

## **Guidance for Data Collectors using the NYS Local IMPACT: Food Retail Assessment Tool**

### Overview of the Assessment Process

The NYS Local IMPACT: Food Retail Assessment Tool is designed to collect baseline, and eventually follow-up, data on availability of healthy products, and the pricing, placement, and promotion of those healthy products in local food retail stores. The instrument is based on the *CX3 Tier 2 – NF 2-5 Food Availability & Marketing Survey* developed by the California Department of Public Health. It has been revised to meet the needs of this project, focusing on small and convenience food retail stores in high need communities in New York State. High need is defined in the Local IMPACT Partnership spreadsheet of SNAP stores (located on SP and emailed to each partnership lead) using three different indicators - located in food deserts, low income areas and/or low access areas. Follow-up data will be collected towards the end of the project to capture changes that take place related to healthier food access in the small and convenience food retail stores.

The purpose of this assessment is three fold: 1) To gather information about the local food retail environment in high need communities; 2) To initiate the engagement process between partnerships and local food retail in an effort to take action/s to improve access to healthy food in the stores; and 3) To collect baseline and follow-up data from targeted food retail stores.

### General Guidance

**Prior to visiting the store** there are a few background steps. Review the SNAP store list to identify stores in the target areas where communities are primarily made up of the priority population and where need appears to be high. Once at least 15 stores have been identified, an online search on the store can provide more detailed information on the status of the store and its location (option to use GoogleEarth or other such mapping tools). For each store, use the information on the SNAP store list as well as some other resources, to complete section **A. Store Information**, on the Assessment Tool. Plan for at least 30 minutes to administer the survey plus additional time for engaging the store owner and/or staff person. Engaging the store owner and/or staff can take place prior to visiting the stores or during the first visit.

**Engaging store owners and/or staff** can be one of the most challenging and most important parts of the process. Recommendations for success include being self-confident, polite and straightforward. There are a few options for how to proceed. One option is to reach out to the stores prior to going in person, this can be done by telephone, letter or possibly email. One potential disadvantage to this

approach is that the store owner misunderstands the nature of the work and data collection, deciding not to engage. Another option is to engage the store owner and/or staff in person when you go to visit the stores and collect the data. This allows for a more informal feel and allows for initial engagement and good communication through in person contact. Potential disadvantages are that the timing of the visit may not be ideal for the store owner and/or staff or if only the staff person is present, s/he may not feel able to engage on behalf of the store. Whether talking in person or communicating through other means, it is important to let the store owner and/or staff person know that the purpose is to enhance access to healthy food and that through the project, resources will be available for the store to make certain changes based on the store assessment. During the initial communication process it is recommended to avoid getting too technical or using public health lingo. Another recommendation is to have data collectors work in pairs. After both complete the survey, they can compare responses and then resolve any differences. This should minimize errors in data collection.

**Once the store owner and/or staff agrees to the assessment** use Detailed Guidance for Administering Assessment Tool- Pretest (Table below) to complete the NYS Local IMPACT: Food Retail Assessment Tool. The tool can provide a structure for engaging and communicating by offering first steps in the process as well as information necessary in order to begin the discussion about the second steps, deciding what might be best to focus on for the work. The assessment tool will be completed as a paper and pencil survey. While it is important to be thorough with your data collection, the more prepared you are, the easier it will be to get in and out of the store quickly. Make it a priority to stay out of the way of customers. It is also a good idea to find something positive to say about the store, if possible related to their healthy offerings, and thank the person at the cash register before leaving.

**After the assessment is complete**, review to check that all items have been answered. Once you are back at the office, enter the responses from the paper copies into SurveyMonkey (provided by DOH) as soon as is feasible. Keep hard copies of the assessment tool in a designated file and use them for program planning and engaging store owners about the focus of the work to take place.

### Detailed Guidance for Administering Assessment Tool

| Item #                                                                                | Instructions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| <b>A. STORE INFORMATION-</b> Complete this section <b>BEFORE</b> going into the field |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1)                                                                                    | <u>Store ID</u> : Use the Site Location ID which is a four digit ID number generated for Catalyst. Once a store has been identified to visit, submit the Site Location Form, within 48 hours this location will be added to Catalyst and a four digit ID will be assigned. Use this ID for the store survey, also add this ID to the Local IMPACT Partnership SNAP Store excel spreadsheet in column C: <b>Food Retail Assessment Store ID</b> |
| 2)                                                                                    | <u>Store Name</u> : Use Local IMPACT Partnership SNAP Store to fill in store name                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

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| 3)                       | <u>Address:</u> Use Local IMPACT Partnership SNAP Store to fill in address                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 4)                       | <u>WIC Vendor?</u> WIC store status can be determined by <i>Vendor list StateWide VMA_WIC</i> located on Local IMPACT SharePoint Site and shared by email to partnership lead                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 5)                       | <u>SNAP Vendor?</u> Circle <b>Yes</b> if found in Document Name UNLESS more current information indicates otherwise                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 6)                       | <u>Date of Visit:</u> Enter the date that you are visiting the store in this format mm/dd/yyyy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 7)                       | <u>Coder Name/ID:</u> Enter the initials of your first, middle and last name, if you do not have a middle name use X                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>B. STORE EXTERIOR</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 8)                       | <p>Record the number of <b>unhealthy, healthy and mixed advertising visible from the exterior of the store</b>. This does not include cigarette or tobacco or alcoholic beverage ads. The decision as to whether an ad is considered unhealthy, healthy, or mixed is based on two things, first what the <b>majority (&gt;50%)</b> of the ad displays and second, the following definitions for unhealthy and healthy (these definitions are also included on the assessment tool). Use <b>mixed</b> if the ad has a fairly equal amount of unhealthy and healthy food displayed.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Unhealthy products</b> are high calorie and/or low nutrient foods and beverages that include soft drinks and other sweetened beverages including diet drinks, sweet desserts and highly sugared cereals, chips and other salty snacks, most solid fats, fried foods, and other foods with high amounts of sugar, fat and/or sodium.</p> <p><b>Healthy products</b> include minimal or no added fat, sugars, or sweeteners. Examples include fresh or dried fruits and vegetables, whole grain snacks (<math>\geq 2</math> g fiber per serving), energy bars (<math>\leq 14</math> g sugar per serving), nuts and seeds, non-fat and low fat milk products, water, or 100% fruit juice.</p> <p>Do not consider: Cigarettes or tobacco or alcoholic beverage ads or products.</p> </div> <p>Make sure to include professionally-produced advertising that depicts brands, logos or products on all doors and windows of the storefront AND banners, posters, temporary signs, etc. on the roof, walls or elsewhere on the property such as on fences, garbage cans or in the parking lot.</p> <p>Types of Ads to Count<br/>Here are examples of the types of ads you will be counting on doors and windows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Signs and posters with pre-printed advertising (usually produced by the manufacturer, but may have prices hand-written by the local merchant)</li> <li>➤ Decals or stickers</li> <li>➤ Pull/push and enter/exit signs on glass doors</li> <li>➤ Lighted or neon signs</li> <li>➤ Branded signs printed by companies that own several chain stores, such as 7-11, Stewarts, or other chains</li> <li>➤ Display boxes or cases that clearly promote the product (have promotional materials attached to or built into them)</li> <li>➤ Any other advertising item with a brand name or logo on it</li> <li>➤ Partially obstructed signs if it is easy to detect the product. Classify the size by the whole ad, not just what is visible. Do NOT count signs that are mostly obstructed.</li> </ul> <p>Do NOT include painted images on doors or windows, these will be asked about separately in questions 12 &amp; 13.</p> |

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|                           | <p>First tally the # of unhealthy small ads using tally marks in the grey area underneath the column headed, <b># of ADS for Unhealthy</b>. Small is considered anything less than or equal to 4 sheets of 8 1/2 x 11 paper (use 4 times the size of the survey itself to estimate). Then count up the tally marks and write the total number of unhealthy small ads in the space next to <b>Total</b>. Repeat this process for unhealthy large ads, tallying and then totaling. Large is considered anything larger than 4 sheets of 8 1/2 x 11 paper.</p> <p>Follow the same directions above for the <b># of Ads for Healthy</b> and for <b># of Mixed ADS</b> filling in all three columns. If there are no ads of a particular type and size, write '0' in the space next to <b>Total</b>.</p> |
| 9)                        | Circle <b>Yes</b> if there are any bins, boxes or containers of fresh fruit or vegetables present on the sidewalk in front of the store. Otherwise circle <b>No</b> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 10)                       | Circle <b>Yes</b> if there are any other <b>food or beverage products displayed on the sidewalk</b> in front of the store or inside the store next to the window so that they are clearly visible from the outside. Otherwise circle <b>No</b> . If there are other food or beverage products displayed, check whether the products are soda, water, other. <b>Check all that apply</b> . If other, describe the product, for example 'canned soups, many varieties.'                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 11)                       | Circle <b>Yes</b> if there are any <b>vending machines on the sidewalk</b> in front of the store. Otherwise circle <b>No</b> . If there are vending machines on the sidewalk check whether the vending machines have soda, water, other. <b>Check all that apply</b> . If other, describe the vending machine, for example 'snack food, mostly chips and cookies.'                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 12)                       | Circle <b>Yes</b> if there are there any images of <b>healthy</b> food and/or beverages, <b>painted</b> on doors or windows of the storefront? Otherwise circle <b>No</b> . Use definition for healthy listed above in #8 or in the text box at the top of page 2 on the assessment tool.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 13)                       | Circle <b>Yes</b> if there are any images of <b>unhealthy</b> food and/or beverages <b>painted</b> on doors or windows of the storefront? Otherwise circle <b>No</b> . Use definition for unhealthy listed above in #8 or in the text box at the top of page 2 on the assessment tool.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>C. STORE INTERIOR</b>  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 14)                       | Count up and write down the number of <b>cash registers</b> throughout the store. Only include cash registers for grocery items, include both staffed and unstaffed registers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 15)                       | Indicate whether <b>unhealthy, healthy and mixed ads or promotions are next to the main check-out area</b> . Fill in all three columns. First, circle <b>Yes</b> if unhealthy ads are next to the check-out area (attached or directly next to), otherwise circle, <b>No</b> . Then do the same for each of the following: healthy ads and mixed. Repeat the process for the next three rows, below the check-out level, on the floor while standing in the checkout isle or next to the counter, and hanging from the ceiling directly over the register. Use the same direction in item #8 to decide whether an ad or promotion is considered unhealthy, healthy, or mixed.                                                                                                                       |
| 16)                       | Go through the list of <b>unhealthy and healthy food and beverages</b> , circling <b>Yes</b> for each product that is located next to or below a check-out counter. In addition, for gumball or candy machines circle <b>Yes</b> if located near the exit doorway. If the product is not located next to or below a check-out counter, circle <b>No</b> . If other products are located next to or below a check-out counter, describe these products in the "Other" row. Use definition for healthy listed above in item #8 or in the text box at the top of page 2 on the assessment tool. Please note that the first unhealthy product asked about is a gumball or candy <b>machine</b> , NOT gum, gumballs or candy.                                                                            |
| <b>D. PRODUCE SECTION</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 17)                       | Circle <b>Yes</b> if produce is sold. If otherwise, circle <b>No</b> . If <b>Yes</b> continue onto the next item, #18. If <b>No</b> , skip to item #22                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 18)                       | Circle <b>Yes</b> if there are any health promotion items around the produce display. Around means within 6 feet of the general area. Promotion may include posters, brochures, recipes, nutrition information or images (painted or printed) of produce or of people eating produce. Otherwise circle <b>No</b> . If <b>Yes</b> , describe the type of health promotion items, for example a holder with recipes for vegetable stir fry.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

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| 19)                           | Circle <b>Yes</b> if there are items promoting locally grown produce. Items can be banners, signs, shelf tags, or other hand-written or professionally made items. Stands or displays of local produce also count. Otherwise circle <b>No</b> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 20)                           | <p>In the column headed <b>Available</b>, circle <b>Yes</b>, for each type of produce that is available in the store. Otherwise, circle <b>No</b>. If the item is not available, draw a horizontal line across the rest of the columns. For those items that are available, under the column headed <b>Acceptable</b>, circle <b>Yes</b> for each type of produce that is considered acceptable using the following definition for acceptable which also describes unacceptable produce. Otherwise, circle <b>No</b>. <b>If it is difficult to decide whether the produce is acceptable or unacceptable</b>, circle <b>No</b>. The definition is also included on the assessment tool.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Acceptable</b> produce is a good color, fresh, firm and clean. Circle <b>No</b> if produce is unacceptable meaning it is bruised, has cracked or broken surfaces, shows signs of shriveling or mold. If it is <b>difficult to decide</b> circle <b>No</b>.</p> </div> <p>In the column headed <b>Price Posted</b>, circle <b>Yes</b> if the price is posted for each type of produce. Otherwise circle <b>No</b>. For each type of produce record the lowest price option. Record the unit in the column headed <b>Unit Per</b>. Indicate whether the price listed is by the pound, piece, package or bunch. If the price is either by the package or bunch, record the weight. The weight can be found marked on the package or bunch (if bagged), often on the bottom. If the weight is not on the package, weigh the item if a scale is present.</p> |
| 21)                           | Tally and total the number of different types of produce available inside and outside the store. This tally and total should include any of the fruits and vegetables available that were listed in the table for question #20. First tally the number of types of fresh fruits using tally marks in the grey area underneath the column headed, # of Types Available. Then count up the tally marks and write the total number of Fresh fruits in the space next to word <b>Total</b> . In the last column, write in the names of any fruit available that were not mentioned in the table for question #20. Repeat this process for vegetables. <b>Do not count each variety of fruit</b> (for example with apples; gala, fuji, red delicious) <b>or vegetable</b> as a different type. Also, please do not count garlic, ginger root, herbs, lemons and limes as fruits or vegetables. In the last row of the table, please describe any other produce in the store, such as prepared salads or fruit cups.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>E. OTHER HEALTHY FOODS</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 22)                           | Circle <b>Yes</b> for each food item in the table that is available in the store. Otherwise circle <b>No</b> . For whole grain bread products, if they are available, write down the number of ounces on the bag in the space provided. For canned beans and canned vegetables, either one of two criteria are used, either reduced sodium/salt on label OR low sodium/salt indicated in the Nutritional Facts. Reduced sodium/salt should be indicated on the label. Low sodium/salt is indicated by $\leq 140$ mg sodium per serving. Please note that while tomato paste and tomato sauce do not count as a canned vegetable, a can of diced or whole tomatoes does count, as long as it has no added salt, fats, sugar or sweetener.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

**CHECK FOR MISSING DATA!** Be sure all questions are answered before leaving the store.