

FRUIT & VEGETABLE MARKETING RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM

Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH)

2015 Request for Proposals

OBJECTIVE: Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH) desires research to better understand marketing tools and techniques that best increase fruit and vegetable sales and consumption.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS DEADLINE: Proposals must be received by 5:00 pm (EST), September 30, 2014

PROJECT PERIOD: One-year

TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE: up to \$50,000

GRANT LIMITS: up to \$15,000

FUNDING PERIOD: January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015

ELIGIBILITY: Projects should benefit the fruit and vegetable industry and/or the public rather than a single organization, institution, individual, or commercial product. Funds will not be awarded for projects that directly benefit or provide a profit to a single organization, institution or individual.

GENERAL RESEARCH GUIDANCE

Today over half of all US adults – 66 percent – and a third of children and adolescents are either overweight or obese. The health costs associated with Americans' growing waistlines are astronomical, even without taking into account other diet-related diseases. Corresponding with escalating health care costs is \$7.3 billion spent annually by the food industry in direct advertising, very little of which is spent on fruit and vegetables. Meanwhile, recommendations for fruit and vegetable intake have increased as a result of a growing body of research that suggests numerous potential benefits of fruit and vegetable consumption for prevention of chronic diseases, including heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, some cancers, and obesity. While public relations and community outreach efforts to increase consumption of fruit and vegetables have been successful, these efforts have been only modestly funded and fruit and vegetable consumption by the population at-large has not increased significantly. Efforts are underway to decrease the marketing of unhealthy foods and to make fruit and vegetables available where people eat, but enhanced marketing efforts to encourage greater consumption of healthy foods, specifically fruit and vegetables, is equally important. Marketing of fruit and vegetables has historically been limited due to lower profit margins for fruit and vegetables coupled with the high cost of traditional media. Today's rich multi-channel, multi-media environment, however, offers new and less expensive ways of marketing to consumers.

PBH research and literature reviews are available as [background](#) for applicants regarding attitudes and behavior related to fruit and vegetable consumption. Particular attention is called to the *Behavioral Economics & the Psychology of Fruit and Vegetable Consumption Scientific Overview 2012*, which outlines potential new strategies that have not been, but could be applied, to increase purchase/consumption of fruit and vegetables. It also identifies gaps in research related to increasing fruit and vegetable consumption and may provide insight into appropriate messaging and behavior strategies to employ in marketing fruit and vegetables.

RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Research proposals must address increasing fruit and vegetable sales/consumption within the realm of marketing, social marketing, behavioral economics/psychology, or product placement and with a balance of rigor and relevance. Topics appropriate for the research competition include (but are not limited to) the following:

- the impact of targeted messages, promotions, discounts, incentives, coupons, rewards, or product placement on purchase or consumption behavior regarding fruit and vegetables;
- how the use of social media, multi-media, or various channels can influence preferences and behavior towards fruit and vegetables. (Within reason, PBH can cooperate in offering the use of its www.FruitsAndVeggiesMoreMatters.org consumer website, Facebook page and Twitter feed for the purposes of a study.)

Proposals are likely to draw upon diverse perspectives and methodologies. Studies may be conceptual or empirical; they may involve combinations of methodological approaches including comparative studies, observational and ethnographic studies, natural, or laboratory experiments.

PROPOSAL FORMAT

While there are no formal guidelines for formatting proposals, submissions should include:

1. A one page summary.
2. A clear statement of the expected contribution to the practice of marketing fruit and vegetables, as well as an explanation of the specific ways the proposed research will contribute to the existing literature or knowledge base.
3. A brief background section introducing the research problem and offering a succinct summary of the relevant literature.
4. A list of research questions, models, or hypotheses describing the issue(s) to be studied, the researchers' initial insights or beliefs, and what should be learned from the study.
5. A description of the proposed research design, methodology, analysis plan, etc.
6. A timetable with dates of key research milestones, deliverables, and expected completion date.
7. Funding or support needs in an itemized budget. *Note that all indirect costs (e.g. university overhead) are not allowed.*
8. Vita(e) and full contact information for all of the researchers involved in the work.
9. Proposals must be no more than 10 single-spaced pages; however the summary, references to relevant literature, and vita(e) will not be counted toward the 10-page limit.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION: E-mail submissions to GrantSubmission@pbhfoundation.org.

EVALUATION

Proposals will be evaluated by a review panel of marketers drawn from both industry and academia. A scored summary review of each proposal will be prepared and provided to each PI.

AWARD NOTIFICATION

PBH will notify successful applicants after a peer review of all proposals and approval of projects. The announcement of awards is expected by December 2014.

REPORTING

- A mid-year report (2 pages) will be submitted to the PBH office by email on or before June 30, 2015.
- All research must be submitted to a peer reviewed journal and the peer-reviewed submission will suffice as the final report to PBH.
- All publications must identify PBH as the funding agency.

PBH CONTACT

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