

# Assessing the Availability, Appeal, and Promotion of Healthier Foods in Arizona Small Stores Using the Stocking Opportunities in the Retail Environment (STORE) Tool



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## Background

Arizona grapples with persistent obesity-related health disparities, and federally-funded programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education (SNAP-Ed) seek to support healthier food purchases in small stores to encourage healthy eating behaviors. We developed a feasible, in-store healthy retail assessment tool for Arizona SNAP-Ed to measure the baseline *availability*, *appeal*, and *promotion* of healthier foods and drinks in small stores.

✓ Availability: are healthy foods and drinks sold?

🎯 Appeal: are they positioned to encourage purchase?

📣 Promotion: are they paired with supportive marketing materials?

## Methods

The Stocking Opportunities in the Retail Environment (STORE) tool is a brief in-store assessment adapted from New York City's research-tested *Shop Healthy* initiative.<sup>c</sup> It measures the baseline availability, appeal, and promotion of produce and healthier options in five food categories: 1) produce, 2) canned goods, 3) grains and beans, 4) snacks, and 5) beverages and frozen foods. SNAP-Ed local implementing agency staff used the STORE tool to measure baseline supports for healthier food purchases at 17 small food stores with 2 registers or fewer (e.g. convenience, corner) in four counties. Data analysis included basic statistics to translate raw results into comparable scores in each STORE category as a percentage of the maximum achievable score.

## Results

Average scores were low (33% of the maximum achievable score) across all five categories, suggesting that these retailers were well-positioned to enhance their healthy retail supports through partnership with SNAP-Ed. Scores for beverages/frozen (40%) and fresh produce (31%) were higher relative to other categories, while canned goods (10%) scored lowest.

### 2017 STORE Scores (N=17 small retailers)



## Conclusions & Implications

The STORE tool provided a feasible way to assess the availability, appeal, and promotion of healthier foods in small stores targeted for healthy retail interventions. The results will direct priority areas for Arizona SNAP-Ed's healthy retail activities, which will be individualized to each store. The tool will also be used for a follow up evaluation after in-store interventions are implemented, to measure changes in healthy retail supports over time.

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