

Smart Menu/Salud Tiene Sabor Menu Labeling Evaluation



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Acknowledgments

Evaluation Team

- Carmen Nevarez, MD, MPH, Public Health Institute
- Sarah Samuels, Dr.PH, Samuels & Associates
- Liz Schwarte, MPH, Samuels & Associates
- Mariah Lafleur, MPH, Samuels & Associates
- Beth Weinstein, Esperanza Community Housing Corporation
- Pri De Silva, MSW, S. Los Angeles HEAC
- Promotoras, Esperanza Community Housing Corporation and S. LA
HEAC

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Evaluation Advisory Committee

- Jerome D. Williams, PhD
- Gilberto Cetina Jr.
- George Flores, MD, MPH
- Lupe Gonzalez-Hernandez
- Nestor Martinez, MPH, RD
- Monica Montes, RD
- Heng Lam Foong, MS
- Robert Garcia, JD
- Jeremiah R. Garza, MA, MPH



Salud Tiene Sabor (Sabor) Program

- Project implemented at Mercado la Paloma located in South Los Angeles, CA
- Collaborative effort among partner organizations
- Seven independently-owned restaurants offering a variety of ethnic foods
- Serves low-income, Latino neighborhood

Intervention

- RD analyzed all menu items, worked with vendors to make healthy improvements
- Posted calorie information on menu boards
- Provided full nutritional information for menu items in pamphlets

Sabor Evaluation Research Questions

- Does program impact restaurant owners' preparation & consumers purchase of healthier meals?
- How do recipe modifications & menu labeling increase healthy meal preparation/eating in Latino communities?
- Does program impact vendors' sales data & return on investment?
- What changes/additional resources are needed for sustainability?
- How does Sabor inform replication to other venues & communities?
- How does Sabor inform state & federal policy implementation?

Sabor Evaluation Methods

- Food & Beverage Environment Assessment
- Calorie Analysis
- Vendor Interviews
- Patron Surveys
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Media/Secondary Data Analysis
- Financial Analysis



Customers Support & Use Menu Labeling



Restaurants Patrons Reported....

- 65% saw calorie information on menu board when ordering
 - Of those who saw the calories, 46% said the calorie information affected their purchase that day
- 76% strongly agree consumers have right to know nutritional content of restaurant meals
 - 93% said they want to see this information



“Ya tengo algunos clientes que vienen buscando las cosas con menos grasa y azucar. Ellos me dicen que les gusta tener un restaurante donde saben que pueden comer algo saludable.”

“ Now I have some clients that come looking for things with less fat and sugar. They tell me the like to have a restaurant where they know they can eat something healthy.”

Restaurant Owners & Broader Community Support Menu Labeling



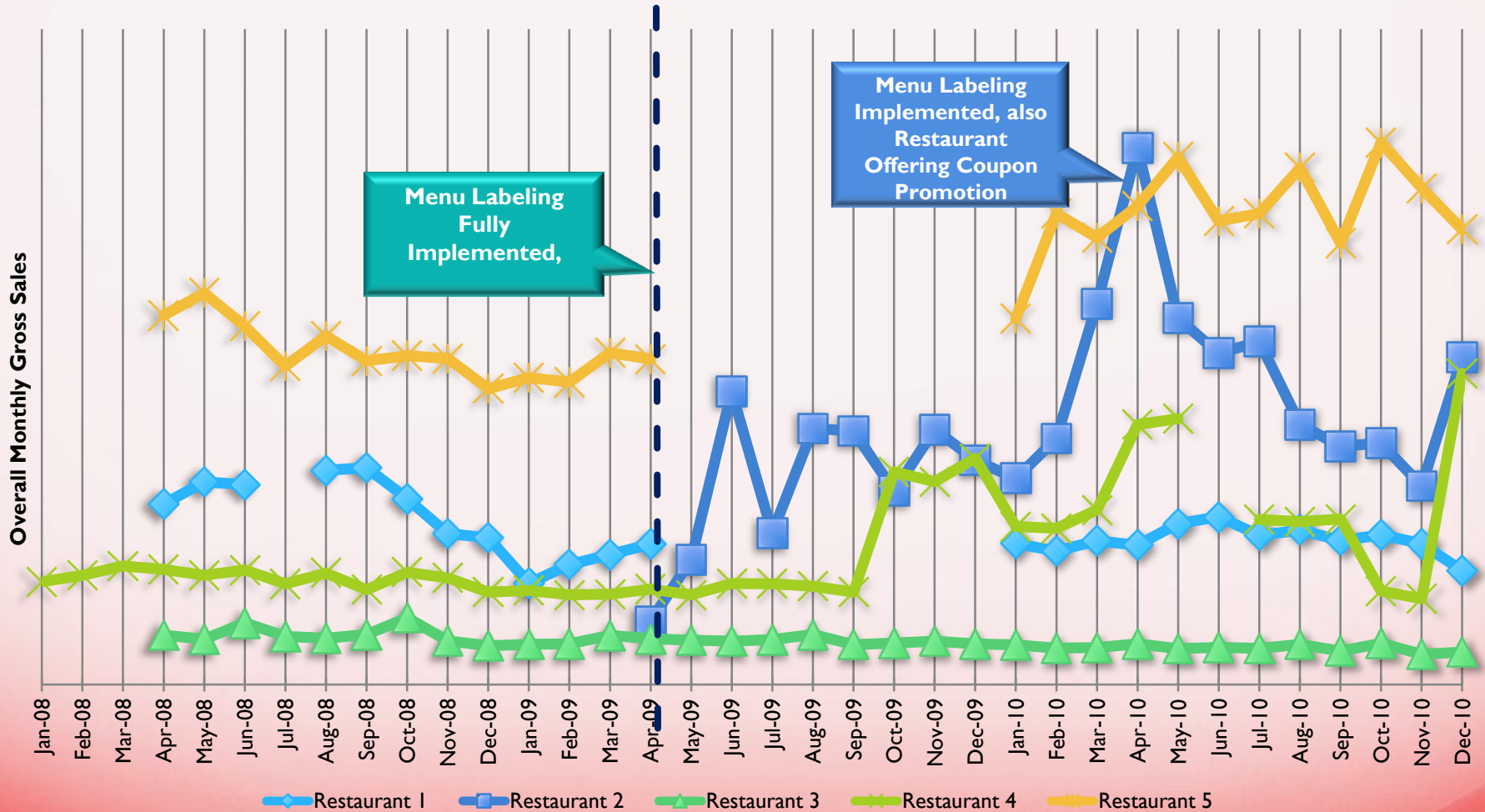
Restaurant Owners Responses to Sabor

- 6 of 7 vendors made healthy changes to foods & beverages
- All expressed overall satisfaction with menu labeling
- Need resources and advertising to maintain and promote Smart Menu program
- No notable change in costs & profits (5)
 - Fruits & vegetables more expensive (3)
 - Increased profits due to smaller portions (2)



Preliminary Financial Analysis

GROSS SALES BEFORE & AFTER MENU LABELING, BY RESTAURANT



Total sales did not drop after implementation, increased for some restaurants (despite economy)

“Hay mas beneficios que desventajas con estos cambios. No tenga miedo, va a mejorar su negocio.”

“ There are more benefits than drawbacks with these changes. Don't be afraid, it will improve your business.”



Community Stakeholders Responses to Sabor

- Need to harness the restaurant owners' passion & experience to encourage other small restaurants to make the changes
- Relationships among small business owners, the community & governmental institutions have been strengthened through the project.
- Local interventions such as Salud are drivers for policy change and local economic development.
- Mercado la Paloma is an incubator environment, provided support for the project to be successful

“The Salud Program is a beacon, the changes are local and impactful.”

Healthy Eating Options are Widely Available at the Mercado



Nutrient Analysis of Menu Items

ITEM CATEGORY	CALORIE TARGET*	# ANALYZED	CALORIE RANGE	AVG. CALORIES	% BELOW TARGET THRESHOLD (# ITEMS)	% OVER TARGET THRESHOLD (# ITEMS)
BEVERAGES	n/a	96	5 - 780	241	n/a	n/a
ENTREES	<u>< 400 cal</u>	347	110 - 1490	455	42% (147)	58% (200)
SIDE DISHES/ APPETIZERS	<u>< 200 cal</u>	114	20 - 760	279	41% (47)	59% (67)
DESSERT	n/a	64	20 - 570	175	n/a	n/a



Almost half of all entrees and sides/appetizers at recommended calorie limit

Sabor Policy Implications

- Healthy menus are possible!
- Small, independently owned restaurants in low-income, Latino communities are contributing to improving nutrition environments
- Financially viable for small restaurants to improve menu items, post nutrient information and maintain or even expand client base
- Policymakers should provide incentives for small, independently owned restaurants to offer healthier menus and menu labeling in low-income communities

Salud Tiene Sabor Presentations

- Presented at annual meeting of the American Public Health Association “Smart Menu/Salud Tiene Sabor Menu Labeling Evaluation”, November 10, 2010, Denver, CO.
- Abstract accepted for presentation at the Annual meeting of the American Public Health Association “Key Findings from Salud Tiene Sabor Evaluation”, October 31, 2011, Washington, D.C.
- Poster accepted for presentation at the Community Food Security Coalition’s (CFSC) Food Justice Conference, “Salud Tiene Sabor: Access to Healthy Foods for Latino Families”, Nov 7, 2011, Oakland, CA
- Submitting abstract for presentation at CDC’s Weight of the Nation “Financial Viability of Menu Labeling in Small Restaurants”, May 7-9, 2012, Washington, D.C.

Salud Tiene Sabor Products

- Article for publication:
 - Nevarez C, Samuels S, Schwarte L, Lafleur M, Weinstein B, DeSilva, P. “Salud Tiene Sabor: A Model for Increasing Access to Healthy Foods in Communities” Submitted to *Health Promotion and Practice*.
- Inclusion in Book Chapter:
 - Flores G, Sanchez-Vaznaugh L, Goldman-Rosas L, Schwarte L, Garcia R, Viera S, Lafleur, M, Aboelata M, Strongin S, Navarro A, et al. “Latino Children’s Health and the Environment.” In: Pérez-Escamilla R and Melgar-Quiñones H (Eds.) *Latino Children’s Wellness*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 2011 (In Press)
- Creation of Website:
 - <http://menulabel.com/> Web-based toolkit for restaurant owners and other stakeholders interested in replicating or learning more about independent restaurant menu labeling and the *Salud Tiene Sabor* project. *Pri de Silva of South Los Angeles Healthy Eating Active Communities and New Health Consultants*.

Future Plans

- Financial Analysis
 - Purchased data from Restaurant Trends for larger LA area & Mercado neighborhood
 - Study team is collaborating with Jerome Williams from Rutgers Business School to conduct detailed analysis of Mercado restaurants compared to other area restaurants
 - Article to be published based on financial analysis findings

For more information

Carmen Nevarez, MD, MPH, Vice President for External Relations & Preventive Medicine Advisor, Public Health Institute, crnevarez@phi.org

Sarah Samuels, Dr PH, President, Samuels & Associates, sarah@samuelsandassociates.com

Liz Schwarte, MPH, Senior Associate, Samuels & Associates, liz@samulesandassociates.com

Mariah Lafleur, MPH, Associate, Samuels & Associates, mariah@samuelsandassociates.com

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