

Oregon State University Extension Service Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program- Education (SNAP-Ed)

January 2015

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January 2015 *Food Hero* Update

Campaign Overview

Food Hero is a research-based social marketing campaign providing community education along with policy, systems and environmental (PSE) change activities aimed at increasing the purchase and consumption of fruits and vegetables (F&V), in all forms, among limited-income Oregonians.

Food Hero is primarily targeted to SNAP-eligible Oregon moms with kids under age 18 living in the home. It's offered in English and Spanish. Since 2009, the campaign has connected regularly with these families to increase their self-efficacy toward making healthy food choices. A key secondary audience for Food Hero is the children of target families: Food Hero strives to make kids champions of healthy food choices within their families and peer groups. Food Hero focuses on providing easy recipes for low-cost, adaptable, nutritious, and delicious meals and snacks and practical tips for food shopping and preparation.



A sample edition of the *Food Hero* Monthly publication



Oregon has Food Hero promoters on the ground covering all 36 counties.

Working to Increase Oregon's Fruit and Vegetable Intake

- Oregon is a national leader with F&V intake, access to healthy food retailers, and farmer's market acceptance of nutrition assistance program benefits.
- However, Oregonians need to eat more F&V to meet USDA recommended levels.

Concerns	Oregon Adults Median Daily Intake	US State Intake Ranking
Vegetables	1.9 servings per day	Highest
Fruits	1.1 servings per day	Among the highest

Most recent data from CDC State Indicator Report (2013).

Three Reasons Oregonians Should Eat More Fruits and Vegetables

- Vegetables and fruits are rich in essential nutrients and dietary fiber.
- Most vegetables and fruits, when prepared without added fats or sugars, are low in calories.
- Consumption of vegetables and fruits is associated with reduced risk of many chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease and certain types of cancer.

Source the US Dietary Guidelines



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Campaign Reach

In 2014, the campaign included providing direct education, supporting the Food Hero website and social media sites, distributing tools to families to take home (such as Food Hero Monthly), and developing a grocery-store centered media campaign. Through these efforts, the campaign resulted in over 15 million targeted impressions.

During 2014, there were 725,398 visits to foodhero.org; an increase of 214% over 2013. Hundreds of comments on the website attest to Food Hero's positive impact. One commenter wrote of the [chili cheese hominy recipe](#): "I love that it uses an ingredient that is low cost and I hadn't used before. I couldn't believe from the taste that it was really healthy?!?! I had to look at the nutrition info, and yes it really is healthy, low fat, and a good source of calcium, [and vitamins] A and C!! I will make this again and again!!" Additionally, Food Hero has over 2,300 followers on social media where Food Hero posts and engages with users daily.

Impacts on Families

A take-home survey was completed by 320 adult caregivers whose children (kindergarten through high school) had tasted Food Hero recipes in class:

- 73% reported their children talked to them about what they'd learned in class about healthy eating. More than half of these respondents changed the food they ate at home as a result.
- 69% prepared one or more of the Food Hero recipes sent home.

Also, a total of 797 adults completed our fall 2013/spring 2014 process surveys. Among respondents who reported recognizing the Food Hero logo a key finding was that there was a steady and significant increase in the median number of days they made meals at home that included vegetables.

Stories from the Field

- The student store at Culver High School in Jefferson County will be selling Food Hero Popeye Smoothies this spring. Eighth graders from Culver Middle School will assist in marketing the smoothies to the high school students.
- In Josephine County, Grants Pass School District food service prepared Food Hero Pumpkin Breakfast Cookies, which were given to children and staff at Parkside Elementary on Oct 29 as children were headed to recess. The children voted overwhelmingly that they liked the cookie (338 to 15). The school district also featured the Food Hero Apple Bar recipe on the back of the district-wide elementary menu for December 2014.
- Over a 3-month time period in 2014, in Wallowa County, SNAP-Ed conducted 10 food demonstrations at a local food pantry. Each offered a Food Hero recipe made with ingredients found in emergency food boxes. Participants tasted the recipes and engaged in conversations about nutrition, cooking, and shopping on a budget.



2014 Most Popular Recipe:
Favorite Pancakes
314,225 page views on foodhero.org.

Connect with Food Hero!

