

Why Healthy Checkout?

The Benefits of Becoming a Health-Supporting Business

Stocking healthier food and beverages is good for customers' health and your store's bottom line.

- As a supermarket, convenience, or corner store owner, you can help to support health in your community.
- The way you display, price, and promote products influences your customers' purchases.

Give customers what they want.

- Americans get more than 75% of their calories from food stores, but most checkout aisles provide few choices for customers who want healthy snacks.^{1,2} For example, water appears in only half of supermarket checkout aisles and takes up less than 2% of checkout space.³
- The space stores reserve for healthier items does not reflect customers' interest: 40% of shoppers report purchasing water from checkout in the past six months. Nuts and seeds are another example of understocked items—they make up less than 1% of checkout space, but 18% of customers purchased these items from checkout in the past six months.³
- Most shoppers—80%—say they want more healthy choices at checkout, and 76% of shoppers who have purchased food or beverages at checkout regret doing so.⁴ Retailers should support customers by providing healthier products where customers are most prone to impulse purchases.

"The number one thing we've heard from our customers is the desire for healthier food options."⁷

—CVS, 2016

Make your business family-friendly.

- More than 80% of Americans agree that marketing that targets children, like placing candy at checkout, fosters conflict between children and parents.⁵
- Parents say that marketing in supermarkets "hurts the relationship" with their children, forcing them to argue over food.⁵

"Moms and dads are especially thankful for [healthy checkout lanes] since they no longer have to deal with the kids asking for treats."⁸

—Harmon's Grocery
Registered Dietician, 2015



A 2014 study of checkout found that the most prevalent foods were candy, energy bars, and chips. Only 13 of the 8,800 food, beverage, and non-food facings were fresh fruit. None were vegetables.²

Represent the cutting-edge in retail.

- In the United Kingdom, nine major grocery stores, representing 90% of the market, have voluntarily implemented healthier checkout aisles.⁶
- In the United States, Aldi has committed to healthier checkout lanes in its nearly 1,500 U.S. stores.⁷ CVS has pledged to stock 25% of the checkout space with better-for-you snacks and non-food items.⁸ Raley's has removed soda and reduced candy by 25% at checkout.⁹
- Many more major retailers are working to change the product mix at checkout.¹⁰

"Aldi is expanding its natural foods selection and replacing sugary snacks at the checkout ... it's great for consumers, especially lower-income shoppers. But it's not so great for the competition."⁹

—Forbes, 2016



For more information or to discuss healthy retail opportunities, contact the Center for Science in the Public Interest at policy@cspinet.org.

¹ Mancino L, Guthrie J. *Supermarkets, Schools, and Social Gatherings: Where Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and other U.S. Households Acquire their Foods Correlates with Nutritional Quality*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Center; 2018.

<https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2018/januaryfebruary/supermarkets-schools-and-social-gatherings-where-supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-and-other-us-households-acquire-their-foods-correlates-with-nutritional-quality/>.

² Fielding-Singh P, Almy J, Wootan MG. *Sugar Overload: Retail Checkout Promotes Obesity*. Washington, DC: Center for Science in the Public Interest; 2014. <https://cspinet.org/sites/default/files/attachment/sugaroveryload.pdf>.

³ Masterfoods, TDS, Wrigley, Dechert-Hampe & Co. *Front End Focus: Maximizing Checkout Performance*. Northbrook, Illinois: Masterfoods; 2010. http://www.frontendfocus.com/documents/publications/FEF_FMI2010-Presentation.pdf.

⁴ Checkout Polling: Online Survey of 1,024 adults. Princeton, NJ: Caravan ORC International; December 1–4, 2016.

⁵ Findings from focus groups among mothers on food and beverage marketing to children. Washington, DC: KRC Research; 2014.

⁶ Ejlerskov KT, Sharp SJ, Stead M, Adamson AJ, White M, Adams J. Supermarket policies on less-healthy food at checkouts: natural experimental evaluation using interrupted time series analyses of purchases. *PLoS Med*. 15(12): e1002712.

⁷ Almy J. Healthier checkout lanes coming to Aldi supermarkets. *Center for Science in the Public Interest*. January 12, 2016. <https://cspinet.org/new/201601121.html>.

⁸ CVS Pharmacy expands healthy foods initiative [press release]. Woonsocket, RI: CVS Pharmacy; June 21, 2016. <https://cvshealth.com/newsroom/press-releases/cvs-pharmacy-expands-healthy-foods-initiative>.

⁹ Ivins J. Grocery chains trading sweets for healthier options in new checkout lanes. *KSL.com*. December 16, 2015.

¹⁰ Heller L. Aldi's organic plan is great for consumers, dangerous for competition. *Forbes*. January 28, 2016.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/lauraheller/2016/01/28/aldi-organic-plan-is-great-for-consumers/>.

⁹ Raley's reimagines check stands by reducing candy and offering "better for you" options [press release]. West Sacramento, CA: September 10, 2018. <https://www.raleys.com/news/raleys-reimagines-check-stands-by-reducing-candy-and-offering-better-for-you-options/>

¹⁰ Almy J, Wootan MG. *Temptation at Checkout: The Food Industry's Sneaky Strategy for Selling More*. Washington, DC: Center for Science in the Public Interest; 2015. <https://cspinet.org/sites/default/files/attachment/report.pdf>.