Food Retail Site-Level Assessment Questionnaire

Updated for FFY 2025

*Developed by*

*the University of California Nutrition Policy Institute*

*for the California Department of Public Health*

**Here is some basic information about the Retail SLAQ:**

* **WHAT does it include?** Observations of the store environment and questions to ask the store manager/owner.
* **WHO should complete it?** CalFresh Healthy Living staff or their contractors.
* **WHEN should this be completed?** *After* the store has been recruited, but *before* you begin interventions each year. This should be completed annually.
* **WHY?** To help plan your healthy retail interventions each year and assess how this store is progressing over time.
* **HOW?** It can be completed on paper or on-line. If you complete it on paper, you will need to enter your data into Survey 123 (link available [**here**](https://ucanr.edu/sites/slaq/SLAQ_Questionnaires/)**)** in order to submit your responses.

**Tips and additional information:**

* Please select the response options that most closely correspond to the current situation that you observe. This will ensure greater accuracy for measuring change over time.
* Point values are included in () and gray font after response options.
* There is space for notes and additional observations on the paper version.
* The price data questions are embedded in the SLAQ below, but if you prefer, you can complete these in a separate “worksheet”; download from the SLAQ website: <https://ucanr.edu/sites/slaq/SLAQ_Questionnaires/> .
* The interview questions can be completed on a different day from the observations and are available in different languages
* Definitions and explanations are listed as [endnotes](#Engagement), all in one place, for easy reference, including the definitions of healthy[[[1]](#endnote-2)](#Engagement) and unhealthy[[[2]](#endnote-3)](#Engagement).
* Please take a look at the data collection protocol, score explanations, and FAQs for additional guidance, including talking points to use with the store. These can all be found on the SLAQ website. <https://ucanr.edu/sites/slaq/>

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# A. Store Information:

1. LHD: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. Data Collector: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*The PEARS Site ID can be found using the* [NPI PEARS Site Search Tool](https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/281302f15fc549edbad838c30ed4a450?hide=submit)*. Watch this* [video tutorial](https://youtu.be/jtC2PgjxF_I) *on how to use this tool to search for a PEARS Site ID.*

(name) (email)

3. Store Name and Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ PEARS Site ID: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. Length of CalFresh Healthy Living involvement at this site: \_\_\_\_\_ year(s) \_\_\_\_\_ month(s)

5. Date of current assessment: \_\_ \_\_ / \_\_ \_\_ / \_\_ \_\_

6. Date of last assessment: \_\_ \_\_ / \_\_ \_\_ / \_\_ \_\_  N/A – this is the first year of assessment

7. How many registers does this store have? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Does the store currently accept…

a) WIC? Yes(2) No(0) b) CalFresh (food stamps/SNAP/EBT)? Yes(2) No(0)

*Are there ways to change displays to promote healthier purchases?*

# B. Product Placement[[3]](#endnote-4):

**Entrance**[[4]](#endnote-5)**:**

1. Which products are placed near the entrance to the store (don’t include checkout area or aisle end-caps):

a) Produce bins: Yes (1) No (0)

b) Water: Yes (1) No (0)

c) Other healthy1 foods or beverages: Yes (1) No(0), describe:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

d) Sugary drinks: Yes (0) No (1)

e) Alcohol/tobacco: Yes (0) No (1)

f) Other unhealthy2 food/beverage: Yes (0) No(1), describe:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Check-out[[5]](#endnote-6):**

2. Does this store have…? One line for multiple registers

Individual checkout lines  how many? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. Are any of the checkouts designated as healthy1 or family-friendly[[6]](#endnote-7)?

No (0) Yes, but none of them are open (1) Yes, and at least one is open (2)

**Select three primary checkout lanes to observe.***If there are 3 or fewer, observe all of them. If there are more than 3, use these guidelines to select which 3 to observe. Which ones are fully stocked, open, have more customer traffic, are closer to an entrance or service desk, etc.? Please choose the ones that have more customer traffic and would therefore have higher impact for healthy marketing strategies. Note: If a large store also has secondary remote checkouts to supplement the main checkout area when it’s busy (sometimes placed in the pharmacy or photo department) – don’t observe these secondary lines.*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **4. Check mark each checkout line (#1, #2, #3) that displays the following:** | | **#1** | **#2** | **#3** |
| **Healthy**1 **options displayed:** | 1. Fruits and vegetables, fresh or processed, no added sugar |  |  |  |
| 1. Bottled water *(sparkling/still, plain/flavored; no caffeine; no caloric/artificial sweeteners)* |  |  |  |
| 1. Other healthy1 foods/beverages (e.g. nuts, seeds, 100% juice, plain milk, baked chips, etc.); Describe: |  |  |  |
| 1. 50% or more of checkout line is used for healthy1 or non-food/bev items |  |  |  |
| **Un-healthy**2 **options displayed:** | 1. Sugary drinks (e.g., regular soda, energy/sports drinks, lemonade, sweetened tea, etc.) |  |  |  |
| 1. Alcohol/tobacco products |  |  |  |
| 1. Other unhealthy2 foods or beverages (e.g. candy, chips, ice cream, etc.);   Describe: |  |  |  |
| 1. More than 25% of checkout line space is used for unhealthy2 items |  |  |  |

**For the next two sections, we are observing other types of prominent displays. Select the three most prominent aisle endcaps and free-standing displays to observe.** *Prominent endcaps and free-standing displays are most likely to be near entrances and/or facing main checkout lanes and often have “sale or deal” signage to entice impulse buys. If there are 3 or fewer, observe all of them. If there are more than 3 that qualify as “prominent”, select the ones you have worked on improving or plan to improve.*

**Prominent End-caps[[7]](#endnote-8):**

**5. How many endcaps are you observing?** **1 endcap** **2 endcaps** **3 endcaps**

* **There are no prominent end-cap displays, skip to free standing displays**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **6. Check off each endcap (#1, #2, #3) that displays the following::** | | **#1** | **#2** | **#3** |
| **Healthy**1 **options displayed:** | 1. Fruits and vegetables, fresh or processed, no added sugar |  |  |  |
| 1. Bottled water *(sparkling/still; plain/flavored; no caffeine; no caloric/artificial sweeteners)* |  |  |  |
| 1. Other healthy1 foods/beverages (e.g. nuts, seeds, 100% juice, plain milk, baked chips, etc.); Describe: |  |  |  |
| 1. 50% or more of endcap display is used for either healthy1 or non-food/bev items |  |  |  |
| **Unhealthy**2 **options displayed:** | 1. Sugary drinks (e.g., regular soda, energy/sports drinks, lemonade, sweetened tea, etc.) |  |  |  |
| 1. Alcohol/tobacco products |  |  |  |
| 1. Other unhealthy2 foods or beverages (e.g. candy, chips, ice cream, etc.);   Describe: |  |  |  |
| 1. More than 25% of endcap display space is used for unhealthy2 items |  |  |  |

**7. How many prominent end-caps are there total? \_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Prominent Free-standing Displays[[8]](#endnote-9):**

**8. How many free-standing displays are you observing?** **1** **2** **3**

 **There are no prominent free standing displays, skip to next section**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **9. Check off each free-standing display (#1, #2, #3) that has the following:** | | **#1** | **#2** | **#3** |
| **Healthy**1 **options displayed:** | 1. Fruits and vegetables, fresh or processed, no added sugar |  |  |  |
| 1. Bottled water *(sparkling/still; plain/flavored; no caffeine; no caloric/artificial sweeteners)* |  |  |  |
| 1. Other healthy1 foods/beverages (e.g. nuts, seeds, 100% juice, plain milk, baked chips, etc.); Describe: |  |  |  |
| 1. 50% or more of display is used for either healthy1 or non-food/bev items |  |  |  |
| **Unhealthy**2 **options displayed:** | 1. Sugary drinks (e.g., regular soda, energy/sports drinks, lemonade, sweetened tea, etc.) |  |  |  |
| 1. Alcohol/tobacco products |  |  |  |
| 1. Other unhealthy2 foods or beverages (e.g. candy, chips, ice cream, etc.);   Describe: |  |  |  |
| 1. More than 25% of display space is used for unhealthy2 items |  |  |  |

10. **How many prominent free-standing displays are there total? \_\_\_\_\_\_**

# C. Access to Free Water

1. Is there clean, free and easily accessible water for customers to drink?

*Check all that apply, 1 point each:*

* None
* Water fountain
* Water bottle filling station
* Pitchers or dispensers
* Fountain drink machine
* Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# D. Fountain Drinks, Coffee Bars and Other Beverage Counters

1. Are there any fountain drinks or other drinks *(e.g. aguas frescas, lemonade, iced tea)* sold in to-go cups?  Yes  No  **skip to next section**
2. Do the drink options include the following?
3. Water (*plain/flavored/sparkling/still; no added caffeine, caloric/artificial sweeteners*) Yes(1) No(0)
4. Unsweetened juice, tea, coffee, or other drinks *(no added caffeine or caloric/artificial sweeteners)* Yes (1) No (0)
5. Diet drinks and other low-calorie beverages Yes (0) No (0)
6. Sugary drinks (e.g., soda, lemonade, sweetened tea)  Yes (0)  No (1)
7. Other drinks, specify: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Yes(0) No(0)

1. Are the following practices in place?
2. Cups are no larger than 16 oz[[9]](#endnote-10): Yes(1) No(0)
3. There are free refills: Yes(0) No(1)
4. Unsweetened options are promoted with a label/sign: Yes(1) No(0) NA, no unsweetened options(0)
5. Sugary options are promoted with a label/sign: Yes(0) No(1) NA, no sugary drink options(1)
6. All or most unsweetened options are the same price or less expensive than sugary options

 Yes (4) No (0) NA, no unsweetened options (0)

# E. Ready-to-eat meals[[10]](#endnote-11) (e.g., grab n’ go, made-to-order, deli or hot meal counter, etc.)

1. Are any ready-to-eat meals sold on site?  Yes  No  **skip to next section**

1. Nutrition information/menu labeling about the meal options is posted/easily visible:  Yes (1)  No (0)
2. a) Are there any healthy1 options for ready-to-eat meals? Yes (4) No (0)  skip to next question
3. Healthier meal options are priced competitively compared to unhealthy2 options:

 Healthy1 options are less expensive than unhealthy2 options (4)

 Healthy1 options are priced the same as unhealthy2 options (2)

 Healthy1 options are more expensive than unhealthy2 options (0)

1. Are any of the following beverages offered with meals (e.g. meal deals, like “add a drink for only 75 cents!”)? (Include fountain drink options, if applicable.)

* NA, beverages are not offered with the meal  skip to next question

1. Water, *sparkling, still, plain, flavored (no caffeine or caloric/artificial sweetener)*: Yes(.5) No(0)
2. Unsweetened juice, tea, coffee *(no added caffeine or caloric/artificial sweetener)*: Yes(.5) No(0)
3. Milk, low-/non-fat unflavored milk: Yes(.5) No(0)
4. Other kinds of milk: Yes(0) No(0), specify \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. Sugary drinks (e.g., soda, lemonade, sweetened tea): Yes(0) No(.5)
6. Other drinks: Yes(0) No(0), specify \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
7. The default beverage option is healthy1:  Yes (1)  No (0)
8. Are any of the following sides offered as part of a meal? *(e.g., meal deals, “add a side salad for $1”, etc.)*

* NA, no sides are offered with the meal  skip to next question

1. Fresh fruit or vegetables:  Yes (.5)  No (0)
2. Dried fruit/vegetables, nuts, seeds, trail mix without added sugar/candy:  Yes (.5)  No (0)
3. Other healthy1 snacks/side:  Yes (.5)  No (0)
4. Chips, candy, French fries or other unhealthy2 snack/side:  Yes (0)  No (.5)
5. Other snack/side:  Yes (0)  No (0), specify \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
6. The default side option is healthy1:  Yes (1)  No (0)
7. a) Are there signs/labels to encourage healthy1 eating or healthy1 selection?  Yes (1)  No (0)

b) Are there signs/labels that encourage unhealthy2 eating or overeating *(super size!, images of unhealthy*2 *foods, etc.)*:  Yes (0)  No (1)

*Now let’s take a closer look at specific categories of foods and beverages – what are the healthy*1 *options available, how are these items displayed and how are they priced?*

**F. Optional: Complete before conducting store observations to save time**

If this is a large store or another type of store where you are confident in the availability of the products listed below, you may omplete one or more of the following sections *before or after* you conduct store observations to save time.

***1) Did you complete any of the following outside of your store observation time?***  Yes No  skip to Section G

***2) Mark which sections you have partially or completely pre-filled:***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * G1a: fresh fruit availability and variety   *(do not pre-fill for quality)*   * G1d: fresh vegetable availability and variety   *(do not pre-fill for quality)* | * H1: Staple foods (regular) * H1: Healthy1 versions of staple foods * I1: Healthy1 snacks * J1: Healthy1 single-serve beverages |

# G. Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

**1. Variety and Quality:**  **No fresh fruits or vegetables sold** **skip to next section**

a) **Fresh fruit**, how many types? Count types (e.g. apples and oranges) and not individual variations (e.g.., Granny Smith and Red

Delicious apples). None(0) skip to d) 1-3 types(1) 4-6 types(2) 7-9 types(3) 10 or more types(4)

b) Are cut and washed, ready-to-eat fresh fruit available? *(e.g., grab n’ go fruit cup, apple slices, etc.)* Yes(2) No(0)

c) How is the overall quality of the fresh fruit? (Poor quality: bruised, overripe; Good quality: fresh, not overripe, few blemishes)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| * All/most are poor (0) | * More poor than good (1) | * Equal proportion of poor and good (2) | * More good than poor (3) | * All/most are good (4) |

d) **Fresh vegetables**, how many types? Count types (e.g. carrots and celery) and not individual variations (e.g. orange and purple

carrots) None(0)  skip to display 1-3 types (1) 4-6 types (2) 7-9 types (3) 10 or more types (4)

e) Are cut and washed, ready-to-eat fresh vegetables available? *(e.g. green salad, carrot/celery sticks, etc.)* Yes(2) No(0)

f) How is the overall quality of the fresh veg? (Poor quality: bruised, overripe; Good quality: fresh, not overripe, few blemishes)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| * All/most are poor (0) | * More poor than good (1) | * Equal proportion of poor and good (2) | * More good than poor (3) | * All/most are good (4) |

**2. Display**3**:** *Are the following practices used for all or most fresh fruits and vegetables?*

1. Displayed in baskets, bins, or other shelving unit: Yes (1)  No (0)
2. Displayed in cardboard packing boxes:  Yes (0)  No (1)
3. Placed on the floor:  Yes (0)  No (1)
4. Displayed in refrigerated cases (for items requiring refrigeration):  Yes (1)  No (0)
5. Other:  Yes (0)  No (0), describe \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. There are signs indicating sale pricing/specials for fruits/vegetables:  Yes (1)  No (0)

4. All or most prices for fruits and vegetables are clearly marked:  Yes (.5)  No (0)

If prices aren’t posted, please ask an employee. (Applies to all price questions)

**5. Price of select items[[11]](#endnote-12):** *Find the price of the fresh fruits and vegetables listed below. If more than 1 option is available, choose the least expensive version and note the unit/size information. Record in pounds, when available.*

1. Apples, specify lowest-cost variety *(e.g. Gala)*: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ NA, no apples

Regular price: $ \_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_ per # \_\_\_\_\_ pound piece other:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Example: Lowest cost apples are Fuji apples for $1.89 per pound and lowest cost bananas are 3 for $1.* Enter these like this:

Apples, Fuji: $1.89 per 1 lpound mpiecemother

Bananas; $1.00 per\_3\_mpound lpiece mother

Sale price: $\_\_\_ . \_\_\_ per # \_\_\_ pound piece other:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ NA, not on sale

1. Bananas NA, no bananas available

Regular price: $ \_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_ per # \_\_\_\_\_ pound piece other:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Sale price: $\_\_\_ . \_\_\_ per # \_\_\_ pound piece other:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ NA, not on sale

1. Carrots NA, no carrots available

Regular price: $ \_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_ per # \_\_\_\_\_ pound piece other:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Sale price: $\_\_\_ . \_\_\_ per # \_\_\_ pound piece other:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ NA, not on sale

# H. Staple Foods[[12]](#endnote-13)

1. **Availability:**  **No staple foods, skip to next section**

*Check for availability of staple foods and indicate whether healthier*[1](#Healthy) *versions are available (denoted with \* and appear in right-hand column). (1 point each; additional 0.5 point for healthy version)*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | * \*Fresh meat, poultry, or fish (1.5 pts) | |
|  | * Processed/pre-cooked meat (lunchmeats, canned or ready-to-eat (e.g. roast chicken) meat) | |
|  | * \*Eggs (1.5 pts) | |
|  | * Cheese | |
|  | * Whole or 2% milk (cow’s milk, lactose- or dairy-free)   *if checked, is healthy*1 *version available? * | *\*plain, unflavored milk:* Yes No |
|  | * Non-fat or 1% milk (cow’s milk, lactose- or dairy-free)   *if checked, is healthy*1 *version available? * | *\*plain, unflavored milk:*  Yes No |
|  | * Yogurt (cow’s milk or dairy-free)   *if checked, is healthy*1 *version available? * | *\*plain, unflavored yogurt:* Yes No |
|  | * Bread/grain products (e.g., bread, tortillas, pasta, rice)   *if checked, is healthy*1 *version available? * | *Option with \*whole grain:* Yes No |
|  | * Hot cereal (e.g. oats)   *if checked, is healthy*1 *version available? * | *Option with \*whole grain AND*  *no added sugar:* Yes No |
|  | * Cold cereal   *if checked, is healthy*1 *version available? * | *Option with \*whole grain as 1st ingredient AND <6g of sugar per serving:* Yes No |
|  | * Dried or canned beans/peas/ lentils   *if checked, is healthy*1 *version available? * | *Option with \*low-sodium AND*  *no added fat:* Yes No |
|  | * Nut butters   *if checked, is healthy*1 *version available? * | *Option with \*no added sugar:* Yes No |
|  | * Canned or cooked fruit (e.g. appleasauce)   *if checked, is healthy*1 *version available? * | *Option with \*no added sugar:* Yes No |
|  | * Canned/jarred vegetable (not pickles or olives)   *if checked, is healthy*1 *version available? * | *Options with \*no added sugar AND*  *no added fat:* Yes No |
|  | * Frozen fruit   *if checked, is healthy*1 *version available? * | *Option with \*no added sugar:* Yes No |
|  | * Frozen vegetables   *if checked, is healthy*1 *version available? * | *Options with \*no added sugar AND*  *no added fat:* Yes No |

2. There are signs indicating sale pricing/specials for healthier1 versions of staple foods: Yes(1) No(0)

*\*healthier*1 *versions of staples are denoted with an \* in the right-hand column in the table above*

3. All or most prices for all staple foods are clearly marked: Yes(.5) No(0)

**4. Price of bread:** **Bread is not sold in this store** **skip to next section**

a) **Price of whole grain bread:**  NA, no whole grain bread available, skip to b) price of white bread

What is the lowest priced loaf of whole grain sandwich bread? *(Package says at least 50% whole grain)*

Brand/type: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Size:\_\_\_\_oz Regular price: $\_\_ . \_\_\_ per loaf Sale price: $\_\_ . \_\_\_ per loaf  NA, not on sale

b) **Price of white bread:**  NA, no white bread available, skip to next section

What is the lowest priced loaf of white sandwich bread?

Brand/type: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Size:\_\_\_\_oz Regular price: $\_\_ . \_\_\_ per loaf Sale price: $\_\_ . \_\_\_ per loaf  NA, not on sale

# I. Snack Foods

**1. Availability of healthy**1 **snacks:**   **No healthy**1 **snacks are available, skip to #3**

1. Dried/freeze dried fruit without added sugar:  Yes (1)  No (0)
2. Dried/freeze dried vegetables without added sugar:  Yes (1)  No (0)
3. Nuts, seeds, trail mix, without added sugar/candy and low in sodium:  Yes (1)  No (0)
4. Other healthy1 snacks: Yes (1) No (0), describe \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**2. Placement and Display**3 **of healthy**1 **snacks:** All or most healthy1 snacks are…

1. In stock: Yes(.5) No(0)
2. Displayed in separate baskets/bins: Yes(1) No(0)
3. Displayed at eye -level (for kids or adults): Yes(1) No(0) (0)
4. Other: Yes(0) No(0), describe \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**3. All or most snack prices are clearly marked:** Yes(.5) No(0)

**4. Are there sales/price specials on the following?**

1. Healthy1 snacks:  Yes (1)  No (0)  *NA, no healthy*1 *snacks* (0)
2. Unhealthy2 snacks: Yes(0) No(1) *NA, no unhealthy*2 *snacks* (1)

**5. Price of selected snacks:** *Find the price of the healthy*1 *and unhealthy*2 *snacks listed below. If the option(s) listed are unavailable, look for an alternative snack in the same category, choosing the brand with the most shelf space.*

a) **Price of regular chips:**  NA, no regular chips, skip to next item

Are *Lay’s Potato Chips - Classic* available? *(Select one of the options below and continue on to price info)*

Yes, size of smallest package: \_\_\_\_\_\_ oz

No, but *Cheetos, flamin hot* are available  size of smallest package: \_\_\_\_\_\_ oz

Neither available, alternate brand/flavor:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, size of smallest package: \_\_\_\_\_\_ oz

Regular price: $\_\_\_ . \_\_ per\_\_ packages Sale price: $ \_\_\_\_ . \_\_ per \_\_ packages NA, not on sale

b) **Price of a single serving package of chocolate candy:  NA, no chocolate candy, skip to next item**

Is a *Snickers bar (1.86 oz)* available? *(Select one of the options below and continue on to complete price info)*

Yes

No, but there are *Peanut M&Ms, 1.74 oz*

Neither available, alternate brand/flavor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Size: \_\_\_oz

Regular price: $\_\_\_ . \_\_\_ per\_\_\_ packages Sale price: $ \_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_ per \_\_\_ packages  NA, not on sale

c) **Price of a package of snack-size nuts**:  ** NA, no snack-size nuts, skip to next item**

Are *Planters lightly salted peanuts, 2 oz* available? *(Select one of the options below and complete price info)*

Yes

No, alternate type *(e.g. salted almonds, 2oz)*: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ oz

Regular price: $ \_\_ . \_\_\_ per\_\_packages Sale price: $ \_\_ . \_\_\_ per\_\_ packages  NA, not on sale

# J. Single-serving beverages

**1. Availability of healthy**1 **single-serving beverages**:  **None available, skip to #3**

Are any of the following **single-serving** beverages, without added sweetener, available anywhere in the store? (Don’t include coffee bar, fountain drink station or other beverage counters.)

1. 100% juice:  Yes (1)  No (0)
2. 100% juice, diluted with water, sparkling or still (e.g. Izze sparkling juice, Honest juice drinks): Yes(1) No(0)
3. Plain, unflavored water, sparkling or still:  Yes (1)  No (0)
4. Flavored water, no added sweetener, sparkling or still (e.g. Bubly, La Croix):  Yes (1)  No (0)
5. Unsweetened tea or coffee:  Yes (1)  No (0)
6. Single serving, plain, low-fat/non-fat milk:  Yes (1)  No (0)
7. Other:  Yes (0)  No (0) , describe \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
8. **Placement and Display**[3](#Placement) **of healthy**1 **single-serving Beverages:**

All or most healthy1 beverages are…

1. In stock:  Yes (.5)  No (0)
2. Displayed at eye-level (for kids or adults):  Yes (1)  No (0)
3. Other:  Yes (0)  No (0), describe \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**3. All or most beverage prices are clearly marked:**  Yes (.5)  No (0)

**4. Are there sales/price specials on the following?**

1. Healthy1 beverages:  Yes (1)  No (0)  *NA, no healthy*1 *single-serve beverages* (0)
2. Sugary drinks:  Yes (0)  No (1)  *NA, no single-serve sugary drinks* (1)

**5. Price of selected beverages:** *Find the price of the following beverages listed below. If the option(s) listed are not available, look for an alternative beverage in the same category, choosing the brand with the most shelf space.*

a) **Price of regular 12 oz soda:**  NA, regular 12 oz soda is unavailable, skip to b)

Is a *regular, 12 oz Coke* available? *(Select one of the options below and continue on to complete price info)*

Yes

No, *but a regular 12 oz Pepsi* is available

Neither available, alternate brand for 12 oz soda *(e.g. Sprite)*:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Regular price: $ \_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_ per \_\_\_ 12 oz container Sale price: $ \_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_ per\_\_\_12 oz container NA, not on sale

b) **Price of regular 20 oz soda:**  NA, regular 20 oz soda is unavailable, skip to c)

Is a *regular, 20 oz Coke* available? *(Select one of the options below and continue on to complete price info)*

Yes

No, but *regular 20 oz Pepsi* is available

Neither available, alternate brand for 20 oz soda *(e.g. Sprite)*: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Regular price: $ \_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_ per \_\_\_ 20 oz container Sale price: $ \_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_ per\_\_\_20 oz container  NA, not on sale

c) **Price of plain, bottled water:**  NA, bottled water is unavailable, skip to next section)

Is *plain, unflavored, uncarbonated* bottled water (16.9 oz) available? *(Select an option below and complete price info)*

Yes, 16.9 oz bottle is available

No, but other size available, size of lowest-cost alternative *(e.g. 1 liter)*:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Regular price: $ \_\_\_ . \_\_\_ per\_\_\_bottles/containers Sale price: $ \_\_\_ . \_\_\_ per\_\_\_bottles/containers  NA, not on sale

***You are nearly there!*** *The last two sections should be completed once you have familiarized yourself with the whole store, and know what kinds of products are available, where they are displayed, and how they are promoted. You may need to look back through the store, including the front or exterior, to answer these.*

# K. Promotion[[13]](#endnote-14)

*Are any new signs needed? Use this space to make notes:*

**1.** Are the following signs clearly visible (e.g., on the doors or windows; near registers)?

1. "We Accept WIC" signage: Yes (1) No (0)
2. "We Accept CalFresh/Food Stamps/EBT" signage: Yes (1) No (0)
3. Healthy1 retail recognition decal: Yes (1) No (0), which recognition program? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**2.** What types of healthy1 promotion signs/materials are currently displayed?

1. Signs or boards for healthy1 sales, specials, new item!, etc. near the entrance: Yes (1) No (0)
2. Posters/banners/lawn signs/floor decals to promote healthy1 purchases or behaviors: Yes (1) No (0)
3. Point-of-decision signs (shelf talkers, recipe cards, decals, etc.) to encourage healthy1 purchases or behaviors:

Yes (1) No (0)

1. SNAP/EBT cross-promotion (e.g. images of CalFresh/ SNAP with healthy1 foods/beverages): Yes (1) No (0)
2. Murals with images of fruits, vegetables, healthy1 eating, or physical activity: Yes (1) No (0)
3. Other: Yes (0) No (0), describe \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**3.** What types of unhealthy2 promotion signs/materials are currently displayed?

* 1. Signs or boards for unhealthy2 sales, specials, new item!, etc. near the entrance: Yes (0) No (1)
  2. Posters/banners/lawn signs/floor decals to promote unhealthy2 purchases or behaviors: Yes (0) No (1)
  3. Point-of-decision signs (shelf talkers, recipe cards, decals, etc.) to encourage unhealthy2 purchases or behaviors: Yes (0) No (1)
  4. SNAP/EBT cross-promotion (e.g. images of CalFresh/ SNAP with unhealthy2 foods):  Yes (0)  No (1)
  5. Other: Yes (0) No (0), describe \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# L. Retail Identity[[14]](#endnote-15)

**1. Appearance/Facilities:**

1. There is landscaping/planter boxes/etc. that are maintained:  Yes (1) No (0)
2. There are permanent bars/chains on the windows or doors *(do not include sliding or rolling chains/bars)*: Yes (0) No (1)
3. Trash/recycling bins are overflowing, not well-maintained and visible to customers: Yes(0) No(1)
4. There is graffiti on the walls or windows: Yes(0) No(1)
5. Bike racks/storage available for customers to use: Yes (1) No (0)
6. Shopping carts/baskets are available:  Yes (1)  No (0)
7. Aisles are wide enough for strollers or wheelchairs:  Yes (1)  No (0)
8. There is a fresh meat counter:  Yes (1)  No (0)
9. All/most refrigerators and freezers are clean and well-lit: Yes(1) No(0) N/A, no fridge/freezers(0)
10. Other:  Yes (0)  No (0), describe \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. What proportion of the overall retail space[[15]](#endnote-16) is used to display alcohol?

None (3) <25% (3) 25-50% (2) 51-75% (1) >75% (0)

3. What proportion of the overall retail space is used to display fresh fruits/vegetables?

<25% (0) 25-50% (1) 51-75% (2) >75% (3)

4. Is the word “liquor” in name of store?  Yes (0)  No (2)

**------------ END OF STORE OBSERVATIONS -----------**

***Please check over your form to see if anything is missing***

# M. Health and Safety Related Emergencies & General Comments:

*Note to healthy retail program team – you can answer the questions below based on your own knowledge of the store, on-going conversations with the store staff, multiple observations, etc. You may also add the question regarding health and safety impacts to the interview questions.*

1. Did the store have to make changes due to health or safety emergencies?

* No à *skip to #2*
* Yes, changes were made due to health and safety emergencies

1a) What types of changes were made?

* + The store has had to stop or discontinue certain activities
  + The store is now working on new activities that they wouldn't have previously
  + Other

1b) Please describe the types of changes that were made:

1. Any other comments about the store environment, clarifications about the observations, additional detail, etc.?

**Next Section: Store Manager/Owner Interview**

You can move on to the interview portion now or schedule for another time. You may be able to answer some of the interview questions through observation – feel free to answer what you can so that you (or the interviewer) won’t have to ask later on.

Questions labeled as “*(optional)”* indicate the questions we are not planning to use in state-level analysis. They are included for potential usefulness for program-planning but you can choose to skip these if they will not be useful for your healthy retail program.

It is okay to schedule this interview for a different day than the day observations take place and even take more than one day to answer all the questions. You can also designate another member of your team to conduct interviews (for example, you may need someone to translate the questions into another language). You may also want to combine these questions with other questions you have developed for program planning purposes.

# N. Store Manager/Owner Interview (can be completed separately)

Here is a “script” that you can use and adapt for introducing the interview section:

*Thank you so much for letting us look around your store and see what kinds of products and signs you already have. We also have a few questions for you that are about things you do for the store and for your customers to help them make healthy choices. We will use all of this information to plan with you about what kinds of healthy changes to make in your store. Just like with the observations, your answers, your name and your store’s name will never be shared publicly without your permission.*

1. a) Has this store made efforts towards offering healthy foods or beverages?  Yes  No

*(b and c are optional)*

b) If no, why not? *(Probe for whether they’ve tried it before and let them share failed attempts)*

c) *If yes, how? When? Who did you work with?*

2. Does the store encourage customers to purchase healthy1 foods and beverages through any of these on-going activities? *(Healthy retail team can answer these without asking if they already know)*

1. Store tours:  Yes (1)  No (0)
2. Taste tests:  Yes (1)  No (0)
3. Food/recipe/other live demos:  Yes (1)  No (0)
4. Participation in health/wellness fair: Yes(1) No(0)
5. Audio-only announcements through a PA system: Yes(1) No(0)
6. Audio/visual displays:  Yes (1)  No (0)
7. Other types of promotion (not signs or posters): Yes No, describe: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. Is the store participating in [“Fresh Creds” / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_] or another program that gives cash-back

*(feel free to name a dollar-matching program used in your community)*

bonuses[[16]](#endnote-17) for using CalFresh/SNAP to buy fruits and vegetables? ¡Yes(4) ¡No(0)

4. Does the store make the prices of healthy1 foods/beverages lower (or price unhealthy2 foods/beverages higher) to encourage more healthy1 purchases?  Yes (4)  No (0)

*If yes, which food/beverages?* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. Does the store have regular sales, discounts, coupons, deals, or other price reductions for…

1. Fruits and vegetables:  Yes (1)  No (0)
2. Other healthy1 foods:  Yes (1)  No (0)
3. Healthy1 beverages *(e.g. water, 100% juice, and other unsweetened drinks)*: Yes(1) No(0)
4. Unhealthy2 foods *(e.g., chips, candy, cookies, etc.)*: Yes(0) No(1)
5. Sugary drinks *(e.g., soda, energy drinks, etc.)*: Yes(0) No(1)
6. Alcohol: Yes(0) No(1)
7. Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

6. *(optional)* Do students or kids often come in to buy foods/beverages here? Yes No

7. *(optional, except for SPAN sites)* Is there a space for breastfeeding and/or pumping breast milk that is not a restroom?

Yes, for employees only (1) Yes, for customers only (1) Yes, for both employees and customers (2) No (0)

8. [*Community* engagement[[17]](#endnote-18)] How do you build relationships with your customers and the community: (1 point each)

1. Are there any community bulletin boards or space to post flyers for community events/gatherings? Yes No
2. Do you allow customers to pay for items later (i.e., an informal credit system, customer “tab”, etc.)? Yes No
3. Do you or other cashiers/store staff know customers by name? Yes No
4. Do you or other staff recommend products to customers, or encourage them to try certain products (not as part of taste tests or other marketing activity): Yes No
5. Do you or other store staff ask customers for recommendations or let them make suggestions on what products to carry in the store? Yes No
6. Are there store-sponsored community events or fundraisers? Yes No
7. Other ways/examples of how the store engages the community? Yes No, describe \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

9. *(optional, ask about the ones most relevant for your healthy retail program)*

Have you or other store staff received training or be interested in learning more about …

* How to display and where to place healthy1 foods and beverages
* How to promote healthy1 foods and beverages using signs and labels
* How to promote healthy1 foods/beverages using price-related strategies
* Stocking healthy1 items
* Food handling and safety
* Produce handling
* Customer relations
* Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

10. *(optional)* *[Trade promotion practices[[18]](#endnote-19)*].

How do vendors and suppliers influence where their products are placed and how they are promoted?

Do certain companies stock your shelves on a regular basis?

11. *(optional)* [*Food waste and recovery*[[19]](#endnote-20)]

We have a few questions about what happens to the excess food you are unable to sell. This information will also help us plan with you what kinds of changes to the store we can make in this next year.

* 1. What do you do with extra food or beverages that you are unable to sell? *(check all that apply)*
* throw it in the trash
* compost it
* donate it to a charitable agency or community organization
* give it to customers that I know struggle to have enough food
* leave it on the street for someone to eat
* other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. What types of food do you find are most likely to go to waste?

* fresh fruits
* fresh vegetables
* meats
* dairy (milk, cheese)
* breads, cereals, tortillas
* frozen desserts
* chips
* candy
* prepared foods
* other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. If you had to guess, about how much money do you think you lose in food that goes to waste?

$\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ each day/ week/ month (choose and circle one)  don’t know  didn’t want to answer

1. **Defining Healthy vs Unhealthy:**

   **Healthy**:

   * ***If you are already participating in a healthy retail program or intervention that has an established definition for healthy foods and beverages, you may use your own definition***
   * Healthy beverages have no added caloric sweeteners, no added artificial sweeteners, and no added caffeine.
     + Examples: water, 100% juice, plain, low-fat milk, unsweetened iced tea
   * Healthy foods are fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, dairy, lean meats, and whole grains. (Mixed-ingredient foods include one of these as the first ingredient.) They have no trans fats, and are low in sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar.
     + For packaged snacks, also look at the nutrition label to see if the product meets these limits:
       - total fat: ≤35% kcals
       - sat fat: ≤10% of kcals
       - sugar: ≤35% by weight
       - sodium: ≤200 mg
       - calories per serving: ≤250 kcals
     + Any snack that meets the federal “[Smart Snacks](https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/guide-smart-snacks-schools)” legislation for K-12 schools can be considered a healthy snack, OR follow your program’s own criteria.
     + Examples of Smart Snacks include: lightly salted nuts, certain brands and flavors of baked chips and granola bars
   * Healthy promotion includes images of healthy foods or messages to encourage healthy food purchases or other healthy behaviors (e.g., MyPlate, “We sell fresh produce!” etc.)
   * Whole grains: the first ingredient (or second after water) must be whole grain; common examples include: whole wheat, whole grain corn, brown rice, whole wheat flour, oats, quinoa, teff, bulgur (also see USDA post [“What Are Whole Grains?”](https://ask.usda.gov/s/article/What-are-whole-grains#:~:text=Whole%20grains%20consist%20of%20the,bran%2C%20germ%2C%20and%20endosperm.))
   * Lean meats and poultry: contain <10 g of fat, ≤4.5 g of saturated fat, and <95 mg of cholesterol per 100 g and per serving (based on Dietary Guidelines for Americans). Also see USDA post: “[How Do I Choose Lean Meat and Poultry?](https://ask.usda.gov/s/article/How-do-I-choose-lean-meat-and-poultry#:~:text=Information&text=The%20leanest%20beef%20cuts%20include,93%25%20or%2095%25%20lean.)”

   [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
2. **Unhealthy:**

   * Unhealthy beverages are sugary drinks, and can include soda, energy drinks, sports drinks, fruit-flavored drinks, pre-sweetened tea or coffee, etc.
   * Unhealthy snacks are candy, cookies, chips, ice cream, and other snacks that are not the reduced fat/sugar versions
   * Unhealthy products also include alcohol and tobacco
   * Unhealthy promotion includes images/messages that encourage purchasing unhealthy foods/products, like cigarettes/tobacco, alcoholic beverages, sugary drinks, foods with high amounts of sugar, fat and/or sodium or encourage unhealthy behavior (can’t eat just one!)

   [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
3. **Product Placement and Display:**

   * Location, Location, Location! Where products are displayed makes a big difference
     + Highly visible areas include the store entrance, end-caps, free-standing display units, and checkout
     + Considered to be“prime real estate” for product display, since customers are more likely to walk past and look at these displays.
   * “Eye-level is buy-level”: Adults are drawn to products at eye-level, while kids will ask their parents for products at “touch-level” Here is a [diagram and further explanation](https://sbshoppingbasket.com/blog/trade-marketing-boost-your-sales-at-the-point-of-purchase/?lang=en) of these marketing strategies.
   * Other strategies that can nudge shoppers to pick up an item and place it in their cart include:
     + Using attractive baskets or containers to help a product stand out
     + Enhancing product lighting

   [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
4. **What to count in your observations of the…**

   **Store Entrance:** If there is more than one entrance, choose the entrance that is used for the address.

   * If the side that is used for the address is not accessible, use the side with the entrance closest to the main parking area.
   * If it is difficult to decide between two entrances, pick either one

   Stand at the store entrance and take a look at what products and promotions are clearly visible from the entrance, either inside or outside of the store, including vending machines. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
5. **Checkouts:**

   * Take a look at the products displayed around each checkout counter/aisle when in line to pay.
   * Include any racks, shelves, coolers attached to register aisles, the aisle itself, the area over the belt, and bins and standing displays that are within arm’s reach. Think about what a typical adult customer can grab without losing their place in line.

   [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
6. Healthy and family-friendly checkout lanes display more nutritious fare rather than the usual chocolate bars, snacks, chips, and soft drinks. Sometimes there is signage that indicates which checkout is designated healthy or family-friendly, but not always. This [news magazine article](https://www.today.com/parents/kids-cant-resist-candy-stores-try-junk-food-free-healthy-t60621) describes the concept further. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
7. **Prominent** **Endcaps:**

   * Displays of products at the end of the aisle are called end-caps.
   * Prominent endcaps are most likely to be near entrances and/or facing main checkout lanes, may showcase seasonal items, and often have “sale or deal” signage to entice impulse buys.

   [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
8. **Free-standing Display Units**

   |  |  |
   | --- | --- |
   | Free-standing display units are displays, often made of cardboard, and can be found throughout the store. For the purposes of this data collection, we are interested in the free-standing displays located in high traffic areas, usually near checkout /service desk and/or store entrance where the majority of customers will pass by. These are often beverage or snack displays maintained by the vendor (such as Frito-Lay).  If a store has placed a free-standing display at the end of an aisle or in a checkout lane, count those as endcaps or checkouts instead. | Example of free-standing display unit (image from CSPI):  Supermarkets “Rigged” through Secret Deals with Food Manufacturers ... |

   [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
9. **Beverage counters/fountain drinks/coffee bars**

   This can include any area of the store that sells drinks in “to-go” cups. This can be a fountain drink or slushy machine, a coffee bar, pitchers of iced tea or aguas frescas, etc. It is often staffed by an employee, but could also be self-serve.

   16-oz cups are typically the medium-sized drink opton at large chain coffee shops like Starbucks or Peets. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
10. **Ready-to-eat/made-to-order food:**

    * Ready to eat meals include pre-made or made-to-order sandwiches, wraps, and other meals or entrees that are ready for consumption, with no additional or very minimal preparation (e.g., optional microwaving).
    * These may include deli counters, other refrigerated displays, a hot sandwich counter, etc., but do not include frozen meals.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
11. **Why are we collecting price data?**

    The price of food and beverages plays a big role in a customer’s purchasing decisions, and the [evidence on healthy retail](http://npi.ucanr.edu/files/263765.pdf) programs has shown that price interventions are the most effective strategy for increasing healthy purchases. It is therefore important to track prices of key products over time, and is also particularly useful when aggregating data state-wide, as was done in this [paper](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5962882/) using CX3 price data.

    A note on the use of brand names. According to [USDA guidance](https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/administration/snap-ed-guidance-and-policy), the use of brand names isn’t allowed on SNAP-ed program or education materials, but is allowable for evaluation instruments as long as we are not using images or illustrations (which this form does not). We use specific brands of products for evaluation data collection in order to make consistent and standardized comparisons for analysis (from year to year and across locations). [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
12. **What are** **Staple Foods?**

    [Staple foods](https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer/staple-foods)are the basic foods that make up a significant portion of a person’s diet and are usually prepared at home and eaten as a meal.

    * Staple foods do not include prepared foods, heated foods, or accessory foods (i.e., snacks, desserts, and foods that complement or supplement meals).
    * Many stores that are perceived as healthy (e.g. grocery stores) are also the places where people tend to buty their staple foods.
    * Stores are required to carry a certain number and type of staple foods to become a SNAP/WIC vendor.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
13. **Types of Promotion:**

    Using signs and other forms of print promotion, like shelf talkers, floor decals, store circulars, flyers, etc.

    Also think about large-format promotion like lawn signs, banners, posters, murals

    Signage can communicate information or education, like Harvest of the Month educational materials, MyPlate signs, or healthy recipe cards

    Promotion can also use behavioral economics or choice architecture concepts

    These work to “prime” people and affect their decision-making

    Example - impose limits: “Local squash-$1.39/lb” vs “Local squash-limit 6 per customer”

    Example - evoke scarcity: “Peaches-$2.99/lb” vs “Fresh peaches for a limited time only!” [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
14. **Retail Identity**

    * Retail Identity = Customer Perception & Experience
    * The look and feel of a store can color a shopper’s perception of whether a store is “healthy”
    * The customer experience can affect people’s decisions of where to shop, which affects the reach of the healthy store intervention. Things like what facilities and amenities are available can make the shopping experience more pleasant. (For example, are there shopping carts? Are aisles wide enough for carts and strollers?)
    * Retail identity also impacts perceptions of the neighborhood food environment. [Research](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6886741/pdf/nihms-1515378.pdf) shows that the perception of neighborhood healthy food availability is associated with greater purchasing of healthy foods.
    * Closely related to Retail Identity is Community Engagement[17](#Engagement) – this is captured in the store owner interview

    [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
15. **How do you estimate “proportion of retail space”?**

    We do not expect data collectors to bring measuring tape, ask about square footage, etc. This does not need to be a precise measurement – instead, you can use the ranges described in the response categories to help guide your estimation.

    * For example, take a look around the whole store to look at the overall space where products are displayed for sale.
    * Next, look at the space where alcohol is displayed.
    * Which of these categories is the best match for how much space the alcohol display takes up?
      + None, <25%, 25-50%, 51-75%, or >75%.
    * Repeat the procedure for fresh fruits and vegetables.

    As a reference example, a typical Safeway grocery store would be marked as <25% for alcohol and 25-50% for fresh fruits and vegetables.

    **More information and additional probes for the interview section:** [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
16. Cash-back bonuses for healthy food purchases:

    Programs where a cash-back bonus or matching dollars are given to customers who use SNAP to buy healthy foods, like fruit and vegatables

    Program name examples: Fresh Creds, Double Bucks, Double-Up Food Bucks, Market Match

    These require a partnership with the store or another partner to provide the bonus itself, since it is not a SNAP-Ed allowable expense; but SNAP-Ed can coordinate and market these interventions [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
17. **Community Engagement**

    These community engagement questions give a sense of how invested the store is in being part of the community and what relationships the store has already built with members of the community.

    Community engagement activities can help boost demand for healthy products, provide promotional opportunities for stores and create opportunities for community members to participate in the process of developing and implementing a healthier food environment for their community.

    Research has shown that it is not enough to simply increase access to healthy food in neighborhoods known as food deserts.

    Information about how engaged a store is in being part of the surrounding community provides valuable information for both program planning and evaluation. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
18. **Trade Promotion Practices**

    Trade promotion practices refer to the variety of payments that food manufacturers make to food retailers. Manufacturers pay large fees to display their products in premium spaces like checkouts, end-cap displays, and free-standing display units, to maintain their spot in those displays, or to introduce new products into stores. Trade promotion practices influence consumers’ purchases and ultimately, their food intake.

    Knowing whether the store you’re working with has any of these agreements with their vendors or suppliers may help you determine how to plan your own intervention, particularly if you are considering placement or promotion strategies

    Additional talking point/examples you can use when conducting the interview:

    *We have heard of examples of snack companies that pay a store to decide where their products are displayed and what advertising is posted.*

    *Healthy store programs often include rearranging placement and displays or adding new signs to encourage customers to choose healthy foods and beverages. It is important for us to understand if your store already has agreements with vendors about placement and advertising.*

    Additional probes you can use:

    *Who provides display units and equipment, like beverage coolers?*

    *Who provides advertising materials?*

    *Do suppliers pay for product placement? Can you choose where products are placed?*

    *Are you required to place ads/signs in certain parts of the store? Who puts up ads/signs?* [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
19. **Food waste and recovery**

    The questions around food waste may be helpful in your program planning to determine what kinds of training or guidance around food purchasing and merchandising the store may need to help decrease food waste

    Additionally,many SNAP-Ed partners also work on food recovery and food distribution, as part of healthy food assistance interventions, and for large stores, part of the SB 1383 mandate. Information from these questions may help develop linkages to other SNAP-Ed efforts and you should feel free to add additional questions or follow-up as needed and is appropriate. See also: <https://calrecycle.ca.gov/organics/slcp/education/> [↑](#endnote-ref-20)