

Jim,

I think you're missing some important information about how PBH has contributed to changes fruit and vegetable consumption over the years. They have been very strategic in using their limited dollars to reach audiences in creative ways. First with 5 a Day and now with Fruits and Veggies - More Matters, PBH has positioned information on fruits and vegetables to be used in a variety of settings that have a much more extensive reach than they could expect to accomplish with the funding they have available.

For a fair assessment, you need to look at the populations and settings where the PBH messages have had the most extensive reach in order to see a change in consumption.

Here in Arizona, PBH's messages and materials have been used primarily with low income individuals reached through USDA programs such as WIC, Food Stamp Nutrition Education, and Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. We know that since the early 1990s, while the overall number of people reporting that they eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables has remained about the same, the numbers for low income individuals (where the PBH messages have been used) has steadily increased and now equals that of people with higher incomes. When the new WIC food package is implemented in October, we think this trend will accelerate and intake of fruits and vegetables among low income individuals will surpass that of people with higher incomes. In Arizona, the new WIC food package will provide for the purchase of \$750,000 of fresh fruits and vegetables each month. Fruits and Veggies – More Matters is an important part of the promotion and education we are doing about the fruits and vegetables that will soon be available to WIC clients. The PBH website for moms that provides information on how to pick, store, and cook fruits and vegetables is something state health departments couldn't provide on their own. I think you are underestimating the value and the impact of the tools that PBH provides for consumers.

I would love to talk more with you about the successes we've seen in using the PBH common messages here in Arizona and I'm sure many other states have similar success stories.

Take a look at some of the creative ways the Arizona Nutrition Network has used the PBH messages and information by visiting www.eatwellbewell.org. Be sure to take time to view the videos!

Sharon Sass, R.D.
Nutrition Education Advisor
Arizona Department of Health Services