



A Qualitative Study of Accessibility, Quality, and Affordability of Healthy Foods Within a Rural Oregon Town

Emma Fallon, BA '20, Jonathan Pedroza, MA, Nichole Kelly, PhD, Elizabeth Budd, PhD, MPH

Prevention Science Institute

Department of Counseling Psychology and Human Services
College of Education, University of Oregon



Introduction	Method	Results		Conclusion	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Many rural towns throughout the U.S. have limited access to healthy foods¹ ❖ Lack of access to healthy foods is a barrier to healthy eating, which increases risk for chronic diseases² ❖ Produce buying clubs are membership-based community groups that buy bulk, wholesale produce from grocery stores, then distribute to the members at regular intervals at a lower price. ❖ The objectives of this study were to qualitatively assess: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1) access to local, healthy foods and ▪ 2) experiences while participating in a produce buying club among residents of a rural Oregon town. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Nine interviews and two focus groups were conducted with residents of the target town. ❖ Both focus groups consisted of non-buying club members, while the interviews included those involved in the buying club. ❖ All were asked questions about prices of food in their town, accessibility of healthy foods, eating and buying habits. ❖ Those who participated in the buying club were asked about their experiences with the club, the food they receive, and changes they would make. ❖ The interviews were transcribed, and content analysis was completed by trained research assistants. 	Buying Club		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The findings show that there is a need for interventions that improve access to healthy foods in rural communities, especially among low income residents. ❖ The Buying Club is a valued resource to those who can access it easily, but additional work needs to be done to remove barriers to access. ❖ Findings can be used to inform recommendations for future health interventions, including Buying Clubs, in other rural towns. ❖ Most participants express a desire to eat healthy foods, but cite price, distance, and availability as barriers to changing eating habits. 	
		Theme	Quote		Theme
		Produce Quality	"...A lot of times what comes out of the food box is pretty old."	Lack of Affordable Local Food	"...I think (local grocery store) is a good 20% higher on most things generally than in town and you know, that's a big hit on your – a fixed income. I mean, you can get a third more groceries that's a lot."
		Technology Use	"If they (residents) have internet access... they only get it when they go to the library and use the computer lab."	Lack of Local Food Variety	"...It would be a little bit more convenient if there was a better variety of fruits and vegetables at our market."
		Organization of Buying Club	"It's run basically by volunteers."	Quality of Local Produce	"Things like that, we can't get here, that are good, natural..."
		Accessibility of Buying Club	"...unless you have Facebook you don't know about it (buying club)" "We (buying club admin) don't do trail cards or Oregon Trail Cards."	Accessibility of Healthy Food	"...I feel for the families who you know, are in a trailer park and they have no option but to go to (local grocery store) and guess what their kids are eating."
		Produce Variety	"...the variety of vegetables, of fruits and vegetables, that are bought are pretty small." "I like that I have a choice of what I'd like to see in my basket."	Local Health Interventions	"Schools I know that they get a free breakfast and lunch." "At (local clinic), they're offering...fruits and vegetables the last Monday of the month."
				Convenience of Food Affecting Choices	"Me, I'll just eat peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and... (laughs). Which isn't the best, healthiest thing, but it, you know, sustains me and I get through the week until the weekend."