Promote Healthy Eating, Improve Customer Loyalty

Healthy Eating is in Store for You™
Faites provision de saine alimentation MC

CANADIAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION | ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DU DIABÈTE

Dietitians of Canada
Les diététistes du Canada

Months of research and development have gone into an exciting new collaborative national health promotion project directed at consumers. The good news for the grocery industry is that participation in this project will help foster positive community relations and enhance store loyalty—and there's a wealth of resource materials available to you at no cost.

The Healthy Eating Is In Store for You™ project is coordinated through a partnership of the Canadian Diabetes Association and Dietitians of Canada, as well as several other organizations (listed at the end). But individuals with diabetes are only one target group for this project that focuses on using nutrition labels on packaged foods to promote healthy eating. Other target groups include adult women with families, seniors, people on fixed or limited incomes and individuals with lower literacy comprehension.

The program has been designed to help consumers make healthy food choices through in-store and community education on how to read and apply the new nutritional information on packaged food labels. With the release of *Canada Gazette Part II* in January 2003, the labels on packaged foods will now display standardized nutritional information on 13 core nutrients including calories, fat, cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrates, sugar, fibre and more. And it is expected that many consumers—even grocers —will initially find this information confusing.

Grocery retailers and manufacturers traditionally do a great job of communicating nutritional information to consumers through pamphlets, point-of-purchase displays, in-store demonstrations, websites and other information channels. With the change in labelling regulations, both grocers and consumers will benefit from having a one-stop resource for information. As a result, the materials developed through this project have been designed to complement and enhance the educational work that retailers and manufacturers are already doing. This information is available at: www.healthyeatingisinstore.ca

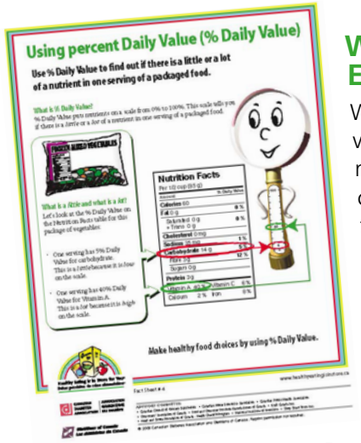
Of Interest to Consumers and Employees

The www.healthyeatingisinstore.ca website offers easy-to-read fact sheets, activities and a fun-filled interactive web-based shopping experience. A virtual shopping tour of the "Rainbow Mart" enables consumers to test their label-reading savvy by playing an interactive shopping game. Grocery store employees also benefit from taking this "cyber tour." According to Susan Roberts, Project Coordinator, "The Rainbow Mart is lots of fun and includes interesting facts on healthy eating and shopping tips to help consumers learn how to use the information on food labels."

Especially for Grocers

For grocers and educators, the Healthy Eating Is In Store for You website has a workshop guide and activity sheets to help teach consumers, and staff, how to read the new nutrition information on packaged foods. This is important because research shows about 70% of all purchase decisions are made in the grocery store and that the majority of shoppers are avid label readers.

The website also has several flyers, brochures, fact sheets and other educational materials that you may incorporate into your store's advertising and promotional campaigns.



Why In Store Education?

When retailers provide an opportunity to educate consumers while they shop, it not only helps influence healthy food choices, but also provides long-term benefits to the grocer at the same time. By partnering with dietitians, home economists and diabetes educators in programs like this, retailers can promote healthy eating.

Laura Kalina of Shop Smart Tours in Western Canada, reports that her research shows a 33.3% increase in label reading by consumers who participated in their grocery store tour program. And Overwaitea Food Group confirms that many children tried unfamiliar food during Shop Smart Tours, and evidence suggests that the tours help promote the adoption of healthy eating habits.

Randy Meltzer, a nutritionist with Market Fresh, says that store tours and in-store education is valuable because it gives the stores a great profile in the community. "When people leave your store feeling that you care about them as an individual, not just another customer, it builds trust and loyalty," says Meltzer.

Ready. Set. Go!

Getting started in this new label reading education program is as easy as 1, 2, 3!

Step 1: Contact a registered dietitian, home economist or community health educator who is familiar with this project. These people will be the gateway to resource materials for retailers and can link you to many resource options for use in your store. To find a knowledgeable health professional in your area contact Susan Roberts, National Project Coordinator (contact information follows).

Step 2: Ensure your employees are familiar with the Healthy Eating Is In Store for You™ program. Have them visit the program website to get up-to-date on what's happening across Canada. Watch for news from the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors and the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers.

Step 3: Download free resources from the website and use some of these resources in your weekly advertising flyers.

Want to know more?

Check the website at www.healthyeatingisinstore.ca or contact any of the following:

Susan Roberts, National Project Coordinator Healthy Eating is in Store for You program

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Dietitians of Canada: centralinfo@dietitians.ca

Canadian Diabetes Association: info@diabetes.ca

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- Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors
- Canadian Home Economics Association
- Canadian Public Health Association
- Consumers' Association of Canada
- Food and Consumer Products Manufacturers of Canada
- Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada-Health Check™ Program
- Kraft Canada Inc.
- National Institute of Nutrition
- Shop Smart Tours Inc.

www.healthyeatingisinstore.ca