

Social Determinants of Health: Fruit and Vegetable Incentive Programs

The analytic framework postulates the pathway through which fruit and vegetable incentive programs increase fruit and vegetable consumption, improve food and nutrition security, and improve health equity.

Fruit and vegetable incentive programs are implemented among people with lower incomes. Fruit and vegetable incentive programs may increase affordability, availability, and access to fruit and vegetables of the participants. This may lead to both decreased out of pocket spending on fruits and vegetables and increased budget for food, which may lead to increased preference for fruits and vegetables. These improvements may lead to increased fruit and vegetable purchases, increased fruit and vegetable consumption, reduce food insecurity, and improved physical and mental health, leading to improved health equity.

Potential additional benefits for retailers, local economies and society included expanded economic benefits for local farmers and food retailers, which may lead to improved food environment; reduced emissions due to support of local, seasonal eating among participants, increased awareness and use of farmers markets, and improved food access by increasing participating food outlets. Potential harms may be increased consumption of unhealthy food.

Potential key effect modifiers include:

- Incentive amount, format, frequency, and timing
- Incentive amount scaled for household size
- Duration of program enrollment and options for reenrollment
- Types of fruits and vegetables eligible for redemption
- Redemption site (i.e., grocery stores, supermarkets, convenience stores, and farmers markets)
- Tailoring program to culture and context of intended population
- Includes nutrition education component
- Includes outreach, on-site product placement, or other program promotion
- Community involvement in program design and implementation