

# Clark County Public Health

## Community Transformation Grant —Success Stories

### Healthy Stores, Healthy People, Healthy Neighborhoods



When Southwest Washington received the Community Transformation Grant in 2011, residents of Central Vancouver neighborhoods had limited access to stores that stocked healthy food items. The only full-service grocery store on Fourth Plain Boulevard had closed, and as a result, neighbors turned more frequently to the area's convenience stores and ethnic markets.

Since then, seven neighborhood stores have partnered with Clark County Public Health to increase access to healthy foods. These stores actively expanded their healthy options and boosted their marketing focus to help “make the healthy choice the easy choice.” Where candy bars and soda pop once ruled the shelves, store managers now stock fresh fruits and vegetables, granola bars, 100% fruit juice, non-fat milk and water.

- Participating stores added more than 80 healthier items.
- Clark County Public Health provided hands-on assistance to help market managers position healthy products for greatest exposure and recruited students from the DECA Club at Fort Vancouver High School to plan marketing strategies to promote the healthier items and revamp displays. As a result, participating markets:
  - Installed interior and exterior signs and/or sidewalk sandwich boards advertising fresh produce.
  - Created attractive end displays to market healthier choices
  - Installed floor decals and overhead signs to lead customers to healthy food items
  - Used attractive produce baskets and colorful shelf liners to enhance the appeal of fresh fruits and vegetables.
  - Implemented “shelf talkers” and posted free recipe cards.
- In addition, markets implemented other strategies to appeal to their customers:
  - One store discounted the price of healthy items compared with unhealthy alternatives.
  - One store created a healthy “grab-and-go” refrigerated case to highlight healthy items.
  - One store uses promotional pricing to encourage produce sales. For example, bananas are sold at two-for-a-dollar.
- In a 2014 survey of participating store managers more than 50 percent said the program was helpful and that sales of healthy items had increased. Stores that benefitted from a “healthy store remodel” reported the most positive impact. Although most stores reported a positive customer response to the availability of produce, they also reported this as the most challenging aspect of change due to limited shelf life and infrequent delivery from suppliers.



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.