

## SETTING THE BAR:

### *Recommendations for Food and Beverage Industry Action*

The **Strategic Alliance for Healthy Food and Activity Environments** is calling on the food, beverage and restaurant industries to make meaningful changes to support people in making nutritious food choices. Highlighted below are concrete actions these industries should take to ensure a healthier future for our neighbors and children. Slight improvements to the nutritional quality of junk food are not enough. In order to change eating norms in California, we need to shift the food supply to provide a preponderance of healthy grocery items, snacks and prepared foods across the State. We need to shift marketing to emphasize healthy food.

Despite California's worldwide reputation for high quality fruits and vegetables, most residents face a food environment in schools, neighborhoods and worksites where high-fat, high-sugar, highly-refined foods are more available, affordable and more aggressively marketed than healthier options. The current food environment has evolved over time and is shaped by multiple factors—from cultural traditions to public policy. Transforming the food environment to support healthier eating is a shared responsibility. Families, businesses, government, and community institutions all have a part to play in making healthy eating the norm. The food and beverage industry has a leading role as it exerts a powerful influence on each of these groups by shaping what foods are produced, marketed and sold.

Nutrition and physical activity related diseases—diabetes, heart disease, stroke, cancer, and other chronic conditions—continue to top the charts as contributors to premature illness and death, and these conditions are making their appearance at ever younger ages. Chemical residues from industrial agricultural production and long distance

#### **IMPORTANT FIRST STEPS FOR THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRY**

- Provide healthy food and drinks as the standard in all children's meals and on children's menus.
- Competitively price healthy foods so they are as affordable, if not more affordable, than less healthful options.
- Make healthy foods widely available in all children's environments (preschool, schools and after school programs), workplaces, and all neighborhoods.
- Eliminate all marketing and advertising of unhealthy food and beverage products to children and youth.
- Support (and do not oppose) policies designed to bring healthier foods and beverages to schools, workplaces, healthcare settings, and neighborhoods.

food transport are contaminating air, water and soil and contributing to asthma, cancer, birth defects, and neurological disorders across our State. While everyone is affected by these health concerns, limited access to healthy food and higher exposure to toxins particularly contributes to poorer health outcomes in communities of color and low-income neighborhoods.

Our public health crisis is preventable through a more healthful diet that takes into account nutritional and environmental concerns.

## WHAT IS HEALTHY FOOD?

- Healthy foods contain whole food ingredients that are minimally processed such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nut/seeds, and low-fat dairy products.
- Healthy foods are high in naturally occurring nutrients (vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients) and fiber.
- Healthy foods are moderate in calories and low in saturated fat, added sugars and sodium.
- Healthy foods contain no trans fat.
- Healthy foods emphasize regionally and locally grown ingredients.
- Healthy foods do not contain artificial colors and flavors.
- Healthy foods are grown and produced using sustainable methods that are protective of the environment and human health.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRY ACTION

The food and beverage industry has the marketing and production savvy to increase the consumption of healthy food in all venues. Companies use the “4 P’s” of marketing as a framework for strategic decisions along the path from product development to customer sales: Product, Price, Place, and Promotion. Each of the “4 P’s” provides an opportunity to improve food and beverage availability. We recommend specific actions along the “4 P’s,” along with the “5th P”—Public Responsibility.

### Product

*The tangible, physical products as well as services of a company*

- Provide healthy food and beverages as the standard in all children’s meals and on children’s menus.
- Add new menu items that are healthy, affordable, tasty, and satisfying, including entrées, appetizers and side dishes.
- Reformulate food products to decrease calories and lower saturated fat, trans fat, sodium, and added sugars, and add more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds.
- Make available, and promote low calorie or no calorie beverage options without artificial sweeteners (e.g., water, low-fat milk) that help customers to manage their calorie intake.
- Eliminate large and extra-large food and beverages portions.

## Price

*The monetary value of products and/or services*

- Competitively price healthy foods so they are as affordable, if not more affordable, than less healthful options.
- Offer meal deals with healthier entrées, side dishes and beverages.

## Place

*The process of getting the products to the customer*

- Make healthy foods widely available in all children's environments (preschools, schools and after school programs), workplaces and all neighborhoods.
- Prominently display healthy products rather than unhealthy ones at kid's eye level in grocery store aisles.
- List the calorie, saturated fat, trans fat, and sodium content of food and beverage items on menus and post calories on menu boards.
- Grow and produce food in a manner that provides a living income and safe working conditions for farmers, farm workers, meat packers, and other food industry workers.
- Adopt preferential purchasing of regionally grown and processed foods and beverages.

## Promotion

*The process of disseminating information about the product, product line, brand, or company to the public*

- Eliminate all marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages to children and youth.
- Stop offering toys and using cartoon and other popular icons to promote foods to children.
- Review and update CARU standards for marketing to address the imbalance in TV advertising of food and beverages to children.
- Discontinue marketing tactics that promote over-consumption and the mentality that larger portions are more favorable.
- Shift all marketing away from high-calorie, less-healthy options to healthy options and market healthy foods more than less healthful options.
- Eliminate product placements and stealth advertising for unhealthy foods aimed at children through text messaging, television, movies, websites, advergames, viral marketing and other emerging technologies.

## Public Responsibility—The 5th “P”

*The ethical obligations to customers, employees, and the general community*

- Support (and do not oppose) policies designed to bring healthier foods and beverages to schools, workplaces, healthcare settings, and neighborhoods.
- Stop developing and marketing nutrition curricula and other educational materials that promote a particular brand, especially when that brand includes junk food.

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The Alliance Steering Committee: The California Adolescent Nutrition and Fitness Program (CANFit); California Center for Public Health Advocacy; California Food Policy Advocates; California Pan Ethnic Health Network; California Park & Recreation Society; California Project LEAN; California WIC Association; Child Care Food Program Roundtable; Latino Health Access; Prevention Institute; Samuels & Associates, Inc; YMCA of the East Bay