



HEALTHY CORNERS

BUILDING HEALTHY CORNERS

A BEST PRACTICE GUIDE FOR CREATING
HEALTHIER CORNER STORES
BY DC CENTRAL KITCHEN

A NOTE FROM OUR CEO

At DC Central Kitchen, we fight hunger differently. We began operations in 1989, with the goal of turning the traditional soup kitchen model on its head. Instead of emphasizing charitable hand-outs, we created innovative programs that brought food where it was most needed while offering the job training and career opportunities our neighbors needed to leave hunger behind for good.

In 2011, we launched Healthy Corners in response to a call for new ideas for expanding access to healthy food in our city's "food deserts." We knew that charitable hand-outs of free food and farmers' markets open on certain days and at certain times would not, on their own, fully address the significant inequalities in food accessibility across Washington, DC. We devised a model that positioned DC Central Kitchen as a mission-driven wholesaler, small business capacity builder, and street-level marketer of healthy, affordable foods, all in service of our city's small corner stores, which had previously struggled to put fresh, nutritious options on their shelves.

Because of Healthy Corners, nearly 60 small corner stores in DC's historically underserved neighborhoods now stock their shelves with fresh produce and healthy snacks—collectively selling over 475,000 healthy items annually at the time of this report. Our success stands in stark contrast to the persistent and misguided stereotypes that suggest low-income communities are less interested in purchasing healthy food, or that small corner stores cannot become robust and reliable providers of nutritious options. We have revealed significant consumer demand and storeowner buy-in—and successfully advanced these key components of program success over time. By providing these nutritious options with a commitment to affordability and respect for the communities we work in and call home, Healthy Corners has won over consumers, small businesses, philanthropists, and public health experts alike.

Healthy Corners is changing lives here in Washington, DC—and we believe this model has far greater potential. This report outlines our processes, innovations, and challenges operating a landmark healthy corner store program in hopes of inspiring others and accelerating their growth. We don't have all the answers – but we're sharing the ones we've discovered the hard way. I hope this document sparks replication, adaptation, and further improvements as we and our peers across the country strive to build a food system that works for everyone.



Michael F. Curtin, Jr.
Chief Executive Officer

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ABOUT DC CENTRAL KITCHEN

DC Central Kitchen's mission is to use food as a tool to strengthen bodies, empower minds, and build communities. Founded in 1989, DC Central Kitchen is a nationally acclaimed nonprofit and social enterprise that combats hunger and poverty through job training and job creation. Our approach provides hands-on culinary job training while creating living-wage jobs and bringing nutritious, dignified food where it is most needed in our city. We serve scratch-cooked farm-to-school meals in DC schools; deliver fresh, affordable produce to corner stores in neighborhoods without supermarkets; provide delicious catering; and operate fast-casual cafes. DCCK has been featured in national media including The Washington Post, The Atlantic, The New York Times, National Geographic, PBS NewsHour, and more. To learn more, visit dccentralkitchen.org.



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“When we open our minds to what people can do when they work together, and we use food as a tool to build communities, powerful change can happen. Healthy Corners embodies that approach, uniting small businesses, local residents, family farmers, and graduates of DC Central Kitchen who have overcome immense barriers in life.”

– Chef Jose Andres

THE GROCERY GAP CHALLENGE

A “food desert” is a geographic area with limited to no access to full-service grocery stores that makes it difficult to buy affordable or high-quality fresh food. The USDA designates an urban area as a food desert if more than 33% of residents reside more than one mile from a supermarket or large grocery store.

Of course, a lack of access to such resources does not occur in a vacuum, and we know this to be especially true here in Washington, DC. While DC has experienced significant economic growth in recent decades, these gains were not enjoyed equally by all residents or neighborhoods. DC consistently faces some of the nation’s highest gaps in employment and health outcomes

along racial lines. In a segregated city, our predominantly Black communities face disproportionately high barriers in accessing healthy, affordable food. Nearly 70% of the District's 76 full-service grocery stores are located in four wards that are predominantly white and have the city's highest household incomes.ⁱ In contrast, just four grocery stores are located east of the Anacostia River. This segment of the city is home to nearly one-quarter of the city's residents along with its highest rates of poverty, unemployment, homelessness, and food insecurity.ⁱⁱ

When the issue of what some, but not all, dubbed "food deserts" became a prevalent concern among public health advocates and anti-hunger groups, local actors in Washington, DC initially coalesced around two primary types of responses. One option was to use large public incentive programs to attract full-service grocery stores to identified food deserts. Unfortunately, grocers largely rejected these incentives over the past 15 years, with just one full-service supermarket opening in DC's most high-need areas during that span and other, smaller-scale grocery options closing.

Another option was to expand charitable and public benefit programs that gave away fresh, healthy food for free, or subsidized low-income shoppers who visited area farmers' markets. These efforts were critical to meeting the immediate needs of area residents, but left space for a middle-ground solution that strengthened existing small businesses in DC's underserved neighborhoods, provided access to healthy food at times when farmers' markets and food pantries weren't open, and demonstrated a strong market demand for nutritious options in these communities. The solution became Healthy Corners, DC Central Kitchen's pioneering response to expanding access to healthy, affordable food in neighborhoods without grocery stores.

A note on language: In recent years, the term "food desert" itself has been challenged and reframed, most notably by food justice advocate and author Karen Washington.ⁱⁱⁱ We acknowledge that supermarkets and grocery stores are far from the only food access points for community members in Washington DC. Other sources include farmers' markets,



farm stands, non-profit distribution points, urban farms, and community gardens. Food desert metrics based on proximity to supermarkets reveal some of the context of a given community's food access, but are naturally incomplete. Therefore, in this report we will refer to these areas as LILA (Low-Income, Low-Access) communities whenever possible.

HEALTHY CORNERS: AN INNOVATIVE SOLUTION TO A SYSTEMIC FAILURE

DC Central Kitchen's Healthy Corners program is a strategic, collaborative response to the ongoing challenges many communities face in establishing robust, reliable access to healthy, affordable food. The Healthy Corners program model is now recognized as a national best practice, and an increasingly prominent source of inspiration for other communities that seek to pilot and execute similar programs.

CORNER STORES AS PART OF THE SOLUTION

Our experience shows that corner stores are uniquely positioned to serve as partners in the effort to bring fresh, healthy options to low-income communities. As existing retailers, they have an established customer base familiar with their location, products, and prices. Because they are often located in or near residential neighborhoods, corner stores can be a key gathering place for residents on their way to or from work, school, or other activities. In fact, a national survey from The Food Trust found that over half of surveyed youth visited a corner store at least once per day.^{iv}

This finding was mirrored in Washington, DC, where Healthy Corners customer intercept surveys from 2024 revealed that 48% of customers visit a corner store nearly every day, and another 29% visit between two and five times a week.^v Open all year-round and often open early morning and late at night, seven days per week, residents can frequent a corner store when farmers' markets and mobile markets are closed. Healthy Corners partners exclusively with small corner stores in LILA neighborhoods; at the time of this writing, 43 of our 57 (75%) partner stores are located in Wards 5, 7, and 8 and the remainder are located in neighborhoods with food access challenges of their own.

Despite these obvious assets, before Healthy Corners launched, some observers were skeptical about the potential of these businesses to offer nutritious foods in a safe, consistent fashion.^{vi} Few if any could meet the minimum delivery requirements of for-profit wholesalers, let alone absorb the costs of installing and maintaining refrigeration or the risks of ordering produce items that did not sell quickly. Where some saw insurmountable barriers, DC Central Kitchen saw an opportunity.

THE HEALTHY CORNERS MODEL

Healthy Corners acts as a wholesaler by aggregating fresh food from mainline distributors and local farms, processing it at our 36,000 square foot kitchen and food hub facility in Southwest DC, and selling it to for-profit independent corner stores—86% of whom accept the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

Unlike typical wholesalers, Healthy Corners sells this healthy food in small quantities appropriate for small retailers. Stores receive once, twice, or three times a week product deliveries, then mark-up items by 35-50% for an average suggested retail price of just \$2.19 per item, always at or lower than produce pricing at big box grocery stores. To build on our commitment to affordability, we launched



Key Program Inputs

Starting a Healthy Corners-style program can involve many functions and forms, but these inputs have proven essential to our operation, which includes produce aggregation, last-mile delivery, and multi-faceted education and outreach activities.

- Kitchen and food storage space
- Refrigerated vehicle(s)
- In-store infrastructure: dedicated, branded refrigeration and shelving
- Key staff roles: merchandiser/delivery driver, store trainer, procurement, customer outreach, food production, strategic partnership management and program evaluation

a partnership with the USDA in 2018 to provide 'produce incentives' that further expand the purchasing power of low-income customers using SNAP benefits at these small retailers. These incentives further promoted strong interest among our intended population in consuming fruits and vegetables and quickly accelerated product sales (for more on this initiative and how we have continued to remediate barriers through benefits access programs, see page 28).

As a mission-driven social enterprise, Healthy Corners also provides free infrastructure like refrigeration and shelving, marketing materials, trainings, and direct technical assistance to help store owners engage customers and increase sales of healthy items. We then deploy staff and partnerships to conduct tastings, nutrition trainings, and cooking demonstrations, while promoting Healthy Corners offerings through paid advertisements, community events, and our own digital app. Healthy Corners also convenes store owners virtually and in-person to advance their knowledge on selling fruits and vegetables in a small retail environment. Together, these holistic efforts expand small business capacity, stimulate consumer demand, and build lasting trust alongside neighborhood-level infrastructure.



"Credit DC Central Kitchen with a myth-busting demonstration project."

– The Washington Post

THE IMPACT

Thanks to Healthy Corners, nearly 60 small retailers that otherwise could not or would not have reliably stocked or sold healthy food are now empowering residents of DC's LILA neighborhoods to purchase fresh produce.

Initial surveys conducted in partnership with Carnegie Mellon faculty and staff in 2015 showed that 91% of store owners indicated that selling produce through Healthy Corners helped them increase their overall profit, while 97% would have recommended that other small retailers participate in the program. The same research showed that, at the time, that walkability to healthy food had increased by 11% in target communities since the program launched. During the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown, the important role of Healthy Corners in being a consistent supplier to these small, neighborhood-level retailers became even clearer and was validated through increased produce sales. In January 2023, Healthy Corners reached 1 million units sold from the start of the pandemic, a tremendous indicator of continued progress despite a period of widespread disruption.^{vii}

Today, Healthy Corners is on the front lines of affordability and accessibility and an established, widely recognized part of both our local food system and District-level strategies for expanding access to healthy food.



SETTING UP SHOP: PROGRAM BUILDING BLOCKS

Minding The Fridge

While refrigeration is essential to any produce distribution system, we found that it was not a one-size solution. When weighing refrigeration investments and upgrades involving partner retailers, it may be helpful to keep a few considerations in mind:

What size and model of refrigeration is suited to the available space? Healthy Corners typically starts new stores in the program with a countertop fridge or a smaller fridge (dimensions: 24" x 24-3/8" x 61-3/8").

What electrical capacity is needed for the desired fridge?

What type of plug?

What product mix will the store need?

Will all the products need to be stored in the fridge? Remember products such as bananas, onions, potatoes, garlic are best stored outside of the fridge.

This section details lessons learned from the early years of Healthy Corners. These findings may be helpful and relatable for those looking to begin new programs and navigate the programmatic start-up stage. Given the ensuing growth of Healthy Corners since 2011, we have also noted more recent findings and learnings that may be useful to those launching similar operations.

LOWERING THE BARRIERS TO ENTRY

In our experience, three significant barriers have historically prevented corner stores and small retailers from selling fresh produce: an inability to procure fresh produce in small quantities from wholesalers, insufficient knowledge and infrastructure to display and care for fresh produce, and risk-aversion to stocking new products without clear customer demand.

Launched in 2011, Healthy Corners' approach tackled all three barriers, first by acting as a produce wholesaler that would sell items to corner stores by the single unit without minimum order requirements. Leveraging the existing food purchasing relationships of DC Central Kitchen's other foodservice programs, Healthy Corners could secure bulk-rate discounts and pass those savings along to corner stores. Then, rather than ask corner stores to remove high rotation items from their shelves to make

Minding The Fridge (continued)

Always note the consistency of the store temperature to decide if other products should be kept in the fridge or can be stored on shelving, such as avocado, tomatoes, and citrus.

What is the store owner responsible for in maintaining the unit and ensuring cleanliness and appropriate stocking levels?

Who will own the fridge? In Healthy Corners, fridges are predominately owned by the program to parallel larger firms who own the fridges in these types of stores and thus determine what can be sold out of them. If a store is consistently not in compliance with our program requirements and uninterested in making needed adjustments, the fridge can also be reassigned by our program to another store that will better serve the intended purposes.

Is the store allowed to place other, non-produce items in the fridge? If so, what percentage of what is displayed? In Healthy Corners, any fridge that is owned by the program cannot have non-produce items within it, unless they are a WIC authorized store. If so, they may have 25% of their fridge with non-produce items.

room for “unproven” fresh produce, we gave retailers racks, baskets, and small display refrigerators so they would have the infrastructure and capacity needed to safely carry perishable goods. This model also mimicked larger corporations that work with corner stores and similarly provide equipment and infrastructure for their products to be sold.

For a limited trial period (approximately three months), we delivered products for free, which allowed risk-averse store owners to establish a market while minimizing their exposure in buying products that might not sell. Despite concerns that stores would drop out once subsidized deliveries stopped, 100% of corner stores stayed in the Healthy Corners network after the initial trial phase, demonstrating that owners saw value (and profit) from selling fresh produce.

BUILDING A DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

To rapidly build a distribution system in the summer and fall of 2011, we allowed stores to order and purchase items by the unit and case, rather than by weight, which allowed stores to maintain their existing point-of-sale operations. Stores received weekly price sheets denoting each offering (bananas, apples, potatoes, peppers, etc.) and made their order for the following week while the Healthy Corners Field Produce Merchandisers dropped off their current order. Orders were relayed daily to DC Central Kitchen’s procurement staff who included these orders in the organization’s much larger food purchases for the thousands of daily meals the organization served at schools and shelters. Vendors delivered the products to DC Central Kitchen’s central aggregation and processing space, where our team then sorted and loaded Healthy Corners products into a refrigerated van for delivery. In these early years, locally grown offerings, even from area farms where DCCCK sourced school meal ingredients, were less common in Healthy Corners. Reasons at the time included customer preferences for product size (e.g. larger non-local apples), interest in non-local types of hand fruit (e.g. bananas and oranges), and cost.

ENGAGING STORE OWNERS

We quickly discovered that the single biggest determinant of an individual store's success was the level of personal engagement of the store owner. When store owners were enthusiastic about the program, they took better care of their items, maintained appealing displays, and educated consumers about new products and promotions. In short, **store owner commitment was everything.**

To meet owners where they were on the engagement spectrum, we created a **store owner training manual** designed to be comprehensive, easy to read, and filled with examples of displays, price tags, and marketing materials. The training manual also included tips on improving store owner-customer relations. Some store owners had built a strong rapport with customers as longtime business owners, while others had strained relationships with their customer base. Many store owners – more than half – self-identified as immigrants or new Americans and as a result, perceived language barriers and cultural differences often further separated store owners from engaging with their customers, and vice versa.

In addition to the training manual, the Healthy Corners team made personal visits to corner stores at least quarterly to answer questions and gather feedback. With the growth of the Healthy Corners program, store engagement has also grown. In partnership with University of the District of Columbia's SNAP Education (SNAP-Ed) program, we started **nutrition trainings** to help address retailer knowledge gaps and enhance cultural awareness related to specific food items and preferences. Our staff noticed that if store owners did not personally like or have familiarity with a given fruit or vegetable, they would not order it. Thus, these trainings helped link the acquisition of new knowledge with improved sales opportunities.

Today, Healthy Corners now facilitates quarterly nutrition trainings entitled "Harvest of the Season" to promote



Sample signage for our in-season locally sourced produce

“Through Healthy Corners, DCKK sells fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables to store owners at wholesale prices, and in smaller quantities than a conventional distributor, which allows retailers to sell them at a discount.”

– Civil Eats

a local or in-season product, educate store owners on the product including nutritional information, and demonstrate a recipe using that product. These virtual cooking demonstrations and trainings also directly increase our sales, such as collards sales doubling after a Harvest of the Season focused on greens.

CREATING JOBS FOR ADULTS WITH BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

DC Central Kitchen considers it critical to its mission to provide stable, meaningful, and dignified jobs for people who have faced barriers to employment, including histories of homelessness, incarceration, and addiction. Since Healthy Corners launched, the production, packaging, and distribution of its products has been led by DC Central Kitchen employees who graduated from the organization’s Culinary Job Training program for unemployed adults. Nearly one half of each year’s culinary students come to us as SNAP customers themselves. Each DC Central Kitchen employee works full-time hours starting above the DC living wage with comprehensive health care benefits and a matched retirement plan.

Any sustainable solution to the challenge of food access must look to create good jobs and economic opportunity, as well as spaces for community residents to contribute to – and advocate for – a more equitable food system that supports their health, wellness, and economic security. Healthy Corners has purposefully empowered Culinary Job Training program graduates to lead nutrition education sessions, store owner trainings, and community outreach workshops, leveraging their culinary expertise while creating leadership opportunities for residents of these historically underserved communities who have personal experiences with food insecurity and living in LILA neighborhoods.

DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE REVENUE MODEL

Selling wholesale produce to corner stores covered basic food expenses, but to keep prices affordable for the end consumer, those prices did not reflect the staff, equipment, and back-end operational costs. Initial investments from local government agencies responsible for public health and small business development propelled Healthy Corners from whiteboard idea to full-fledged operation, and additional public-sector investments continued to sustain a significant portion of the program for years to come. With our unique approach to supporting food access in LILA neighborhoods and improving community health, we began to leverage private sector investments from healthcare companies, food retailers, and family foundations to build our Healthy Corners operations. Over time, Healthy Corners adopted a revenue model that blended public, private, and earned revenue – a much more sustainable and resilient model than produce sales alone.

While some observers have questioned if a produce wholesale model not fully funded by wholesale revenue is truly “sustainable,” we propose an alternative framing and comparison. Distribution of questionably appealing produce boxes funded by charity or tax dollars are far less “sustainable” than consumer-driven sales of fresh produce subsidized, in part, by an array of public and private partners and offer less agency to the consumer. If we continue allowing barriers to food access to cause negative health outcomes, those spiraling costs will be widely shared; why shouldn’t a dignified, community-driven response reflect shared, collaborative investment aimed at reducing far more expensive bills down the road? Some food products, including less-healthy ones, externalize costs and benefit from subsidies and policy advantages. Enhancing the competitiveness of fresh fruits and vegetables helps level the playing field for those who grow, distribute, and want to purchase them.



STOCKING UP: PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

With some early wins and hard-fought lessons learned in its first years of operation, Healthy Corners entered a new phase aimed at building efficiency, managing growth, and professionalizing its operation. In this period of program development, Healthy Corners continued to generate new findings and build trust among store owners and customers. Many elements of Healthy Corners that are now considered essential were integrated at this time and could be considered as start-up phase options by those seeking to replicate such programs.

Winning versus Waste

Healthy Corners' current waste prevention policy includes the following components:

We will refund any items within 24 hours of delivery if they are not deemed to be of suitable quality. All refunded products must be removed from display by the store owner.

Waste is tracked by our merchandising and delivery staff when they arrive with the next delivery. Our staff use mobile access to our Appian database to instantly record waste findings.

Each week, our team analyzes store-level waste findings. We then follow up with store staff when waste is a pattern or a substantial amount of product is wasted in a week. We work with our retail partner to adjust order quantities and consider strategies to improve sales in the long-term.

We produced a Produce Shelf Life Guide, detailing the approximate number of days each product can be stored, proper storage and handling, and signs of a product going bad. This guide has been distributed to stores and is used by Healthy Corners team members as a resource when conducting produce ordering and waste trainings.

EXPANDING PRODUCT LINE

Healthy Corners began by selling only whole fruits and vegetables such as bananas, apples, and carrots. This approach was successful in building initial demand for produce, but to better meet customer expectations of **convenient, grab-and-go purchases** and respond to store owner feedback, we sought to offer a wider variety of produce, more fresh ingredients for home cooking, and prepacked items customers could take with them and eat on the go.

We expanded our Healthy Corners product line to include products such as whole watermelon, onions, collard greens and kale; added fresh-cut items including pineapples, mixed fruit, and mango; and prepared and packaged healthy trail mix. We coupled the new produce additions with easy-to-make recipes and nutrition education materials that featured the key nutrients in each produce item.

To meet growing customer demand for local produce in that same year, Healthy Corners conducted a produce line audit to determine which fruits and vegetables could be sourced from local farmers in an effort to ensure that more of our dollars supported the region's food economy. As a result, the team sourced seven items (apples, pears, broccoli, spinach, and sweet potatoes, among others) directly from local growers instead of wholesalers. Today, more than 30% of our produce offerings are locally sourced and some of our most popular items including cut-watermelon and yellow onions are procured locally when available. .

DECREASING WASTE

Product sales were extremely difficult to track in the first years of the program because the start-up Healthy Corners team could only visit each store once per week. By bringing on new staff and adding technological tools in 2014, the team had the capacity to evaluate each store's waste at least twice per week which, in turn, allowed for

more accurate assessment of successful and unsuccessful products. We discovered waste from spoilage or unsold items was roughly 10%. Up until that point, Healthy Corners bought back unsold and spoiled produce each week – a strategy initially developed to incentivize program participation and mitigate store owner risk.

We decided to reframe that policy in 2015, and only bought back produce that was still edible but not attractive enough for retail purchase. Healthy Corners delivered that product back to DC Central Kitchen, which used dehydrators and other processing tools to safely recirculate produce into its daily meals. To empower store owners to take ownership of their unsold products, we offered additional training on safe and effective produce handling and worked directly with owners to adjust their weekly purchases to more accurate amounts. We developed new packaging and pricing for less successful products, and created marketing materials to engage customers and store owners around specific items. As a result, waste decreased from 10% per month to less than 3% per month by 2017.



Assessing Program Fit

When considering a new Healthy Corners partner retailer, our team considers some of the following factors:

Store location: Is the retailer in a LILA community? Is it near public transportation and/or a residential area?

Store model: Does the retailer accept SNAP? If not, why not?

Does the retailer sell other food or primarily beverages?

Would produce fit into the store model?

Store lay-out: Is there a natural or workable location for Healthy Corners infrastructure and signage?

Store owner buy-in: Is the store owner willing to engage in training and pass on information to their staff? Does the store owner understand the goal of providing fresh produce to the community? Does the store invest in positive customer relationships?

SCALING SUSTAINABLY

Healthy Corners doubled its network in the eight months between April 2014 and December 2014, thanks to a grant from a DC agency that stipulated the addition of 30 more participating stores. Expansion was primarily led by a Healthy Corners Coordinator who used GIS mapping and the USDA SNAP Retailer Locator tool to locate potential stores in target neighborhoods. The Coordinator then made door-to-door visits to inform store owners about the program and recruit them.

With initial incentives like free infrastructure and free produce to start, we enrolled 34 additional stores that summer and fall, each of whom signed a three-year aspirational pledge to sell healthy food. While marketing and outreach were the primary mechanisms through which corner stores learned about the program initially, by fall 2014 word-of-mouth and positive referrals also brought new stores to the network. This ambitious expansion strategy was made possible by leveraging DC Central Kitchen's existing procurement relationships, commercial kitchen, kitchen production staff, and fleet of vehicles to rapidly scale in ways that a stand-alone operation might have found more challenging.

Over the following three years, however, we found that serving as many as 70 stores made establishing consistent expectations for store performance, shopping conditions, and customer engagement difficult. While the aggressive push to add stores did yield nearly two dozen quality partners, the overall experience underscored the importance of identifying retailers who shared our values and vision, and allowing that alignment to shape growth plans. Now, we proactively add stores when we identify geographic gaps in our store network and pursue stores in that area. Given our prominence and longevity, stores also now seek out Healthy Corners, and we then use our assessment tools to determine their fit for the program.

PERSONALIZING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Healthy Corners does not simply deliver or sell produce. Our approach seeks to create healthier food environments by empowering retailers and consumers. But transitioning corner stores from exclusively offering shelf-stable items to stocking sufficient quantities of fresh items means asking store owners to reorganize store layouts, manage new equipment, learn to handle food that spoils, test new marketing strategies, add produce displays, and work with new vendors. To ease this process, Healthy Corners began offering increasingly robust technical assistance.

In addition to creating and disseminating a store owner training manual which walks store owners through common questions involving store layouts, ordering, and customer preferences, we began by providing each store with an annual store report detailing their sales, waste, and retail value of produce purchased. This popular feature led to the creation of monthly sales and waste reports, and working one-on-one with owners to increase the amount of variety of products they offer. Monthly personalized newsletters for each store with information on product promotions and upcoming activities helped foster program engagement.

In time, Healthy Corners' growth and evident value inspired more direct store-to-store knowledge sharing and collaboration. Informed by the success of our store owner nutrition trainings and in response to direct requests from our store partners, we created a **Store Owner Community of Practice** in 2022. This new form of gathering allowed store owners to meet and share best practices while learning about a topic from an expert guest. The objective of the Store Owner Community of Practice was ultimately to support store owners in reducing barriers to selling fruits and vegetables. The Community of Practice now continues quarterly and topics, many of which are identified by the businesses themselves, have included produce care and maintenance, bystander intervention and de-escalation, small business grant writing, and SNAP 101.

"This program proves that the stereotypes and assumptions discouraging other retailers from investing in these communities are just that, and we hope more will follow our lead."

*– DCCCK CEO Mike Curtin,
in Washington Business Journal*

DRIVING CUSTOMER DEMAND

Healthy Corners stimulates customer demand and promotes community health and wellness through marketing, outreach, and community partnerships. Since its launch, Healthy Corners has provided **free marketing materials** to corner stores which includes floor stickers, fridge stickers, shelf talkers, window signage, and recipe cards. We design these items in-house to ensure brand alignment and an educational focus that reflects our mission.

In August 2017, with funding from local government, Healthy Corners launched its first mass marketing campaign using nearby buses, bus shelters, and Metro rail stations to display Healthy Corners advertisements navigating customers to the closest healthy food access point. This month-long advertising campaign increased sales of one of the target stores by 96%, and another by 60% compared to August of the previous year.

In addition to print marketing, Healthy Corners used its email marketing platform to send monthly community newsletters promoting upcoming events as well as food assistance redemption reminders, purchased geo-targeted mailing lists to send direct mail to community residents informing them of upcoming store and promotions events, and maintained a calendar of community events on DC Central Kitchen's website.

From 2017 forward, the program began conducting a minimum of four monthly events both at corner stores (including cooking demonstrations) and at nearby community locations (including nutrition workshops, taste tests, produce giveaways, and produce raffles). This work was made possible by support from DC Health and strategic partnerships with more than three dozen farmers' markets, health clinics, public libraries, community centers, and nonprofits. Hosting store events helped to create a reliable customer following and built trust between store owners and customers who previously felt tensions due to security measures like bulletproof

glass. Community partnerships have allowed for customer engagement on an ongoing basis outside their shopping experience.

At each of these events, customers had the opportunity to sign up for Healthy Corners' communications. In 2017, our preferred method for follow-up communications became a text messaging service, which we used to send bimonthly healthy eating text messages and monthly reminders to residents to redeem food assistance benefits, creating one more touch point to improve public health. As of 2025, more than 2,260 community members now receive text messages related to healthy retail activities including store offerings, produce facts, and event updates.

PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHT

HEALTHY CORNERS & DC GREENS

Healthy Corners is one of several successful food access programs in DC, and partnership between these diverse programs has been vital to our program's success. Among other innovative endeavors at the intersection of food and health, DC Greens helped reimagine DC's farmer's markets by identifying community champions who could serve as liaisons between market operators and low-income shoppers, and with their help, DCCK adapted this 'trusted messenger' model in 2018.

Our Store Navigators are residents of the DC wards with Healthy Corners stores and are hired part-time by DC Central Kitchen.

Each Store Navigator is assigned to a group of approximately 8 stores to visit weekly where they share program information, walk community members through our benefit programs, and collect information and feedback from the community to share back with the Healthy Corners team.

Store Navigators help shape Healthy Corners programming through providing feedback on program changes big and small, from sharing feedback on flyers and giving thoughts on new product ideas to shaping program language and weighing in on our alignment with federal nutrition programs.

We have collaborated with DC Greens' similar group of Navigators for years, including joint trainings, meetings to share experiences, and hosting Mix and Mingles for Navigator-type roles across the community at DC Greens' urban farm. These community spaces support those in Navigator-type roles across DC to build community with each other and to gain further knowledge to cross promote resources that other programs provide while representing their respective organization out in the community.

EVALUATING IMPACT TO IMPROVE EFFECTIVENESS

Our approach to evaluating performance aligns the tracking of short-term outputs and pursuit of longer-term impacts. Healthy Corners tracks over three dozen unique data points from procurement to sales to customer preferences. We conduct annual assessments at each participating corner store to evaluate existing physical infrastructure and store layout. Over the course of the program, we have also deployed two different, notable third-party tools that exist to assess the nutrition environments of stores including corner stores: the Nutrition Environment Measurement Survey (NEMS) and the Market Basket Assessment Tool (MBAT). We have found comparative value and merit in each, and total assessment time for MBAT is typically significantly shorter than that for NEMS, which, given our number of partner stores, is one contributing factor to our current use of the MBAT survey. Healthy Corners tracks these data points in a performance management database for DC Central Kitchen's evaluation experts and allied university researchers to assess impact and determine program effectiveness, in line with our logic model. (Appendix I).

In 2015, Healthy Corners conducted a rigorous year-long evaluation of its consumer population; the results of 1,000 surveys of adults and seniors found that almost 90% of community members were very willing to purchase healthier food options and 95% knew the importance of consuming fruits and vegetables. These types of insights drove Healthy Corners to increase the variety of produce it offered and place free recipe cards on corner store shelves to walk customers through purchasing and preparing these healthy products.

In 2017, we partnered with Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities (HSHC) Lab at American University to understand program impact and create a tool, entitled the Healthy Corners Scorecard, to help predict the long-term success and sustainability of a Healthy Corners store. The HSHC Lab surveyed customers regarding their visit frequency, produce purchases, and healthy eating

Program Development Phase: Primary Takeaways

Customers aren't just price sensitive, they are time sensitive, too. Grab-and-go items and prepared foods are successful healthy products.

- Technical assistance to store owners regarding marketing, store design, and product placement drives sales.
- Externally validated impact is valuable in guiding informed program decision-making along with securing grants and donations from public and private entities. .
- Providing nutrition education through demonstrations, recipe cards, and product sampling helps customers learn to shop for and cook with the new healthy options in the store.

decisions. They also leveraged three years of Healthy Corners store evaluations and sales data to create a scorecard that (after some modifications over the years) ranks up to 14 key variables of success. These include store compliance with program standards, produce sales and waste trends, variety of produce offerings, and store owner satisfaction, with a maximum value of up to 14 points. (Appendix II). With the concept that a higher score on the scorecard may be a predictor of long-term engagement and increased healthy food offerings, the Healthy Corners Scorecard allowed us to compare network stores to each other to determine how to maximize investments of staff time, marketing dollars, and outreach activities to improve corner store success. The collaboration led to a multi-year partnership with The HSHC Lab that enhanced our ability to ask questions, collect data, and align with emerging best practices and research findings.

In 2024, the annual evaluations process included conducting an annual intercept survey of 100 respondents in Wards 5, 7, and 8 and the annual GusNIP survey, which as of 2024 required 150 respondents for the Large Scale USDA grant awarded to DCCK. The grant was our third USDA nutrition incentive grant, aimed at increasing purchases of fruits and vegetables by SNAP shoppers and emphasizing locally grown items. The intercept survey includes questions on general purchasing habits such as how often participants visit a corner store and what they purchase, fruit and vegetable purchasing habits such as where participants buy their produce, and perceptions of quality, price, and variety of the produce they purchase. The GusNIP survey focuses on SNAP Match participation and food consumption within specific categories of food such as juices, fruit, and vegetables.

A fresh update to the SNAP Match Program!



You no longer have to spend \$5 to get \$5.

Add one piece of produce* to ANY EBT purchase and get a \$5 coupon for more produce.

***Valued at 50¢ or more**

Sample flyer for our evolving nutrition incentive program

THE INFLECTION POINT: PROGRAM EVOLUTION

In 2018, Healthy Corners faced a turning point. After seven years of program operations, the program was well-established, well-regarded, and seeing incremental gains in sales year over year. It embodied every USDA-endorsed strategy for creating healthier corner store environments and had received a multi-year USDA Community Food Project grant to bolster the program's reach. And yet, most store owners still saw healthy food sales more as a beneficial service to their community than a driving component of their business strategy. The issue came down to supply and demand.

“Healthy Corners...served a double purpose during the pandemic. Its nutritious food reached D.C. residents in food-challenged neighborhoods, and it also helped small, local farmers who faced challenges during the pandemic getting their produce sold through traditional channels.”

– WTOP

Simply put, risk-averse store owners were concerned about over-ordering perishable products that might not sell. Meanwhile, customers responded negatively to sparse displays and a perceived lack of options. More bountiful product offerings might have produced increased sales, but store owners were understandably nervous about taking the first step and being left with the bill as trust and transactions caught up.

Healthy Corners addressed this produce stand-off with a USDA grant aimed at providing produce incentives to low-income customers using SNAP. The Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) had, for many years, incentivized produce purchases at farmers’ markets. Healthy Corners became the first project to apply this model at scale at urban corner stores. To adapt the incentive model to the corner store context, DCCK began matching SNAP purchases of any allowable food item—rice, beans, cereal, and so on—up to \$5, and providing customers with a coupon for an additional \$5 in fruits and vegetables. This incentive coupon was fully funded through USDA grant funds. The model allowed for consumer choice and expanded the purchasing power of shoppers who wanted fruits and vegetables, yes, but also had to meet other food needs. Within a few months, Healthy Corners **produce sales jumped 172%** while driving related gains in the diversity of produce items carried by partner stores and overall consumer awareness.

As the popularity of the incentives that became known as **SNAP Match** grew, Healthy Corners further refined the model. The program began requiring that the initial \$5 purchase of SNAP-eligible items include a single fruit or vegetable in order to earn the matching \$5 incentive. The added expectation for voluntary purchases of produce—a “produce-for-produce model in USDA parlance—was well-received by shoppers and actually contributed to higher redemption rates for the coupons over time.

PROGRAMMING INSIGHT: SNAP MATCH (2018-2025)

- When a Healthy Corners shopper made a SNAP/EBT purchase of at least \$5 and included at least one fresh or frozen produce item, the shopper received a \$5 coupon for more fresh and frozen produce. Coupons were redeemable at any participating store for up to \$5 in fresh or frozen fruits or vegetables.
- When a customer used a Healthy Corners coupon to pay for fresh or frozen fruits or vegetables of \$5 value, the cashier rang up the transaction and stapled the receipt to the coupon. When the store received a Healthy Corners delivery, the store submitted its “distribution” and “redemption” receipts. The Healthy Corners team then calculated the total reimbursement for produce purchased with coupons.
- The Healthy Corners team provided SNAP Match stores with necessary infrastructure, marketing, and technical assistance. Healthy Corners trained store owners and managers on how to run the program, reimbursed stores for the value of produce redeemed with coupons, and collected data from stores and participants that we used for reporting, program evaluation, and improvement.
- These incentives have been made possible by three USDA GusNIP grants since 2018. The initial grant spanned from 2018-2020 and provided \$500,000, all of which passed through DCCK directly to shoppers through these \$5 incentives. DCCK secured a second grant of the same size from 2020-2023 prioritizing its produce-for-produce model. In 2023, DCCK won its first Large-Scale GusNIP grant, a four-year award totaling \$890,000 emphasizing plans to grow into additional DC wards and prioritize locally sourced fruits and vegetables. For each of these grants, DC Health served as the required provider of matching funds.

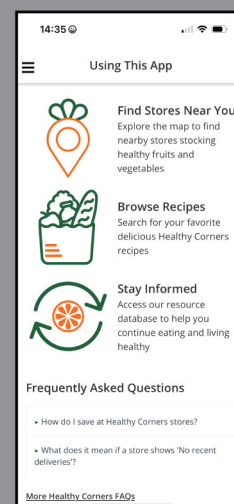
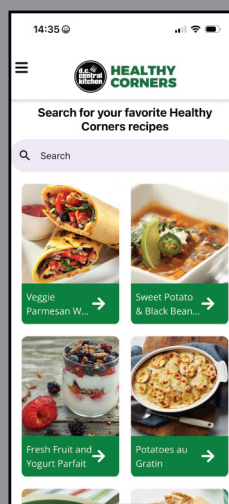
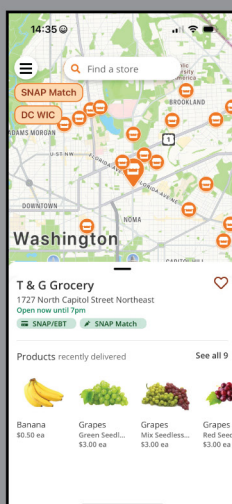
PROGRESS DURING A PANDEMIC

The early success of SNAP Match produce incentives laid a crucial foundation of community trust and programmatic reach when the COVID-19 pandemic struck. While other programs were suspending operations at the outset of the public health crisis, Healthy Corners insisted on maintaining operations and even implemented an across-the-board price cut to ensure affordability for households facing severe and sudden economic setbacks. The program incorporated no-touch deliveries to stores and accelerated plans for a **Healthy Corners App** that, at a minimum, could convey timely information to shoppers about what had been delivered to their nearest corner store, minimizing shopping trips and alleviating consumer concerns about empty shelves.

Heathy Corners Application:

The Healthy Corners App has been refined over time through careful community listening. DCK staff regularly walk customers, including seniors, through the app's accessible features and updated resources at in-person events.

First debuted in 2020, the Healthy Corners App has undergone numerous rounds of iterative design and community feedback. Today, it includes information about: the location, hours, benefits offered, and products delivered at each corner store; nutritious recipes featuring Healthy Corners products; and nutrition and food access resources provided by local government and peer nonprofit programs.



MERGING FOOD POLICY AND PRACTICE

During the worst of the pandemic, Healthy Corners emerged as a lifeline for communities where the already insufficient number of available grocery stores became downright dangerous. In 2021, Healthy Corners scored another major victory when after years of legislative advocacy and policy implementation efforts, DC's small retailers were deemed eligible to accept federal Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits for the first time. As a trusted partner of both small, aspiring retailers and the District's health officials charged with managing WIC programming and benefits in the city, DC Central Kitchen helped ease regulatory barriers and guide corner stores through a managed process of becoming WIC-eligible.

Passed in 2018, the WIC Program Expansion Act eliminated DC's long-standing requirements that stores participating in WIC possess at least 10,000 square feet and three cash registers. Before the law's passage, DC's requirements for minimum stocking levels were also much higher than other comparable markets. While understandable from a compliance management perspective, these regulations had the unintended effect of minimizing the number of locations where WIC-eligible residents could use their benefits in their own wards. After multiple years of behind-the-scenes collaboration and implementation support, a pilot group of three Healthy Corners stores began accepting WIC in 2021; three years later, this number would stand at 9.

Healthy Corners' role as a technical assistance provider and food policy advocate proved as vital to its growth as its produce delivery function. By thoughtfully integrating federal nutrition benefits as revenue sources for small retailers, the program enhanced store owner buy-in, reached growing numbers of low-income customers, and stimulated supply and demand simultaneously. Future attempts at replication could consider opportunities to align with federal, state, and local nutrition programs and food policies as essential as efforts to address cold storage, food stocking, and nutrition education needs.

HEALTHY CORNERS: THE WORK OF TODAY AND TOMORROW

In the aftermath of the pandemic, DC Central Kitchen and Healthy Corners grew rapidly thanks to a combination of new space, additional resources and partnerships, and newfound visibility.

THE POWER OF A NEW HOME

In March 2023, Healthy Corners took another crucial step forward as DC Central Kitchen transitioned to a substantially larger, long-term headquarters replacing the borrowed spaces it had relied on for three decades. The 36,000 square foot Klein Center for Jobs and Justice includes more than 10,000 square feet of dedicated, custom-built space for produce aggregation and processing, meal preparation, and cold storage used by all of DCCCK's core programs, including Healthy Corners. The new facility provided the program with substantially more space and opportunities to engage DCCCK production staff and volunteers in the daily work of Healthy Corners. Notably, volunteers worked alongside staff to slice, package, and label fresh-cut Healthy Corners items before they went out for delivery—giving volunteers a chance to contribute to food accessibility in an innovative way.

This added capacity paid immediate dividends. In the program's first full fiscal year of operations in the Klein Center, Healthy Corners posted its **strongest sales totals ever** (421,000 units) and reached an estimated 22,000 SNAP customers. Healthy Corners helped DC Central Kitchen earn national recognition from the **President's Council on Sports, Fitness, and Nutrition**, which presented DCCCK and the Washington Nationals with its Community Leadership Award. The 2024 award noted the opening of a Healthy Corners location at the Nationals Youth Baseball Academy as one of several achievements in nutrition and food access inspiring the honor.

ENHANCED PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCES

After more than a decade of front-line food access work, Healthy Corners eventually established itself as both a pillar of DC's food system and a national model. This outcome was far from pre-determined and relied on several key partnerships and developments.

Our Store Navigators became increasingly central to our program model and implementation. Now a cadre of 4 residents of our focus communities, these Navigators receive part-time stipends, robust training, and numerous opportunities to shape our programming and relationships.

In DC, our University of the District of Columbia (UDC) had long operated **SNAP-Ed**, a federally funded initiative aimed at helping SNAP customers make the most of their budgets and practice healthy eating and living strategies. Given our shared goals and deep ties to SNAP, this partnership made a great deal of sense, and Healthy Corners offered SNAP-Ed staff an effective access point for reaching residents who could benefit from their offerings. Before long, our partnership included annual nutrition training for store owners, monthly corner store events with chef demonstrations and program information for community members, and recipe cards from UDC SNAP-Ed that our staff placed in stores and matched the demonstrations and products we offered.

Our partnership with the **International Fresh Produce Association (IFPA)** has been similarly well-aligned. IFPA helped us understand the role and importance of nutrition incentives before we launched SNAP Match and matched us with individual members—produce companies and their in-house experts—for pro bono advising on how best to select, merchandise, and distribute our perishable products. Since the opening of the Klein Center, IFPA has regularly partnered with us on educational events for produce professionals and school nutrition experts.

“There is proof that small businesses want to be part of a healthier, more sustainable community and that low-income consumers are interested and want to put healthy food on the table for themselves and their families,”
 – DCCCK CDO Alexander Moore
in Food Tank

A sustained collaboration with the **Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities Lab at American University** aimed at effective, independent, year-over-year evaluation provided DCCCK with programmatic insight, expanded our capacity to capture and analyze customer and store-level data, and equipped DC Health with valuable insights as it determined program effectiveness and future investments.

DCCCK’s long-standing friendship with chef and humanitarian **José Andrés**, which began in the early nineties when he visited our facility as a young volunteer, evolved when he identified Healthy Corners as a scalable, national solution to urban food access challenges. His philanthropic support via the Longer Tables Fund and personal thought partnership helped the program grow into its newfound space and reach at the Klein Center. He also facilitated a connection to the **Global Food Institute** at George Washington University, another hub of innovative research and applied practices in the food and nutrition space. It was this connection that led to a purposeful partnership with GFI and the Partnership for a Healthier America to explore replicating Healthy Corners practices in locations like Indianapolis and the Mississippi Delta.

LESSONS FROM THESE WINNING COLLABORATIONS INCLUDE:

- Meaningfully seek, engage, and act on community perspectives. Ensure community members’ time and expertise is adequately compensated and reinforced through training and networking opportunities.
- Identify existing programs that can bolster and complement your efforts, especially if they may benefit from additional opportunities to connect with community members.
- Food industry partnerships, from chefs and local farms to cold storage experts and professional associations, can accelerate learning, improve program visibility, and offer in-kind contributions.

A Day in the Life

The model below provides a high-level overview of a typical day in the life of our team. It outlines the key activities and flow of work throughout the day.

ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY AND SUCCESS IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

Healthy Corners builds the capacity of small businesses to meet the healthy food needs of residents, and ultimately exists to sustainably improve food environments in DC's LILA communities. As we have learned, the definition of sustainability varies based on each store's context and operating environment. For some stores with lots of square footage and high customer traffic, success might

7AM: Merchandisers receive packing slips to confirm contents of orders & materials needed for distribution to stores

8AM: Merchandisers pack cold, dry, frozen boxes into truck according to route

11AM: HC PM sends over packing slips and requisition to Production

9AM: Merchandisers head out on their store routes (until 2 or 3pm)

10AM: HC PM places order with wholesale vendor based on store orders

10AM: HC team places local orders for the week

12PM: Stores place orders until 2pm for delivery two days later.

Operational

7AM: Vendors make deliveries (Conventional vendor every day and local once a week)

9AM: Production cuts fruits and vegetables and packs into containers

8AM: Production prints out packing slips and requisition form

10AM: Production packs whole produce

11AM: All boxes are labeled by store

Production Operations

9AM: HC team meeting - review previous week's sales data, stores, products, benefits programming

11AM: HC team meets with new farm partner to source new product.

12PM: Some HC team members do store site visits (1pm - 4pm)

10AM: HC Director meets with grant project officer

1PM: HC team calls any stores that have not placed orders.

Administrative

9AM: Corner store event set-up (9:30am)

10AM: Healthy Corners corner store event with SNAP-Ed; chef demonstration, samples, partnerstabling (until 11am)

1PM: HC Store Navigator Check-in (Store Navigators share-out community feedback)

2PM: HC team produces HC flyer with pricing and recipe about new product to go out to all stores.

Programming

be selling large enough quantities of produce to work directly with a for-profit wholesaler—in other words, what Healthy Corners defines as a “positive exit” from the network.

In the eyes of many store owners, success is simply generating profit each month from the sale of produce it purchases from DCCK. For others, success involves positive customer feedback and establishing a sales advantage over their nearby competitors. Part of our annual store-level evaluation approach includes capturing each store’s point-in-time success and providing a roadmap for moving that store toward different metrics of progress which may include increased sales, increased variety of offerings, improvements in customer feedback, or a combination of multiple variables.

Healthy Corners’ revenue model blends public and private investments with earned revenue in line with other social enterprises of its size and scope. While nearly one-third of its revenue is generated through the sale of produce, the majority is granted through local government to expand operations and evaluate programmatic impact, federal pass-through funds for SNAP Match, and private philanthropy looking to make smart investments in more equitable food systems. Going forward, Healthy Corners will look to help high-performing stores transition to purchasing from cooperative or traditional wholesaling options that may be able to offer a wider variety of products and more regular deliveries. In the event of these stores “graduating” from Healthy Corners, the program will be able to shift its limited resources to new partner stores that do not yet offer nutritious, fresh food options and building their capacity as healthy food retailers.

In the past two years, long-term sustainability for our partner stores has been impacted by continual changes in the SNAP program. When a locally funded supplement to SNAP was eliminated in the fall of 2024, we observed a significant decline in the number of transactions earning our SNAP Match coupons. In response, we adjusted our model, which previously expected each customer to spend

\$5 in SNAP while including at least one eligible produce item in the transaction to earn a \$5 coupon. Instead, we eliminated the \$5 threshold and provided a \$5 coupon for fruits and vegetables to any transaction that includes one or more produce items. The shift triggered an immediate 40% increase in SNAP Match coupon transactions—affirming customer interest in healthy produce while acknowledging the difficulty many low-income shoppers faced in making even a \$5 purchase of food at a time of inflationary pressures and economic uncertainty in the DC region. This shift represented years of careful listening to our customers and retailers about evolving needs and is just the latest example of the power and value of healthy corners stores in contributing to healthy food access and more resilient food systems.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FUTURE WORK

Listen intentionally.

Ensure initial and ongoing conversations with all key parties, from customers and retailers to wholesalers and peer organizations, are focused on identifying needs, mapping existing assets and gaps, and continually capturing feedback in support of program goals.

Operate entrepreneurially.

Managing expenses, prioritizing customer service, building awareness and brand buy-in, and embracing opportunities to leverage philanthropy and shared resources are vital to filling food access gaps.

Partner reliably.

Continuity of operations, relationships, and vision all go together. Corner store models are not monthly activations or seasonal interventions, requiring constant attentiveness to the needs and aspirations of all partners and constituencies.

Grow opportunistically.

There is no singular way to build healthier corners—ours is simply one. Remain open to new collaborations, funding opportunities, and operating structures as circumstances present themselves. Agility and adaptability should be seen as core competencies and traits to prioritize in your culture, staffing, and planning activities.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Ensuring robust, reliable access to healthy food in Low-Income, Low-Access communities requires entrepreneurial thinking, system-level approaches, and a wide array of purposeful collaborations. In Washington, DC's LILA neighborhoods, federal nutrition programs like SNAP, full-service grocery stores, farmers' markets, and charitable feeding initiatives are all part of the solution. A robust Healthy Corners program contributes to the success of each of these endeavors by reinforcing positive behavior changes among consumers while demonstrating the significant opportunity missed by businesses who do not offer nutritious, affordable food options. Just as importantly, Healthy Corners contributes to the social determinants of health through its linkages with SNAP, SNAP education, job training activities, and healthy physical activity promotion. Today, Healthy Corners is positioned at the intersection of market forces and mission-based work, addressing a critical public health need while investing in small businesses, DC's local food system, and accessible career pathways for adults with high barriers to employment.

For more information about DC Central Kitchen or Healthy Corners, please email info@dccentralkitchen.org. We would be pleased to connect with you, host you for a visit, or share additional resources. Available materials for approved knowledge sharing partners include our store owner training documents, Healthy Corners Scorecard, pricing sheets, product lists, and marketing and education templates. We also suggest interested partners read *The Food Fighters: A History of DC Central Kitchen* by Alexander Justice Moore, available through most online book retailers for more history and context on our programs and evolution. Thank you for your interest in Healthy Corners and expanding access to healthy food for everyone.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: HEALTHY CORNERS LOGIC MODEL

The following is a sample logic model using placeholders for specific numbers and details.

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACTS
Staff: ___ full-time employees in the following roles (production, ___ FTEs; distribution, ___ FTEs; program management, ___ FTEs; and evaluation, ___ FTEs) Partnerships: ___ corner stores; nutrition education partners; wholesalers, local farms, university evaluators Processing & Distribution: ___ sq. ft. commercial kitchen, fleet of delivery vehicles Technology: Mobilized survey; database; SMS tools; email marketing platform Skills: Delivering nutritious food to corner stores; engaging nutrition education	Distribute healthy food to corner stores in ___ neighborhoods; enroll ___ new stores Provide technical assistance to corner stores Provide nutrition education and outreach to residents Provide healthy eating info directly to residents through marketing and community events Develop sustainable revenue model and align with local health department strategic plan	___ units of fresh produce and healthy snacks are sold annually Store profits from selling healthy food increase by ___% ___ adults and seniors receive info on nutrition assistance programs and healthy food engagement ___ community residents living in priority neighborhoods become aware of Healthy Corners program Book of Best Practices made available as internal training tool and external resource	Sales of healthy foods increase by ___% Store owners report positive attitudes about offering healthy food options in their store ___% of surveyed SNAP participants increase healthy eating Increased resident awareness of healthy food options available in their community (survey data) ___ corner stores advance to ordering produce from traditional wholesalers	Increased number of retailers stock and sell healthy food Enhanced customer and store owner relations Consumers in priority neighborhoods use nutrition assistance programs to purchase healthy food Consumers are more regular purchasers of healthy food provided by area retailers Ongoing healthy corner store activities included in local food policy and public health action plans

APPENDIX II: HEALTHY CORNER STORE SCORECARD

developed by Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities Lab at American University

Category	Category Max Points	Variables	Points							
			0	0.25	0.5	0.75	1	1.5	2	Max
Store Performance	4	5 Vegetables offered per month	< 5				≥ 5			1
		5 Fruits offered per month	< 5				≥ 5			1
		2 Deliveries per month	< 2				≥ 2			1
		Outdoor HC Signage	No				Yes			1
Sales and Waste	3	Cumulative Sales (\$)		< 1000	1000-3000	> 3000- ≤ 6000	> 6000			1
		Cumulative Sales (units)		< 1000	1000-3000	3001- ≤ 6000	> 6000			1
		Waste Tracking	> 20%	16-20%	11-15%	6-10%	0-5%			1
Customer Volume	3	MBAT			≤ 10		11-20	21-30	≥ 31	2
		Snap repemption %	0-25%	26-50%	51-75%		76-100%			1*
Store Owner Assessment	3	Store Owner attendance at quarterly nutrition trainings	No mtgs	1 mtg	2 mtgs	3 mtgs	4mtgs			1
		Store Owner attendance at quarterly COP mtgs	No mtgs	1 mtg	2 mtgs	3mtgs	4 mtgs			1
		Internal Assessment of Store Owner Attitude/ Buy-In	1	2	3	4	5			1
Total Points Possible										13
Bonus	1	Did store receive a new refrigeration unit?	No		Yes					.05
		Does store place their own orders?	No		Yes					.05
Bonus points Possible										1

*Only applicable to corner stores participating in the SNAP Matching program



END NOTES

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We use food as a tool to
strengthen bodies,
empower minds, and
build communities.

Fighting hunger differently
since 1989