



green light,  
eat right.



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## QV Urban Market Pilot RESULTS SUMMARY

### Introduction

Green Light Eat Right (GLER) is a program aimed at improving the range and access to nutritious food in the City of Melbourne. The program enables consumers to make more informed food choices.

The GLER pilot ran at QV Urban Market from May 1 – November 30, 2009 where nine small to medium food businesses participated in the program. Participating food businesses were required to have their menus assessed and classified according to a traffic light system where foods were assessed and labelled as Green (Healthiest Choice), Amber (Ok Choice) or Red (Less Healthy Choice).

Participating food outlets who committed to the program gained Healthy Eating Accreditation (bronze, silver, gold levels) from Nutrition Australia that they could advertise in their business.

### Evaluation and Results

During the pilot program, information and data was collected from each business as part of program monitoring and evaluation. Evaluation components were:

- Quarterly food business sales data;
- QV consumer research questionnaire (online and random sample);
- Monthly maintenance program proprietor survey;
- Roundtable workshop – (peer review of criteria and program, facilitated by Nutrition Australia).

#### *Quarterly Food Business Sales Data*

- Sales data was collected from each participating business at four points in time; Pre, Early, Mid and Post program.
- Overall there were small but steady increases in total sales of “green” products and a subsequent steady decrease in “amber” coded menu products.
- Overall sales data showed an average increase of 4.5% in sales of “green” products.
- For percentage of “green” items sold, all data sets showed a spike (increase) of 2 - 4% at the Early phase, followed by a lull (decrease) of 3 - 7% at the Mid phase before another spike of 2 - 6% at the Post phase. Promotional activity was undertaken at the Pre and Mid points of the pilot suggesting that these spikes correspond to the period following promotion activity, however it could also reflect seasonal change.

### *QV Consumer Questionnaire*

- Of the total number of 357 consumers surveyed (59% female, 41% male) 60% of respondents could recall the GLER program unprompted and furthermore, 67% of total respondents understood the traffic light system (based on a common theme of healthy versus unhealthy) and could recognise the traffic light system unprompted.
- Self reported impact program on attitudes and behaviour saw 66% of respondents reported having a better understanding of what meals are healthy and unhealthy, whilst 63% were more likely to buy a meal from an outlet participating in the GLER program.
- 64% of respondents felt that the GLER information card gave them information they didn't know about healthy choices and 64% also said it motivated them to buy and/or prepare healthier meals.

### *Monthly Maintenance Program - proprietor survey*

- Proprietors were surveyed each month during the pilot phase.
- 40% of proprietors "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that they have sold more "green light" meals since the program started.
- Overall positive feedback about the program.

### *Peer Review Roundtable Workshop*

- In December 2009, key industry stakeholders gathered to provide feedback on the pilot program. As a result recommendations were made to enhance and improve the robustness of the program moving forward. These included developing an ongoing and quality auditing process, redeveloping the GLER criteria to account for proportion and quantities of ingredients, standardising recipes and portion sizes, and adjusting language on written communications to ensure that there is clear meaning of green, amber and red foods.

### **Next Steps**

The City of Melbourne will continue to develop the *Green Light, Eat Right Program*. The program will be refined to reflect some of the feedback received throughout the evaluation such as:

- continuing to ensure alignment with the Victorian Governments Healthy Choices Criteria: guidelines for Victorian public hospitals;
- provision of standardised meal recipes where appropriate;
- consideration of main ingredients only for criteria assessment.

The program has already been expanded to include City of Melbourne - Recreation Centres and Vending Machines.

A Green Light, Eat Right Strategic Plan; will clearly define the direction of the program, including scope of the program, a targeted approach plan and funding sources.

### **Enquiries**

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