



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Shop fresh in your neighborhood!

Local group helps bring healthy foods to convenience and corner stores.

Eau Claire, WI –October 16, 2017—How often do you stop at a gas station, convenience, or corner store for a snack or for last-minute groceries? Do you ever walk out with a soda or candy that you didn't plan on buying? Have you ever wished it was easier to grab a healthy option? Our food environment, including where we shop, has a big influence over what foods we choose to buy and eat. It would be much easier to pick a healthy snack if your local gas station or corner store was stocked with colorful, fresh fruits and vegetables placed near the door or by the register. Recently, the *Healthy Food Marketing Collaborative*, a local coalition of health agencies connected with local store owners in low-income neighborhoods to make this possible.

Five stores in the Chippewa Valley, all located in low-income areas, participated in the project. Coalition members met with store owners to complete healthy retail assessments. The overall goal was to increase the availability and sales of fruits and vegetables in their stores. Eye-catching displays and messaging signs were purchased and placed to help local stores offer more fruits and vegetables.

Eau Claire County Locations

Direct Stores, 317 N. Barstow St, Eau Claire

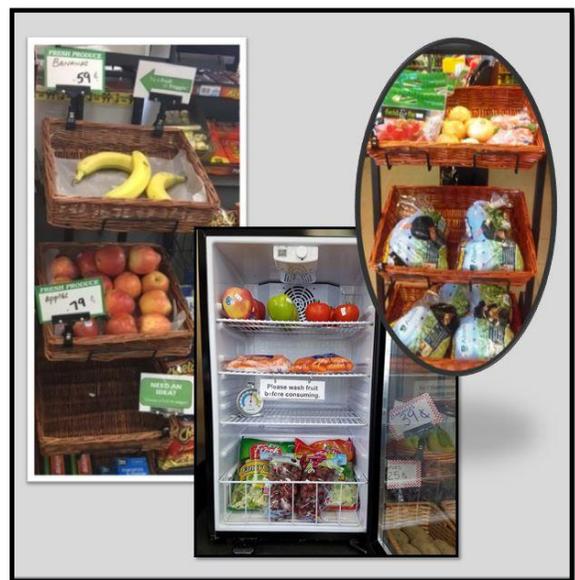
L' Oriental Store, 1607 Bellinger St, Eau Claire

Sunoco, 1404 Birch St, Eau Claire

Dunn County Locations

Bridge Stop, 101 State Road 25, Wheeler

Menomonie Market Food Co-op, 814 Main St, Menomonie



Many Eau Claire residents cannot easily get to a large grocery store or supermarket. According to the City of Eau Claire's Health Chapter Comprehensive Plan, there are three food deserts in Eau Claire. The USDA's Healthy Food Financing Initiative defines a food desert as a low-income census tract where a large number of residents has low access (>1 mile) to a supermarket. Many low-income families rely on convenience stores or gas stations for buying basic foods. Improving access to healthy food in these stores can play a big role in improving health in lower-income neighborhoods and rural areas.

By partnering with local food store owners, the coalition hopes to increase access to healthy food in targeted neighborhoods. This work was funded by the Department of Health Services Chronic Disease Prevention Unit Coalition Healthy Retail grant. To learn more about our work with local convenience and grocery stores, contact Susan Krahn at 715-839-6941.

Everyone Living Better, Longer

Members from Eau Claire, Chippewa, and Dunn County coalitions have joined together to form the **Healthy Food Marketing Collaborative. Partners include:*

Chippewa County Health Department,

Eau Claire City-County Health Department,

HSHS St. Joseph's/Sacred Heart Hospitals,

Mayo Clinic Health System,

UW-Extension FoodWise Program: Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire counties

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