

## 2.2 Nutrition Success Stories



### Healthy Snacks Program

#### the people

The City of Auburn is located in Central Maine and employs 260 people in a variety of positions, including office staff, manual laborers, and public safety officers. The City's Wellness Committee has been active since 1995. The Wellness Committee works with the Maine Municipal Association's Employee Health Trust to offer educational programs and incentives to support employee health.

#### the need

The Wellness Committee was interested in promoting better eating habits by making healthier snack choices available to employees, as well as exposing employees to a wider variety of healthy foods.

#### the idea

A variety of Wellness Committee initiatives were developed in order to increase the availability and variety of healthy foods to employees.

#### the idea at work

The Wellness Committee met on a number of occasions to implement and expand the availability of healthy foods in the workplace. Departments were asked for suggestions and the committee took all comments into consideration. The committee already had a healthy snack program, but wanted to expand that program to offer an expanded selection of healthy alternatives.

The Wellness Committee provides healthy food and snacks to all employees four times a year, free of charge. A variety of healthy choices are offered that are low in fat and sugar, including individual containers of applesauce, pretzels, baby carrots, bagels, English muffins, and juice. In addition, healthy snacks are provided for all wellness-sponsored educational activities as well as for company meetings. Vending machines have been monitored and healthier choices have been placed in the machines. Bottled water has also been provided to all departments. In addition, the committee made healthy snacks available to police officers on night duty, as their access to healthy snacks is limited. This made it much easier for officers on duty to eat healthy.



## the cost

Approximately \$450 a year

- Meetings: \$15-\$18 per meeting (held monthly)
- Healthy snack day: \$130 (4 times a year)
- Snacks for police department: \$30 (4 times a year)

## the results

A number of employees report significant changes in eating habits, including not snacking as much and making healthier choices when craving a snack. The variety of nutrition initiatives has increased awareness and has influenced eating habits. The Wellness Committee rates this as one of their most popular initiatives. Remarks from employees have been equally positive. “The variety of the snacks has been great, with something to appeal to everyone’s taste. I always look forward to the wellness snack day and put the event on my calendar,” says Geri Crane, Engineering. The program serves as a regular reminder to choose healthy snacks.

## contact

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