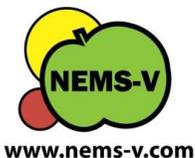# NEMS-V Research Final Report
Iowans Fit for Life, Iowa Department of Public Health

www.nems-v.com

The following contains key insights from the three phases of the research. Further details about each phase can be found at www.nems-v.com

- **Phase One -** designed to gather information for a foundational understanding of current vending machine habits, beliefs, motivations and attitudes among the target audiences
- **Phase Two -** focused on gaining consumer input to optimize consumer messaging in development. This campaign consisted of targeted messages for social marketing promotion of healthy choices when making vending purchases.
- **Phase Three -** was an in-market test of messaging to evaluate its influence on purchasing behavior

Vending Research Phase One

METHODOLOGY AND AUDIENCES STUDIED

Seven worksites and two state rest areas were used to conduct onsite research during April and May 2011. Participating companies were promised confidentiality in reporting, so the profiles of each type of company are reported here. The locations were spread across the state of Iowa.

Respondent Segments	# Interviews
White Collar Urban – two locations were used, one a state agency employer and one a large Fortune 500 employer with an onsite cafeteria, employee exercise facilities and their own "green" labels signaling better vending choices. Both are located in urban centers walking distance to restaurants.	11
White Collar Suburban – a mid-size insurance company. Vending includes an ice cream vending machine and part of a refrigerated machine dedicated to yogurt & fruit.	6
White Collar Rural – a rural hospital location with a cafeteria on premises.	7
Blue Collar Urban – an electrical parts supplier. Wellness efforts include weight loss challenges. The break room has animal crackers and pretzels provided by the company available for employee snacking. Vending machines include a refrigerated one with some sandwiches. Fast food options within walking distance.	7
Blue Collar Suburban – an active retirement community employer with an onsite cafeteria for residents. One vending machine offered leftover salads, fruits, vegetables, entrees and sandwiches from the cafeteria at prices of $.25 - .50 per item. These items looked fresh with taste appeal, restocked daily by cafeteria staff.	5
Blue Collar Rural – a metals machining company that provides fruit for employees at the start of each week, it's usually gone by Thursday. Some employees are part of a wellness committee that works to raise awareness of nutrition and exercise.	8
Rest Area located on I-29 SB near Sergeant Bluff	7
Rest Area located on I-80 EB near Underwood	4
Total Respondents	55

Methodology:
All interviews were done in the vending machine environment to capture in-the-moment-of-purchase thoughts and visual cues that help with detailed responses. Respondents were invited to participate in a short 7 - 10 minute interview as they completed vending machine purchases. Topics discussed included reason for purchase, assortment & selection of products, habits of vending use, snacking habits, nutrition label attention & understanding, respondent attitudes & habits regarding their dietary intake in general. Respondents were shown a summary of the NEMS-V "traffic light" proposed labeling scheme to get their input.

Vending Research Phase Two

METHODOLOGY AND AUDIENCES STUDIED

Three audiences were recruited to participate in online discussion boards held over July 27-28th, 2011. This methodology enables gathering a geographically diverse audience from across the state of Iowa and encourages participation because respondents can log in to participate at their convenience. Total respondents (41): 12 white collar; 15 blue collar; 14 rest area.

Respondents first discussed their overall approach to health and nutrition and their current use of vending machines. Then each group evaluated four concepts individually to give feedback on message clarity, relevance and persuasion. Finally, each respondent selected their favorite concept, taking into account the IDPH goal of communicating the labeling vending snacks green, yellow or red.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

MIX IT UP message garnered the most positive responses overall with nearly 6 in 10 respondents saying it worked best to communicate the snack rating system clearly. This concept should move forward to Phase Three in-market testing.

When asked "If this were to appear on a vending machine you approached, would it influence your decision on what to purchase?" The responses for each segment are categorized below.

	Yes, would influence	Maybe would influence	No, would not influence
White Collar	63%	27%	10%
Blue Collar	27%	33%	40%
Rest Area	43%	43%	14%

Vending Research Phase Three

METHODOLOGY AND AUDIENCES STUDIED

Three test cells were set up for comparison. The team wanted to evaluate the effectiveness of products in the vending environment that had marketing messaging AND NEMS-V labeled product versus NEMS-V labeling only versus the control cell that had a similar mix of products without either NEMS-V labels or marketing messaging. The same creative / messaging was used in all three environments tested (white collar, blue collar and rest areas).

CONTROL	TEST 1	TEST 2
• No NEMS-V evaluated • No messaging • Mix of red, yellow & green products represented aligns with IDPH recommended mix	• NEMS-V evaluated • No messaging (however, a small 2"x6" static cling explained the marking system) • Mix of red, yellow & green products represented aligns with IDPH recommended mix	• Messaging Displayed • NEMS-V evaluated • Mix of red, yellow & green products represented aligns with IDPH recommended mix

The research team worked with the supplier to Iowa rest areas and a supplier to businesses in the greater metro Des Moines area to set up and track volume for a six week test period. Every reasonable effort was made to balance the mix of the types of environments in each test cell (e.g. size of machines, mix of products, white collar work sites, blue collar work sites, employers with multiple vending environments in same worksite location) while maintaining the workflow for participating suppliers who graciously volunteered their time and efforts for this research.

Snapshot Scorecard – Total volume mix for each test cell in units sold

WHITE COLLAR	Control (6 machines)		Test Cell #1 (6 machines)		Test Cell #2 (6 machines)	
	VOLUME	%MIX	VOLUME	%MIX	VOLUME	%MIX
Red	843	**79.2%**	374	**75.1%**	723	**68.9%**
Yellow-Green	222	20.8%	124	24.9%	327	**31.1%**
Total	1065	100%	498	100%	1050	100%

BLUE COLLAR	Control (6 machines)		Test Cell #1 (6 machines)		Test Cell #2 (6 machines)		Test Cell #2 w/o CCX*	
	VOLUME	%MIX	VOLUME	%MIX	VOLUME	%MIX	VOLUME	%MIX
Red	2281	**76.9%**	1204	**69.4%**	1753	**77.3%**	637	**71.2%**
Yellow-Green	686	23.1%	532	30.6%	514	22.7%	258	28.8%
Total	2967	100%	1736	100%	2267	100%	895	100%

* CCX was removed to get a clearer picture based on comparing more consistent environment types

REST AREAS	Control (4 machines)		Test Cell #1 (5 machines)		Test Cell #2 (5 machines)	
	VOLUME	%MIX	VOLUME	%MIX	VOLUME	%MIX
Red	2910	**79%**	3956	**78.1%**	5272	**77.6%**
Yellow-Green	773	21%	1108	21.9%	1520	22.4%
Total	3683	100%	5064	100%	6792	100%

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