

# NPI Brown Bag Seminar Series

## Mandela Partners: Building an Equitable Food System with Food Access Programming

Lori Ciara Segura, Mandela Partners &  
Gail Woodward-Lopez, Nutrition Policy Institute

**Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

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# UC Berkeley Nutrition Policy Institute

## Mandela Partners Healthy Retail Programs

Ciara Segura  
Director, Programs and Policy



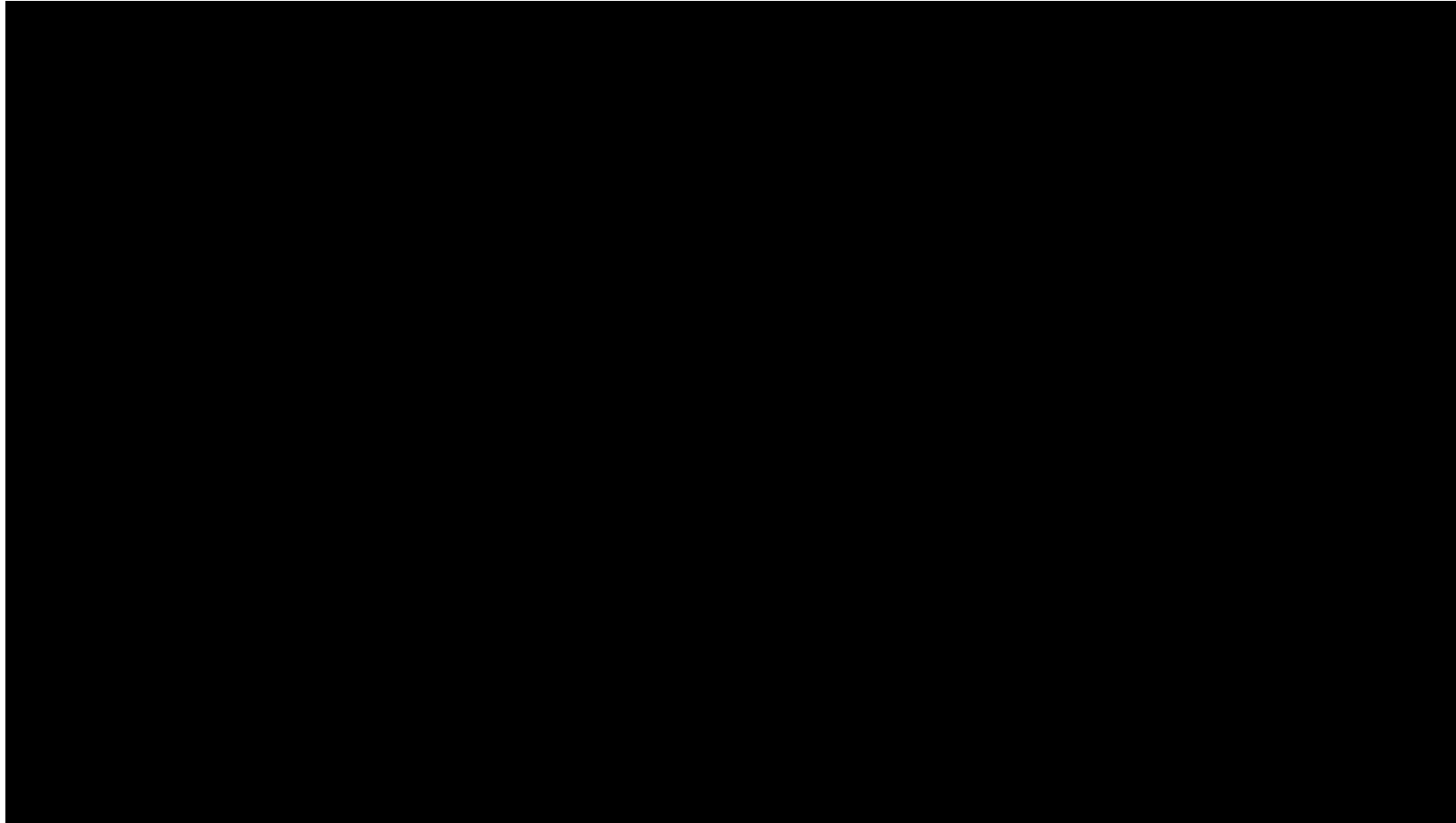
# Our Mission

# Who we are and what we do



- Founded in 2004
- 5 programs - Healthy Grocery Initiative, Community Produce Stands, Wellness Education, Entrepreneur Workshop Series, Regenerate Opportunity
- 3 incubated businesses: Zella's Soulful Kitchen, Ashland Market and Cafe, and Mandela Produce Distribution
- Recently acquired Core Kitchen, produce-forward restaurant in Downtown Oakland

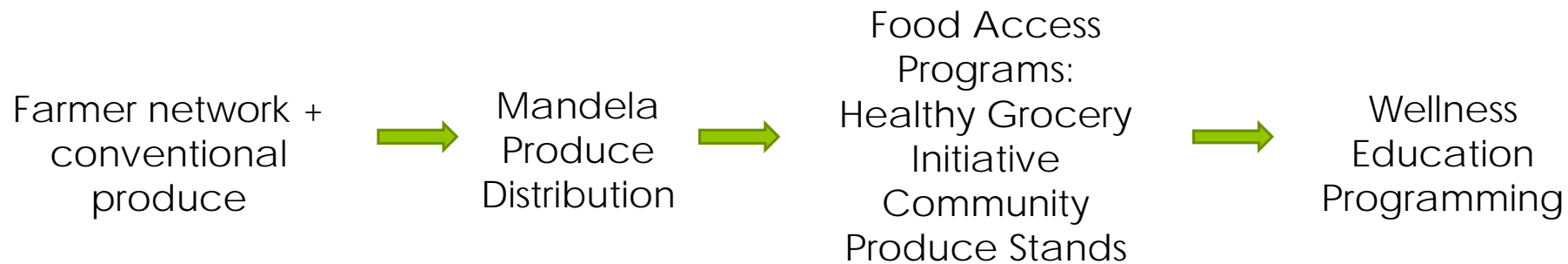
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_I96YCknOz4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_I96YCknOz4)



# HR Program Components



Addressing two food access challenges:  
Fair pricing for under-resourced farmers of color +  
affordability for low-income customers





# Farmer Network

Mandela Produce Distribution (MPD) works with 25-30 small farms (less than 100 acres) in California throughout the year

Organic and pesticide-free practices

MPD sources 60% of their produce from these farmers

# Community Produce Stands



## Current Model

- ❖ Parent Leaders
- ❖ Food Access + Wellness Education

## Partnerships

- ❖ Schools, clinics, senior housing, and libraries



# Healthy Grocery Initiative



## Current Model

- ❖ Tiered Service Structure
- ❖ Leads with Business Development
- ❖ Food Access + Wellness Education

## Partnerships

- ❖ 9 stores in Oakland and Ashland/Cherryland

# Wellness Education



Diet and Nutrition

Fitness

Mental Health

Financial Literacy

Environmental Awareness

# Fresh Creds



## 50% DISCOUNT

on all California grown **fruits and vegetables** when using your EBT (CalFresh) card!



### BUY LOCAL FOR LESS



No sign-up necessary,  
Start saving now!

Fruits and Vegetables	\$15.00
50% Discount	-\$7.50
Charge EBT	\$7.50

Fresh Creds discount was created to increase access and encourage the consumption of healthy California-grown fresh fruits and vegetables while highlighting our network of small local farmers of color

Questions? 1364 7th St  
Contact us: (510) 443-0993

Instagram: @mandelapartners  
info@mandelapartners.org



# What's next?



Workforce Development

Consulting Model

Equitable Food Oriented Development

Stronger Program Alignment

- HGI + BizDev
- MPD + CPS

Thank you!



Questions?

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# An oasis in the desert: How mobile produce stands can improve access to healthy foods

American Public Health Association Annual Meeting

Wednesday, November 6, 2019

Philadelphia, PA

Authors: Janice Kao, Gail Woodward-Lopez, Ciara Segura, Dana Harvey

**Presenter: Gail Woodward-Lopez**



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# Special Dedication

Dana Harvey, Founder and Executive Director, Mandela Partners  
*passed away last year after her battle with cancer.*

*A visionary leader who devoted her life, passion, and creativity to catalyzing groundbreaking programs, launching community-based businesses, and forging wide-reaching partnerships that fostered food security and equitable economic development.*

*She will be missed.*



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# BACKGROUND & INTERVENTION



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# An urban food desert

- 23 census tracts identified as **Vulnerable Populations** in Alameda County
- Most of these are in **West and East Oakland**
- These census tracts have:
  - High rates of poverty and unemployment
  - High rates of mortality and chronic disease
  - Limited access to fresh, healthy food
  - Less economic opportunity



# Evidence on Healthy Retail Interventions

## Shopping patterns of low-income households:

- Highly price-sensitive
- Stretch limited dollars by purchasing lower cost, less healthy foods
- Willing to travel to a supermarket to buy lower-cost groceries, even if its further away

## To increase purchasing and consumption of healthy foods:

- Best evidence is for interventions that include price and monetary incentives
- Inconsistent or insufficient evidence for:
  - nutrition education and promotion,
  - increasing access to healthy foods,
  - farmers' market type interventions



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# The Mandela Partners Community Produce Stands

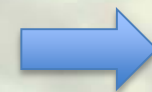


-Farm fresh produce and basic staples at affordable prices

-Convenient locations: schools, health centers, senior centers, and residential facilities.

-Year round “mobile” or “pop-up” stands: open 2-3 hours once per week

-Locally sourced: limited resource, sustainable farmers within 200 miles; in house distribution center



wholesale prices for customers



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# Produce stand expansion (2014 -2017)

- CDC REACH grant:
  - Added 5 new stands
  - Added EBT card readers
  - Marketing campaign
  - Nutrition ed/food demos
  - Opportunity for program evaluation
  - Contribute to knowledge base



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# Where were stands located?

- Elementary schools: 2 (2 new)
- Healthcare facilities: 2 (1 new)
- \*Public housing site: 1 (1 new)
- Senior center: 1
- \*Community market: 1 (1 new)

*\* These venues operated monthly, all others operated weekly*



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# Evaluation Questions

1. How many and who shops at the produce stands?
2. How did the number of shoppers and volume of purchases change with the increase in number of stands?
3. Did sales change with the launch of nutrition education and marketing strategies?



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# Methods

- Customer residence, sociodemographics, self reported change in purchases (customer intercept surveys and staff interviews) Oct-Dec16
- # of transactions (manual counts); Dec15-Mar17
- # EBT transactions (EBT card readers); Dec15-Mar17
- Pounds of FV sold (distribution records & wastage inventory): Jan14-Mar17
- Intervention activities (activity tracking forms) Jan14-Mar17



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# RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS



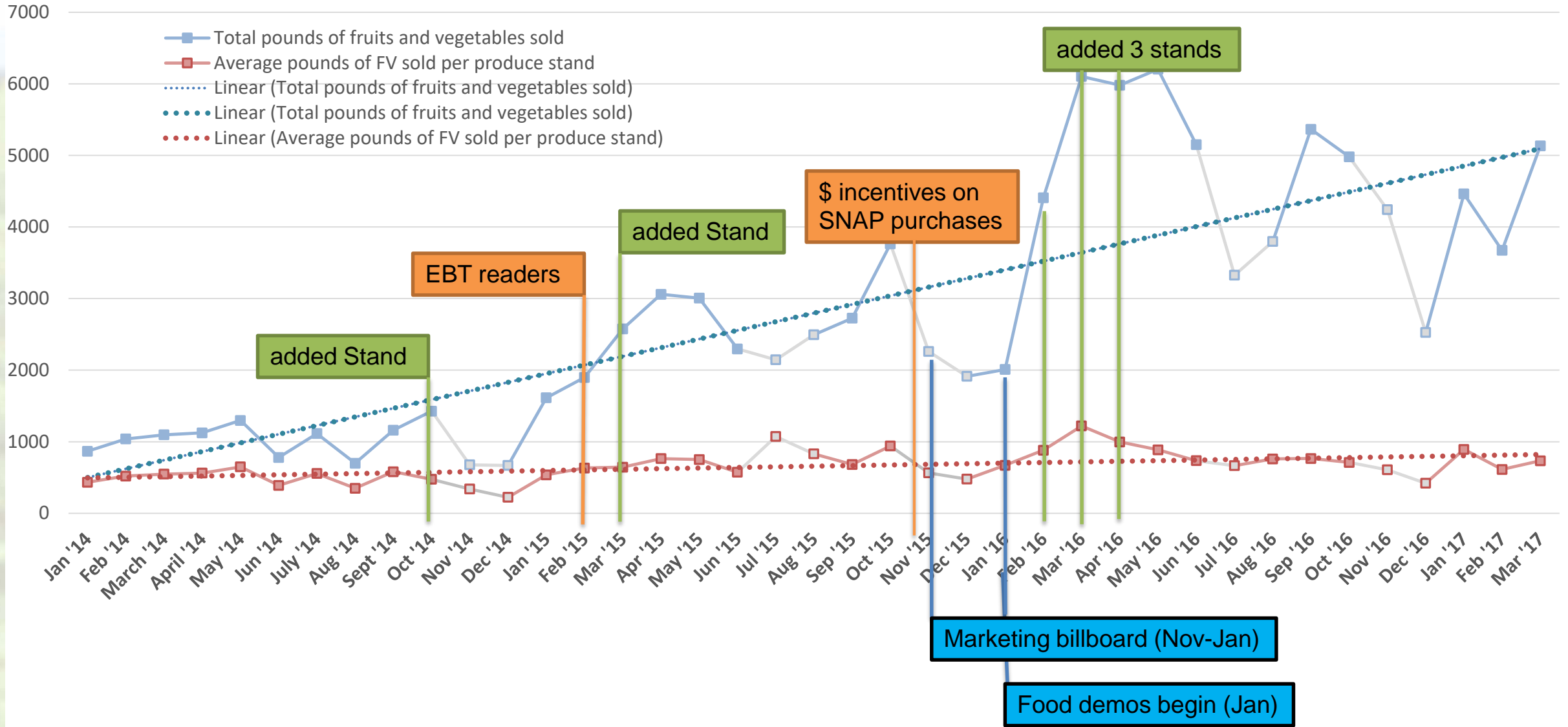
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# Intervention Activities and Change in Sales of FV



## Change in Sales of Fruits and Vegetables (FV) Before vs. after last 3 produce stands added

	Time 1 (Dec 2015 - Jan 2016)	Time 2 (Dec 2016 – Jan 2017)	Percent Change
Number of stands	4	7	+75%
Total # of operating days	21	35	+67%
Average # of pounds of FV sold per day	190	216	+14%
Average # of transactions per day	27	20	-26%
Average pounds sold per transaction	7.1	10.6	+49%

# Large variation in reach

Range of averages at endpoint (Oct 2016-Mar 2017):

	Pounds sold per operating day mean (range)	Transactions per operating day, Mean (range)
<b>Higher reach sites:</b> Hospital Senior center 2 schools	257 (210-334)	25 (21-28)
<b>Lower reach sites:</b> Health clinic Community market (monthly) Public housing (monthly)	58 (57-60)	13 (12-16)

# Customer Characteristics

	Community resident <sup>3 or 4</sup>	Racial/ethnic minority <sup>2 or 3</sup>	Food/income assistance <sup>2 or 3</sup>	% EBT <sup>1</sup>
School #1	100%	97%	82%	21%
School #2			82%	14%
Public housing		NA	100%	13%
Health clinic	49%	78%	55%	10%
Hospital			14%	6%
Community market			40%	3%
Senior center			15%	3%

Sources: <sup>1</sup>transaction records, <sup>2</sup>school records, <sup>3</sup>customer surveys, or <sup>4</sup>staff interviews

# Shopping Patterns (based on survey data from 4 stands)

n=201	
Female	75%
Purchasing for family	63%
Buys majority of FV here	44%
Top 3 reasons why: (n=89)	Quality (58%), convenience (47%), price (33%)
Top 3 reasons why not: (n=112)	Inconvenient (64%), limited hours (39%), low selection (15%)
Change in total FV purchased: (n=175) (self-report)	55% increased 43% stayed the same 2% decreased
Shop here, times per month:	Mean = 2.35, standard deviation = 1.3
FV purchased per household per month (pounds/transaction x times shop per month)	25 pounds

# Community Engagement

*The produce stand is something I look forward to. Not only is the produce incredible, but the staff makes the experience enjoyable. The produce stand symbolizes a step in the right direction in terms of affordability, accessibility and sustainability. The food stand takes food justice to another level. Although the operation is small the change they stand for and the approach they take is anything but small.*

*I come here because the first time I shopped here I had just gotten out of the hospital. I got a tumor removed. The guy here showed me love and wouldn't let me pay.*

*I need to say this vegetable market needs to expand service here for 2 more days!! ... The quality of its products parlays directly to improving the quality of my health and life!!! I'm here every week since they began. Its staff members are not just friendly, they're family. Their knowledge of the products is extraordinary. Their patience and willingness with us less knowledgeable folks causes all of us to return each week because we've been educated and encouraged to eat right and live right. The prices here are the best in the Bay Area!!!! ... This market is manna to our pockets, health, well being and sanity. Thunderous thanks.*



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# Summary

- The produce stands are reaching their intended population
  - community residents, low income, communities of color
  - Patrons of the organization where stand is located
- FV purchases increased overall and per operating day
  - Increases varied widely from stand to stand
  - Decrease in number of transactions but increase in pounds per transaction
- Embraced by the community
  - Felt Mandela Partners were responsive to community needs
  - Felt welcome



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# Theories/Implications

- Group of dedicated customers emerge once novelty effect wears off
  - Increased their FV purchasing, such that pounds/transaction increased at most stand
  - Potential effect of the nutrition ed/food demos – helps with customer engagement and retention
- Unclear if marketing campaign effective for produce stands
  - Customers are those that utilize the community org hosting the stand
- Low utilization of EBT price incentives



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# Acknowledgements:

## Mandela Partners Team:

- PI: Dana Harvey
- Project Manager: Trisha Chakrabarti
- Data collection: Josephine, Yuro, Gabby, Audrey, Erick

## UC NPI Evaluation Team:

- PI: Gail Woodward-Lopez
- Project manager: Janice Kao
- Data collection: Aviva, Spencer, Isabel, Dillon, Jenna

Funding: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Research was supported by the Cooperative Agreement Number DP005951



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# Questions?

- For research and evaluation, please contact:
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    - Janice Kao, Research Coordinator, [jankao@ucanr.edu](mailto:jankao@ucanr.edu)
    - Gail Woodward-Lopez, Principal Investigator, [gwlopez@ucanr.edu](mailto:gwlopez@ucanr.edu)
- For Mandela Partners programs, please contact:
  - Mandela Partners
    - Ciara Segura, Programs and Policy Director, [Ciara@mandelapartners.org](mailto:Ciara@mandelapartners.org)



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