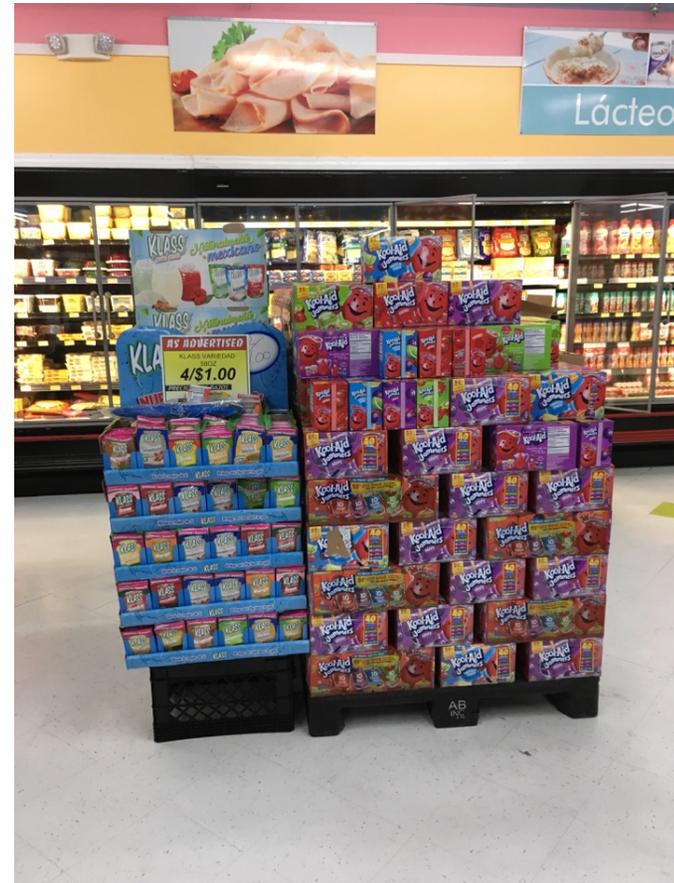
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## Aisle End-cap



## Free-standing display



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## Sections E-F: The Rise of the Groceraunt

E. Access to Water and  
Drinks Sold in To-Go Cups

F. Ready-to-eat Meals

*Does the store sell prepared foods and meals? Think take-out and to-go – the line between what's a store vs a café or restaurant is disappearing.*

*Let's also look for access to free water!*



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## Section G: Who Am I?

### G. Overall retail identity

*What does this store primarily sell? How would you describe it to someone who's never been inside? Not meant to be rocket science. No tape measure required.*



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## Sections H-K: Pulling Back the Curtain

H. Fresh Fruit and Vegetables  
 B. Staple Foods  
 C. Snack Foods  
 D. Single-serving Beverages

*It's time for the deep dive. What healthy foods and beverages are sold at this store? Does the marketing in each of these areas encourage healthy or unhealthy purchasing?*



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# How these sections are organized

What healthy products are available?

How are healthy and unhealthy items displayed?

What kinds of point-of-decision marketing signage is present (healthy and unhealthy)?

Collect actual prices of reference items (healthy and unhealthy)



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# Counting Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

*Count a type only once even if there are multiple varieties (e.g. Granny Smith and Red Delicious apples) or presentations (whole and cut)*

**Poll #2: These are the fresh fruits and vegetables you see at the store. How many types of each do you mark down (using the SLAQ response categories)?**

## Fresh Fruits

- Whole apple
- Sliced apples
- Fruit salad made with fresh fruit in the deli case
- Strawberries
- Green grapes
- Red grapes

## Fresh vegetables

- Bunch of large carrots
- Package of baby carrots
- Pre-washed, bagged romaine lettuce
- Heads of green leaf lettuce



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# How do you know something is whole grain?

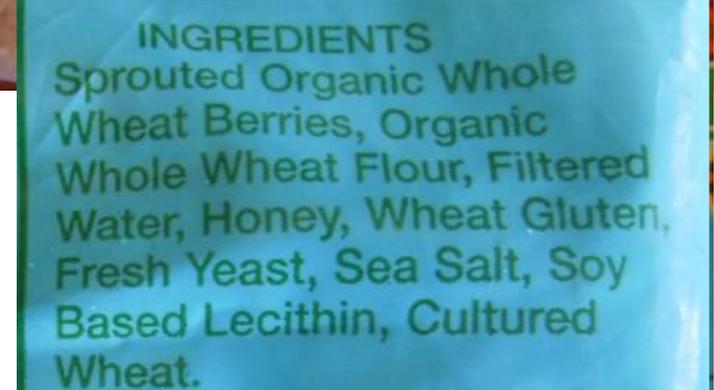
- Package labeling:
  - The package will say, for example, “whole wheat”, not just “wheat” or “enriched wheat”
  - first listed ingredient is a whole grain
- Color of the product (brown rice, whole wheat pasta, whole wheat bread)
- Wheat berry, 7-grain, “wheat”, rye are not whole grain, unless the word “whole” is in front
- Can assume corn tortillas and oats are whole grain



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# Whole Wheat vs. Not Whole Wheat Product Examples



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## Section L: The Final Frontier

### L. Interview Questions

*Let's go make friends! These are questions that help you gain more context, see what kinds of health/wellness-related strategies the store has already been involved in, and help you find additional places where your intervention can plug in.*



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# DATA COLLECTION PROCESS



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# Preparation for Site Visit



1. Review the forms: be sure you understand everything and know what to look for



2. Explain assessment activities to store contact, get agreement



3. Walk through the store and get a sense of where things are, how checkout is organized, etc.



4. Find out when produce deliveries happen (if applicable)



5. Find out interview preferences of store manager/owner



6. Choose a date for your observations!



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## Day of observation:

### Before you arrive:

*Gather the following:*

- 1-2 copies of data collection form, print single-sided
- Pens/pencils
- Clipboard
- A watch or device that tells time
- Camera/camera phone (with enough memory for photos!)

### Once you arrive:

- Check in with store staff; let them know what you're doing and that you'll stay out of the way
- If interviewing on same day, check in with person you're interviewing to see if there are time constraints
- Look through your observation form; note any sections that don't apply
- Begin!



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# When you're done

1

Review over your form to make sure you aren't missing anything

2

Thank the store staff; let them know you'll follow-up with next steps

- Make arrangements for the interview portion, if not already completed

3

Enter form data into link provided (*coming soon!*)



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# NEXT STEPS



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**Coming soon  
from NPI**

- Data Entry/SLAQ submission link
- Intervention tracking form
- Scoring
- Validity and reliability testing



# Scoring – sections

Product availability  
(what healthy products are available)

Price (healthy vs unhealthy, strategies used)

Placement (which products are placed in most prominent locations)

Promotion (audio, interactive/education, visual/print)

Retail identity

Other supports/factors (staff training, community engagement, etc.)



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# Validity and Reliability Testing

*Purpose: to ensure that our questionnaire is accurately and consistently measuring what we designed the tool to do; along with pilot feedback, will be used to determine if additional modifications are needed*

- Happening for all SLAQs, through Fall 2019
- For retail, this involves coordinating your site visit with NPI SLAQ team
- NPI staff would observe store on same day, also using SLAQ and additional retail assessment tool (e.g. NEMS)
- NPI staff would be present during interview portion and ask additional questions
- NPI staff would offer the store personnel being interviewed a \$20 gift card for the additional time and inconvenience required



# Questions?

NPI SLAQ team: Janice, Carolyn,  
Christina, Amanda

SLAQ website:

<https://ucanr.edu/sites/slaq/>

SLAQ help form:

[https://ucanr.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_ba5y7W7H7tbvqk](https://ucanr.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ba5y7W7H7tbvqk)

Retail lead: Janice Kao  
<jankao@ucanr.edu>



# THANK YOU!



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