

San Benito County (cluster with Monterey County) Noteworthy Initiative

Customer engagement techniques in retail settings

San Benito County SNAP-Ed staff pride ourselves on our ability to engage customers in friendly conversation when promoting items for Harvest of the Month, MyPlate, healthy recipes during food demos, Rethink Your Drink, etc. When it comes to working in a retail setting, San Benito SNAP-Ed staff utilizes a number of engagement techniques to maximize customer participation in food demos.

When engaging customers in the retail setting we believe it is important to have at least two staff working together. In order to make the most of the educational opportunity, one staff member is serving and conversing with customers passing by the booth while another employee walks around offering taste test to customers in the store. The employee walking around the store then encourages the customer to stop by the booth to receive more information such as newsletters, cookbooks, pamphlets or other materials. Once the person arrives at the booth, the staff member will provide education on the benefits of fruit/vegetable and since it is in season, price and taste are better.

By using this approach, staff is increasing their reach because not all customers in the store will pass by the booth demo thus more customers are impacted. Staff has seen this work because customers will go to the produce section and buy items that were found in recipes. Another way to get customers engaged is to have visuals of models for example MyPlate, food models, sugary drink models, posters, etc.

Staff strives to be friendly, genuine and never pushy. By using the techniques mentioned above, customers are engaged in their own educational process by choice and seem to appreciate the opportunity to learn about incorporating local and seasonal healthy fruits and vegetables into their meals.