



10 Steps to Setting Up a School Fruit and Vegetable Stand

*How to increase access to fresh fruits
and vegetables in small rural communities
in the Central Valley*

Healthy Foods, Healthy Communities



Numerous studies show that children who eat nourishing, well-balanced meals and healthy snacks, and get plenty of vigorous exercise have more energy, are more alert, and perform better in school. Nutritionists, health care workers, school food services directors and an increasing number of parents across California now encourage inclusion of fresh fruits and vegetables with all family meals and snacks. This is nearly impossible, however, unless families have easy access to fresh produce they can afford.

The goal to “eat healthy” is especially challenging in small, rural communities in the Central Valley, which cannot support full-scale grocery markets or the kind of Farmers Markets found in larger communities. Most commonly found in small communities are one or two “Mom and Pop” markets offering a limited choice of fresh fruits and vegetables (onions, peppers, chilies, lime/lemons, oranges and perhaps bananas), at prices well above those charged in larger markets. To find a wider variety of produce at more affordable prices, residents have to drive – if they can – to larger communities with supermarkets or big box stores.



Success in Pixley

The community of Pixley (population 2,589 Census 2000) in Tulare County lacked a large market selling fresh fruits and vegetables. But what Pixley has – as does nearly every community of more than a thousand residents – is a local school (or school district) with concerned parents, teachers and school administrators, and local officials who can help promote the health and well-being of community residents. And as a center for community services and events, school sites already provide a safe, structured environment and familiar focal point for the community.

Today at Pixley school, affordable fruits and vegetables are made available to families for purchase at the weekly School Fruit and Vegetable Stand. This exciting pilot project has proven to be beneficial to the students, the community and the school. The students involved in bagging, and the parents involved in selling the produce, learn multiple skills relevant to future employment; funds are earned for after school activities; the relationship between community and school is enhanced, and children, their families and community members are consuming more fresh fruits and vegetables.

With the right preparation, schools in small communities throughout the Central Valley can serve as similar sites for fresh fruit and vegetables stands. We offer the following booklet as a guide for schools and related organizations considering establishment of a school-based of a Fruit and Vegetable Stand in their community. Working together, every community can improve access to healthy, affordable food for ourselves and our children.



With acknowledgement and special thanks to:

Pixley Union School District

Dr. Saddle Nishitani, School Superintendent

Wendy McPhetridge, Food Services Director

Bob Chandler – Pixley Town Council and PUSD

Pixley Food Center – Ali Alamsi

Resource Class – Pixley School

Parents of Pixley

Tulare County Nutrition Collaborative

Healthy for Life (CCROPP) Council

University of California Cooperative Extension, Tulare

The California Endowment

Farmers Market Committee in Tulare County

Tulare County Health Education and Promotion Department

The Pixley Post





10 Steps



to Setting Up a School Fruit and Vegetable Stand



Step 1:

Establishing the need

Do people in your community need better access to affordable fresh fruits and vegetables? Visit all local convenience and gas station stores as well as local markets and make an inventory of the produce available.





Step 2:

Form a produce stand work group

Form a small working group of local residents, community stakeholders and sympathetic professionals. Assure them that this is a short term commitment with lasting benefits for their community. Your work group can include:

2-5 parents; local store owners; School Superintendent or designee; City Council or Chamber of Commerce/community leader member; representative(s) from County health organizations and programs aimed at nutrition education, health promotion and/or obesity prevention; faith community representative; others

Note: Including local store owners and the Chamber of Commerce from the beginning reduces the risk that the school fruit and vegetable stand operation will be seen as a competitive economic threat.



Step 3:

Hold your first work group meeting

Secure a location, date and time for your first meeting. Contact work group members by e-mail, phone or face-to-face to let them know about the meeting. Be sensitive to the use of appropriate languages in spoken and written messages when recruiting diverse members of your community.



Step 4:

Make the case for a fruit and vegetable stand on school property

Use your Step 1 inventory to describe current access to fruits and vegetables, (locations, type of store, range of produce etc.), and briefly make the case for increasing access. Discuss the advantages of buying locally – lower cost, saving of time and gas, and the benefits to all family members of eating more fresh produce. Inform them of the successful school-site fruit and vegetable stand established in Pixley, Tulare County.



Step 5:

Organize the work group

Develop and update a contact list for the work group members based on a sign-in sheet completed at each meeting. Agree on who will keep notes at the meetings, how the work group members will be sent information, and when and where meetings will be held.



Step 6:

Gain necessary supporters for the F&V Stand project

Make a check list of the buy-in, support and cooperation customarily needed to make a Fruit and Vegetable Stand happen:

- ✓ Permission from the School Superintendent and/or School Board to develop and operate a Fruit and Vegetable Stand on school property
- ✓ School Food Services Director
- ✓ School janitor, transportation manager or plant maintenance manager to help with F&V stand set up and take down
- ✓ Parents involved in raising funds for school activities (PTA, Booster Club, school trip, after school program, scholarship fund etc.)
- ✓ Local market owners/operators
- ✓ Local businesses, Town Council, faith community
- ✓ Local clinic, public health department and nutrition education programs.



Step 7:

Develop a plan of operation

- ✓ Choose a site for the weekly fruit and vegetable stand that is visible and easily accessible to parents and others wanting to shop.
- ✓ Purchase, borrow or find donations of necessary equipment: tables, chairs, cash box, banner, canopy, sandwich board, price cards.
- ✓ Set hours of operation that are convenient for parents. Two hours in the afternoon when elementary children are picked up from school works well.
- ✓ Establish a team responsible for the F&V stand on a weekly basis. The list of tasks should include:
 - Ensuring that the fruit and vegetables to be sold are on the school site;
 - Counting and bagging the fruit and vegetables;
 - Setting up the fruit stand, chairs, canopy, signs and banners etc.;
 - Ensuring that volunteers selling the F&V arrive on time, trained and prepared to work;





- Establishing fair pricing: since it is critical that produce is affordable to low-income residents, we suggest no more than a 15% mark-up.
- Providing a secure cash box or register;
- Maintaining communication with the school Food Services Director;
- Arranging clean-up, put-away and final accounting.



Step 8:

Provide accountability behind the scenes

Ultimately, the School Superintendent and/or his/her designee is responsible for the activities associated with operating a fruit and vegetable stand on school property. The following issues were raised during the pilot project and resolved as listed below:

- **Liability Insurance:** In Pixley, the operation of a F&V Stand on school property was not deemed to increase risks already covered by the school's liability insurance. The short term, supervised nature of the F&V stand, and the simple sale of bagged, whole produce for school fundraising purposes does not amount to significant additional risks.
- **Health Department Certification:** The sale of whole, bagged fruit that is not cut or consumed on school premises does not require certification by the County Environmental Health Department. The pre-sold and unsold fruits and vegetables are stored in the regulated cold storage unit used by the school kitchen.



- **Business permit:** The sale of fruit and vegetables for charitable purposes to raise money for extra curricular school activities does not require a business permit. A school F&V Stand is a not-for-profit enterprise and falls into the same category as school tee-shirts, sweaters, and candy that are also sold to raise money for school activities.
- **Weights and Measures:** Selling fruit and vegetables by the piece and bagged does not require a Weights and Measurements inspection.
- **Book keeping:** Initial start up funds for the pilot project that amount to less than \$1,000 can be used to open a line item in the school budget. Each week that account is reimbursed the amount of money used to purchase the fruits and vegetables from the wholesale food vendors that supply the school kitchen, with ensuing profit dedicated to extra curricular school activities.
- **Reporting:** School Food Services Directors keep meticulous and extensive records on the costs and quantities of the foods they purchase for school meals and snacks. Accounting for the fruits and vegetables purchased from their regular vendors for the F&V Stand is a relatively easy task for most willing Food Services Directors. The records they produce can be reconciled with the monies taken in by the F&V Stand sales, as well as provide a record of the consumption of each type of fruit and vegetable.



Step 9:

Advertise



Let as many people in your community know that fresh fruits and vegetables are being sold every week at their local school, and when. Boosting sales also increases the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables in the community and money earned for school charities. Some suggested means of advertising:

- ✓ A shade canopy, banner and sandwich board erected each week on the site to draw attention to “the event” (cost is approximately \$500). A logo contest for students can create added interest.



- ✓ A sandwich board can be made or purchased and placed where parents in cars will see it to remind them of the F&V sale after school
- ✓ Flyers designed by students and sent home periodically
- ✓ Schedule other events on Fruit and Vegetable Stand day to attract attention: folkloric dance groups, visits by a local blood mobile or other health and nutrition provider; outreach by the Food Stamp program, Children's Health Insurance recruiters, WIC, etc.
- ✓ Include information about the F&V Stand in a town or church newsletter.
- ✓ Post flyers (with permission) in appropriate venues in town.



Step 10:

Have fun!

Operating a school fruit and vegetable stand is a win-win for everyone involved. Make sure you give the community, kids, School Board and all your stakeholders feedback about your successes. Include news about the stand in the school and local newsletters, invite the local media to a special event involving the F&V Stand, give a presentation to the school board and congratulate everyone involved. Making it easier for families in your community to purchase and eat fresh fruits and vegetables makes it easier for everyone to live healthier, more active lives.



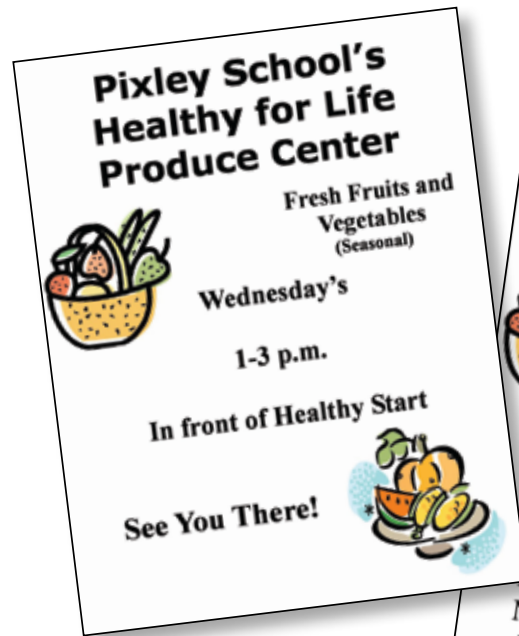
Appendix



10 Steps to a School Fruit and Vegetable Stand

Flyers

English and Spanish language flyers sent home with elementary school students at the beginning of each term



Sandwich Board



Announcing the Fruit and Vegetable Stand at the main student pick-up and drop off point on school property

Instructions for vendors

Instructions for all parent groups handling the sales of fruits and vegetables each week


- 1 Food Service will order produce.
- 2 Special Day Class will bag.
- 3 Food Service will write down beginning inventory and set prices for the days produce.
- 4 It is the responsibility of the organization to pick up the cart by 1 p.m.
- 5 The designation spot for the cart will be on the corner of the circle drive in front of Healthy Start. Bob will set up the canopy. If Bob has not set up canopy it will be the organizations responsibility to contact him. The organization will be responsible for canopy and banner.
- 6 Once you have completed the day, the cart must be returned to the Cafeteria and placed back into the left hand corner by the salad bars. All empty boxes should be thrown away in the dumpster, and extra produce should be placed in the kitchen on the back counter.

- 7 An ending inventory must be taken by the organization and all monies turned in to the Cafeteria. Money must be counted and totaled by the organization on a sheet which is signed and given to the Food Service Department. If your money is short, your organization will be responsible. Remember items sold should total your money turned in.
- 8 All money is turned into the District Office and deposited into Student Body account under CCROPP. The organization will earn the profit made for the week (retail price minus the wholesale price). The money is then disbursed to the organization's sub account in the Student Body Fund.
- 9 ALL FOOD SERVICE PERSONNEL LEAVE AT 3:30.

Wendy McPhetridge, Food Service Supervisor / April 14, 2008



Price Cards

Bell Pepper, Red and Yellow



- Excellent Source of Vitamin C!
- Excellent Source of Vitamin A!
- Source of Dietary Fiber!

Chile de Campana, Rojo y Amarillo



4 for \$1.00

Orange



Naranja



- ¡Buena fuente de la vitamina C!
- High in Vitamin C!
- ¡Buena fuente de la fibra dietética!
- Good Source of Dietary Fiber!

6 para \$1.00

Reusable laminated price cards that include nutrition education but do not necessarily require literacy.

Administrative Spread Sheet

Produce Inventory		Month of January 2008									
Date	Description	Total Amount	Price Per	Selling Price	Amount Sold	Carry Over	Amount Received	Total Invoice	Profit		
23-Jan	Tangerines 20lbs	10	\$ 1.35	\$ 2.75	10	0	\$ 27.50				
	Pears 150 ct.	32	\$ 0.13	\$ 1.00	32	0	\$32.00				
	Jalepenos 40lbs	20	\$ 0.61	\$ 1.50	8	12	\$ 12.00				
	Onions 50lbs	26	\$ 0.21	\$ 2.00	11	15	\$ 22.00				
	Anaheim Chili 30lbs	14	\$ 0.68	\$ 1.75	9	5	\$ 15.75				
							\$ 109.25	\$ 96.85	\$ 12.40		
	Total Invoice							Disneyland & 8th grade			
30-Jan	Tangerines 20lbs	21	\$ 1.35	\$ 2.75	12	9	\$ 33.00				
	Pears 150 ct.	29	\$ 0.13	\$ 1.00	17	12	\$ 17.00				
	Bananas 75 ct.	15	\$ 0.22	\$ 1.00	15	0	\$ 15.00				
	Jalepenos 40lbs	12	\$ 0.61	\$ 1.50	4	8	\$ 6.00				
	Onions 50lbs	15	\$ 0.21	\$ 2.00	2	13	\$ 4.00				
	Anaheim Chili 30lbs	5	\$ 0.68	\$ 1.75	5	0	\$ 8.75				
							\$ 83.75	\$ 57.50	\$ 26.25		
								Disneyland			

Record of sales (produce amount, wholesale and retail costs) to maintain fiscal accountability and allow for accurate reporting

Student Learning



Special Education students count and bag the fruits and vegetables and set up the stand



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