



Creating Policy, Systems, Environmental Change: Yolo County's Success and Lessons Learned in 2015

Title: **WIC**ked Success with Harvest of the Month

Intervention Summary

Yolo County is a community with strong roots in agriculture and farming. We grow a variety of fruits, vegetables, and other crops on our land, most of which are shipped across the world to various countries. Unfortunately, our own community is limited in its awareness of and consumption of local and seasonal fruits and vegetables despite having them growing in the areas around their own homes. Because of this, it was a goal for our program to increase our target audience's awareness of local and seasonal produce in hopes that it would also lead to an increase in consumption of these fruits and vegetables. We began this process by focusing on a small subset of our target population. We partnered with our local WIC agency's staff to promote "Harvest of the Month" (HOTM) using fruits and vegetables that are specific to Yolo County. These same fruits and vegetables are also highlighted in Yolo County schools, so the message was being shared across several venues in the county. We began by collecting initial data to assess recognition of the campaign by WIC clients. Then, we worked with WIC staff to train them in techniques and approaches for promoting HOTM within their counseling sessions, classrooms, at the front desk, and other areas of work. Each training session included a taste test of a recipe featuring the chosen fruit or vegetable of the month to further reinforce their capacity to promote the campaign. Additionally, we provided posters, newsletters, recipes, and other materials to support their message. After three months of these interventions, we recollected data and saw a 13% increase in "Harvest of the Month" recognition, with 60% of those clients recognizing the campaign specifically because of the HOTM presence in the WIC environment. After this success, we are continuing to improve our training methods with staff by trying to meet their needs as promoters and we are also improving our materials and the way our materials are placed and provided in the WIC setting.



Description of Barriers Encountered and Identified or Proposed Solutions

The biggest barrier to our intervention was truly convincing WIC staff that “Harvest of the Month” was a valuable campaign to spend time promoting in their clinics. Often times, they expressed feeling that the campaign was additional work to their already-busy work loads. Fortunately, the WIC supervisor and manager assisted with helping the staff see and find ways to incorporate HOTM into work they already do so that promotion of that campaign did not create more work for the staff. NEOP staff also worked to creatively accommodate WIC staff needs and requests to help make the HOTM campaign promotion easier and seamless. There were no other significant barriers.

Future Directions/Sustainable Success

Over the next few years, we will continue to partner with our WIC to improve our training methods, the way we provide materials to them, and the types of materials we provide to them. In the long term, we are hoping that Harvest of the Month will become a regular part of WIC nutrition education and that we will be able to continue providing them with improved and updated resources as needed. Over time we should see a higher number of WIC clients recognizing HOTM, and specifically from the promotion in WIC, so that we can ensure that our promotion strategies are working and we can share them with other partners.

Contact information about this Narrative

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