

Grey Bruce  
Recreation Space Food and Drink  
Survey Report



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## Executive Summary

Recreation spaces are places where children, youth, adults and seniors go to be physically active as part of a healthy lifestyle. However, there are rarely healthy food and drink options available in the concession booths and vending machines found in these spaces. As a follow-up to the 2015 environmental scan of *Healthy Food Choices and Tap Water in Municipal Recreation Facilities and Affiliated Public Spaces*<sup>1</sup>, the Grey Bruce Health Unit, PLAY in Bruce Grey, and the Grey Bruce Healthy Communities Partnership sought to better understand the purchasing behaviours and opinions of Grey Bruce recreation space users and identify barriers and opportunities to increasing the availability of healthy choices.

A survey of Grey Bruce recreation space users was conducted in June 2016 to gather information about their food and drink purchasing habits and perceptions of food and drink availability in local recreation spaces. The survey also assessed the acceptability of healthy options that could be sold and other changes to the food and drink environment in recreation spaces.

## Summary of Results

The majority of respondents were the parent/guardian of children who visit recreation spaces. Respondents reported buying food and/or drinks from a concession booth more often than from a vending machine. The most common drinks bought at recreation facilities were: bottled water, coffee/tea, sports drinks, hot chocolate, pop, chocolate milk, and slushies.

Many respondents bring food and drinks from home to recreation spaces. The most common foods brought from home were: fruit, granola bars, veggies, sandwiches, protein/energy bars, and other homemade snacks. The most common drinks brought from home were: tap water in a reusable bottle, bottled water, coffee/tea, and sports drinks.

The vast majority (88%) of respondents would like to see more healthy food and drink options in Grey Bruce recreation spaces. Eighty-five percent (85%) indicated that they would buy more (56%) or the same amount (29%) if there were more healthy choices available. Only 3% said they would buy less. In addition, 69% of respondents would support candy machines being removed from recreation spaces. The remaining respondents were either unsupportive, or not sure.

The top healthy items that people would consider buying, if they were available, were: fresh fruit smoothies, veggies and dip, homemade soup and biscuit, fruit, hummus and crackers, chili, pulled pork on a bun, and frozen yogurt popsicles. Healthy sandwich/wrap options were also popular suggestions. Many respondents suggested local businesses or individuals who may be able to offer healthy options at recreation spaces.

Respondents who were concerned about the idea of increasing healthy options in recreation spaces most commonly gave the rationale that it is the individual or parents' right to choose what they purchase. However, it's possible that some of these respondents may have misunderstood the intent of the initiative which is not to remove all unhealthy choices, but rather to add more healthy choices. The majority of respondents left positive comments about the merit of the survey and the goal of increasing healthy food and drink choices in local recreation spaces.

## Background

In 2015 an environmental scan of *Healthy Food Choices and Tap Water in Municipal Recreation Facilities and Affiliated Public Spaces*<sup>1</sup> was completed by the Grey Bruce Health Unit and Healthy Communities Partnership. The report highlights a *Grey Bruce Action Plan* which recommends conducting a recreation space patron survey to better understand the types of food and drink that consumers would like to see available in their recreation spaces and to gauge their support for including more healthy choices.

## Method

The survey was developed by the Grey Bruce Health Unit (adapted from similar surveys conducted by Lambton, Peel, Oxford and Niagara Region Public Health) using online survey software (FluidSurveys) and pilot tested by a group of individuals and parents/guardians of children who use recreation facilities. Revisions to the survey were made based on feedback from the pilot testers. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix A.

Invitations to participate in the survey were specifically targeted at the patrons and users of public recreation facilities in Grey Bruce. In May 2016, each municipality, Saugeen First Nation and Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation were contacted via email to ascertain their interest and ability to support distribution of the survey invitation via email to user groups of their recreation facilities. Interested parties were provided with an email including the survey link and directions on how to share the link with their association or group contacts on May 19, 2016 (Appendix B). Two email reminders were sent over the course of the survey period, which ended June 30, 2016.

In total 14 municipalities and one First Nation community agreed to share the survey invitation via email with their recreation facility user groups. Some municipalities also promoted the survey through their website and/or social media accounts. The link to the survey was promoted directly by some facilities and user groups including the Owen Sound Grey Bruce YMCA, and contacts involved with various sports associations in municipalities that did not directly distribute the survey. The link to the survey was also posted on a variety of social media platforms including the GBHU Facebook page, website, and twitter account and the PLAY in Bruce Grey Facebook page. A list of the various types of user groups with whom the survey was shared can be found in Appendix C.

## Limitations

This survey used a convenience sample, therefore it is possible that the results under-represent or over-represent particular groups within the sub-population (users of Recreation Spaces in Grey Bruce). However, because the characteristics of the sub-population are unknown, response bias cannot be determined.

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<sup>1</sup> Grey Bruce Health Unit and Healthy Communities Partnership. (2015). *An Environmental Scan of Healthy Food Choices & Tap Water in Municipal Recreation Facilities & Affiliated Public Spaces*.

## Response

In total, there were 742 responses to the survey, and 729 of those respondents completed the survey in full (98%). Because a convenience sample was used, it was not possible to calculate the survey response rate. The breakdown of respondents by municipality can be found in Table 1.

**Table 1: In which municipality do you live?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Count</b>
<b>Arran-Elderslie</b>	8%	58
<b>Blue Mountains</b>	1%	8
<b>Brockton</b>	12%	85
<b>Chatsworth</b>	6%	46
<b>Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation</b>	0%	0
<b>Georgian Bluffs</b>	7%	52
<b>Grey Highlands</b>	3%	25
<b>Hanover</b>	2%	16
<b>Huron-Kinloss</b>	9%	70
<b>Kincardine</b>	10%	76
<b>Meaford</b>	5%	37
<b>Northern Bruce Peninsula</b>	<1%	2
<b>Owen Sound</b>	11%	84
<b>Saugeen First Nation</b>	1%	8
<b>Saugeen Shores</b>	10%	73
<b>South Bruce</b>	2%	16
<b>South Bruce Peninsula</b>	3%	21
<b>Southgate</b>	1%	7
<b>West Grey</b>	7%	49
<b>Outside Grey Bruce</b>	1%	9
	<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>742</b>

Seventy-two percent (72%, n=534) of respondents indicated that they were the parent or guardian of children under the age of 18 who visit recreation spaces. The remaining 28% (n=208) of respondents were people who use or visit recreation spaces themselves but do not have children.

## Results

### Frequency of Food and Drink Purchase When Visiting a Recreation Space

#### Food from a concession booth

Just over half (53%) of respondents buy food from a concession booth *occasionally*. An additional 26% buy food *often*, 7% buy food *at every visit*, and 11% *never* buy from a concession booth. For the remaining 4% this question was *not applicable* as the recreation spaces they visit do not have concession booths.

#### Food from a vending machine

Just under half (45%) of respondents *never* buy food from a vending machine, 44% buy *occasionally*, 7% buy *often* and less than 1% buy *at every visit*. For the remaining 5% this question was *not applicable* as the recreation spaces they visit do not have vending machines.

Table 2: How often do you buy food when visiting a recreation space?

	At every visit	Often	Occasionally	Never	Not applicable (the rec spaces I visit do not have this)	Total Responses
From a concession booth	54 (7%)	189 (26%)	388 (53%)	79 (11%)	29 (4%)	739
From a vending machine	4 (<1%)	48 (7%)	312 (44%)	319 (45%)	33 (5%)	716

#### Drinks from a concession booth

Nearly half (49%) of respondents *occasionally* buy drinks from a concession booth, 29% *often* do, 10% *never* do, and 8% buy *at every visit*. For the remaining 4% this question was *not applicable* as the recreation spaces they visit do not have concession booths.

#### Drinks from a vending machine

Half of respondents (51%) *occasionally* buy drinks from a vending machine, 34% *never* do, 12% *often* do, and only 1% buy *at every visit*. For the remaining 3% this question was *not applicable* as the recreation spaces they visit do not have vending machines.

Table 3: How often do you buy drinks when visiting a recreation space?

	At every visit	Often	Occasionally	Never	Not applicable (the rec spaces I visit do not have this)	Total Responses
From a concession booth	59 (8%)	213 (29%)	361 (49%)	72 (10%)	27 (4%)	732
From a vending machine	5 (1%)	82 (12%)	359 (51%)	243 (34%)	19 (3%)	708

## Types of Drinks Purchased

Respondents were asked to select from a list the drinks that they buy for themselves or their family when visiting a recreation space. The most common drinks bought by both groups combined were: *bottled water* (75%), *coffee/tea* (55%), *sports drinks* (45%), *hot chocolate* (37%), *pop* (31%), *chocolate milk* (28%), and *slushies* (27%) (Table 4). Drinks reported as “other” included *licensed beverages*, *iced tea*, *almond/soy milk*, *organic option* and *cider*.

**Table 4: Which drinks do you buy?**

Response	For yourself		For yourself or your family		Combined Total	
	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count
<b>Bottled water</b>	79%	136	73%	353	<b>75%</b>	489
<b>Vitamin water</b>	15%	25	16%	77	16%	102
<b>White milk</b>	5%	8	9%	45	8%	53
<b>Chocolate milk</b>	11%	19	34%	164	<b>28%</b>	183
<b>Coffee/tea</b>	49%	84	57%	275	<b>55%</b>	359
<b>Hot chocolate</b>	28%	48	41%	196	<b>37%</b>	244
<b>Juice</b>	13%	22	26%	126	23%	148
<b>Slushies</b>	8%	14	34%	165	<b>27%</b>	179
<b>Sports drink</b> (e.g., Gatorade, PowerAde)	30%	51	50%	241	<b>45%</b>	292
<b>Pop</b>	33%	56	30%	147	<b>31%</b>	203
<b>Smoothie</b>	5%	8	6%	27	5%	35
<b>Milkshake</b>	5%	8	2%	8	2%	16
<b>Energy drink</b>	5%	8	3%	16	4%	24
<b>Other, please specify...</b>	5%	9	<1%	2	2%	11
	Total Responses	172	Total Responses	483	Total Responses	655



## Frequency of Bringing Food from Home to Recreation Spaces

Respondents were asked to indicate how often, if at all, they bring food from home to recreation spaces (for themselves or their family). Thirty-one percent (31%) bring food from home *often*, and 17% bring food from home *at every visit*. Thirty-one percent (31%) bring food *occasionally*, and 21% *never* bring food. The remaining 1% did not know.

**Table 5: How often, if at all, do you bring food from home to recreation spaces?**

Response	Percentage	Count
<b>At every visit</b>	17%	122
<b>Often</b>	<b>31%</b>	226
<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>31%</b>	226
<b>Never</b>	21%	158
<b>Don't know</b>	1%	6
Total Responses		738

## Types of Food Brought From Home

Respondents were asked to select from a list the types of food they bring from home for themselves or their family. The most common foods brought from home were: *fruit* (76%), *granola bars* (67%), *veggies* (45%), *sandwiches* (35%), *protein/energy bars* (25%), and other *homemade snacks* (21%). The homemade snacks that were most often specified were *muffins*, *cookies*, *granola bars*, and *cheese and crackers*. The most common types of food specified as 'other' were *crackers*, *cheese and crackers*, and *yogurt*.

**Table 6: Which foods do you bring from home?**

Response	Percentage	Count
<b>Fruit</b>	<b>76%</b>	434
<b>Sandwiches</b>	<b>35%</b>	198
<b>Soup</b>	3%	16
<b>Pizza</b>	3%	17
<b>Gummy fruit snacks</b>	17%	96
<b>Granola bars</b>	<b>67%</b>	385
<b>Protein / energy bars</b>	<b>25%</b>	146
<b>Veggies</b>	<b>45%</b>	257
<b>Chips</b>	12%	67
<b>Popcorn</b>	8%	48
<b>Homemade snacks, please specify...</b>	<b>21%</b>	120
<b>Other, please specify...</b>	12%	70
Total Responses		574

## Frequency of Bringing Drinks from Home to Recreation Spaces

Respondents were asked to indicate how often, if at all, they bring drinks from home to recreation spaces (for themselves or their family). The majority of respondents (65%) bring drinks from home *often* (32%) or *at every visit* (33%). About a quarter (24%) bring drinks *occasionally*, and 11% *never* bring drinks.

**Table 7: How often, if at all, do you bring drinks from home to recreation spaces?**

Response	Percentage	Count
<b>At every visit</b>	<b>33%</b>	240
<b>Often</b>	<b>32%</b>	235
<b>Occasionally</b>	24%	177
<b>Never</b>	11%	79
<b>Don't know</b>	1%	6
Total Responses		737

## Types of Drinks Brought from Home

Respondents were asked to select from a list the types of drink(s) they bring from home for themselves or their family. The most common drinks brought from home were: *tap water in a reusable bottle* (64%), *bottled water* (48%), *coffee/tea* (40%), and *sports drinks* (22%).

**Table 8: Which drinks do you bring from home?**

Response	Percentage	Count
<b>Bottled water</b>	<b>48%</b>	314
<b>Tap water in a reusable bottle</b>	<b>64%</b>	414
<b>Vitamin water</b>	3%	21
<b>White milk</b>	4%	27
<b>Chocolate milk</b>	4%	26
<b>Coffee/tea</b>	<b>40%</b>	262
<b>Hot chocolate</b>	5%	35
<b>Juice</b>	16%	102
<b>Sports drink</b> (e.g., Gatorade, PowerAde)	<b>22%</b>	144
<b>Pop</b>	7%	47
<b>Smoothie</b>	6%	42
<b>Energy drink</b>	2%	10
<b>Protein shake</b>	6%	38
<b>Other, please specify...</b>	2%	13
Total Responses		652

## Healthy Food Options Respondents would Consider Purchasing

Respondents were provided with a list of healthy food options and asked to indicate which items, if any, they would consider buying if they were offered at the recreation spaces they visit. The most commonly selected items were: *fresh fruit smoothie* (64%), *veggies and dip* (51%), *homemade soup and biscuit* (48%), *whole fruit* (45%), *hummus and crackers* (41%), *sliced fruit* (38%), *chili* (38%), *pulled pork on a bun* (36%), and *frozen yogurt popsicle* (36%). The majority of respondents who selected 'other' specified various types of *sandwiches and wraps*.

**Table 9: If the following items were offered for purchase at the recreation spaces you visit, which ones would you consider buying?**

Response	Percentage	Count
Fresh fruit smoothie	64%	472
Whole fruit	45%	327
Sliced fruit	38%	280
Veggies and dip	51%	371
In-house/freshly made energy bars	29%	209
Granola	15%	108
Bagel with apple slices	29%	212
Frozen yogurt popsicle	36%	265
Yogurt	26%	193
Yogurt parfait with granola and fruit	33%	238
Hummus and crackers	41%	297
Guacamole and tortilla chips	34 %	250
Tuna salad or turkey & veggie pita pocket	32%	235
Bean and cheese quesadilla	18%	131
Oatmeal pancakes with yogurt and fruit	15 %	111
Chili	38%	277
Homemade soup and biscuit	48%	355
Homemade mac and cheese	24%	177
Pulled pork on a bun	36%	265
Other, please specify...	9%	64
None of the above	7%	51
Total Responses		733

At the end of the survey some respondents left specific ideas and suggestions for other types of food and drink that would sell well at recreation spaces. Some of their ideas were: *smoothies or sandwiches that could be pre-ordered and ready when the game is complete and portable enough to take in the car; lean meats on a bun or grilled panini (meats done in a crock-pot or frozen in individual*

portions and heated up as needed and placed on a fresh bun); breakfast sandwiches and wraps; baked potatoes with salsa and other foods with familiar flavouring (e.g., garlic, oregano) to entice kids to try; cheese and crackers; assorted tea varieties; good coffee; and fruit juice. One respondent got her 11-year old son to suggest foods he would like to see offered and they were *meat/cheese/veggies in a wrap that is easy to make, carry and eat; and, homemade pizza, lasagna and spaghetti*. Other ideas from respondents included *offering specials (e.g. pasta special one weekend and sandwich special the next); and including kids in assembly of food (pick-your-own toppings)*.

## Expected Buying Decisions if Increased Availability of Healthy Choices

Respondents were asked how their decision to buy food and drinks at recreation spaces would be affected if more healthy choices were available. The majority of respondents (85%) indicated that they *would buy more* (56%) or *the same amount* (29%). Only 3% of respondents indicated that they *would buy less*. The remaining 13% of respondents didn't know how healthy food choices would affect their buying habits. (Table 10)

**Table 10: If more healthy food and drink choices were available, how would it affect your decision to buy food/drink at a recreation space?**

Response	Percentage	Count
<b>I would buy more</b>	<b>56%</b>	410
<b>I would buy the same amount</b>	29%	210
<b>I would buy less</b>	3%	19
<b>Don't know</b>	13%	93
Total Responses		732

A number of comments were left by respondents at the end of the survey noting that the current lack of healthy choices stops them from buying food and/or if there were more healthy choices available they would buy more. Some examples of comments were:

*We would definitely buy more food at recreation spaces if it was healthier. Currently if we needed to buy food we would go elsewhere for healthier choices.*

*The snack booth is full of unhealthy options, which is why I try to pack [food from home] but it's tough with a busy schedule to be prepared all of the time. Healthy options that are convenient would definitely result in my husband and I purchasing more food and drink from any recreation space.*

*If there were more healthy options...we would go to the rink earlier to eat before skating starts, it would save us time and less rushing.*

*I would certainly be more likely to purchase healthy food options.*

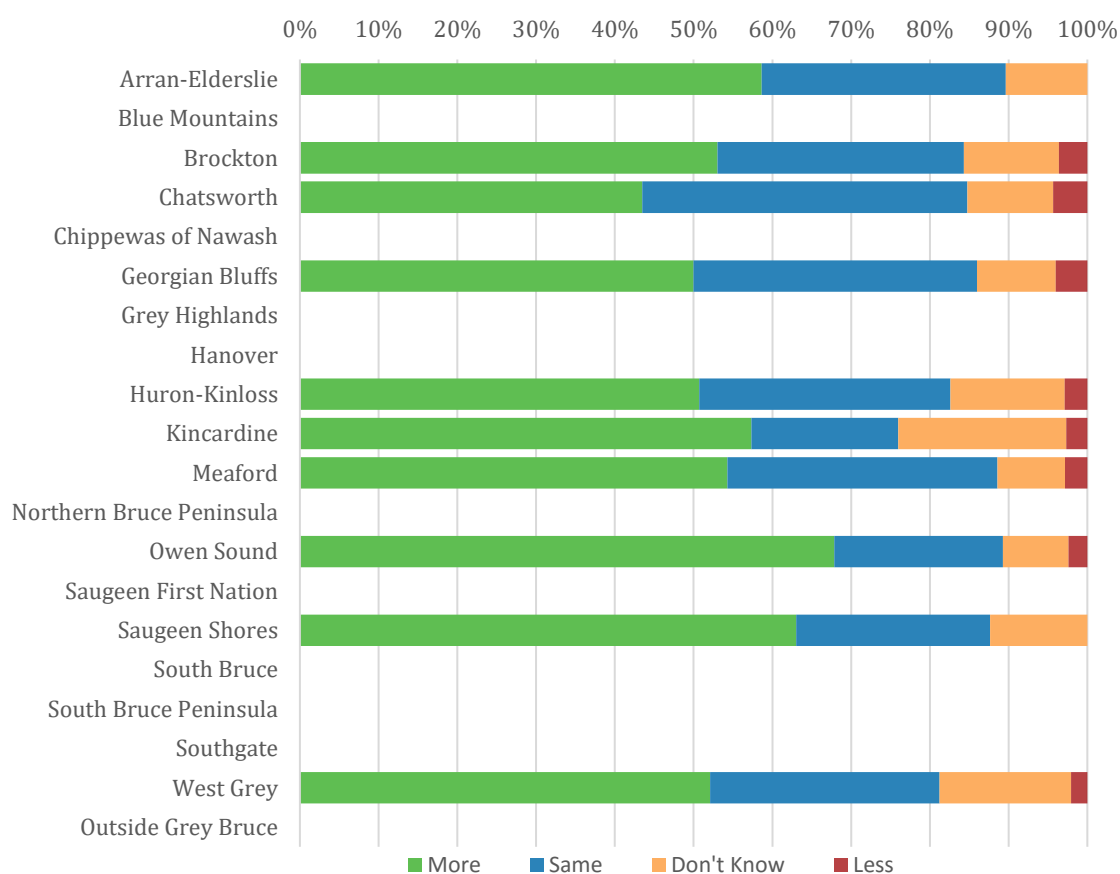
*It's hard to find healthy food options which is why we bring our own from home. Don't like only having the choice of chocolate or chips and pop.*

*I would rather be able to take a [healthy] snack with me [from the recreation space] than to have to stop at Tims on our way out...*

*If I knew I could get a really delicious bowl of homemade chili I would skip dinner and plan to eat at the rink! Right now the only options are bad french fries and crappy pizza - so I don't buy anything!*

Figure 1 displays the results of the question broken down by the municipality in which respondents indicated they reside. Variation among municipalities in the response *I would buy the same amount* and *I would buy more* combined ranged from 76% to 90%; *I would buy more* ranged from 43% to 68%; *I would buy the same amount* ranged from 19% to 41%; *I would buy less* ranged from 0% to 4%; and *don't know* ranged from 8% to 17%. Results for municipalities with fewer than 30 responses are not reported in the graph since the small sample size means the estimate might not be representative of the municipality's actual rate. Full results can be found in Table 13 (Appendix D).

**Figure 1: If more healthy food and drink choices were available how would it affect your decision to buy food at a recreation space? (By municipality)**



## Support for Increased Healthy Food and Drink Availability at Recreation Spaces

Respondents were asked whether or not they would like to see more healthy food and drink options available at recreation spaces. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of respondents indicated that they would like to see more healthy food and drink options available. Only 5% of respondents do not want to see more healthy options made available and 8% were unsure. (Table 11)

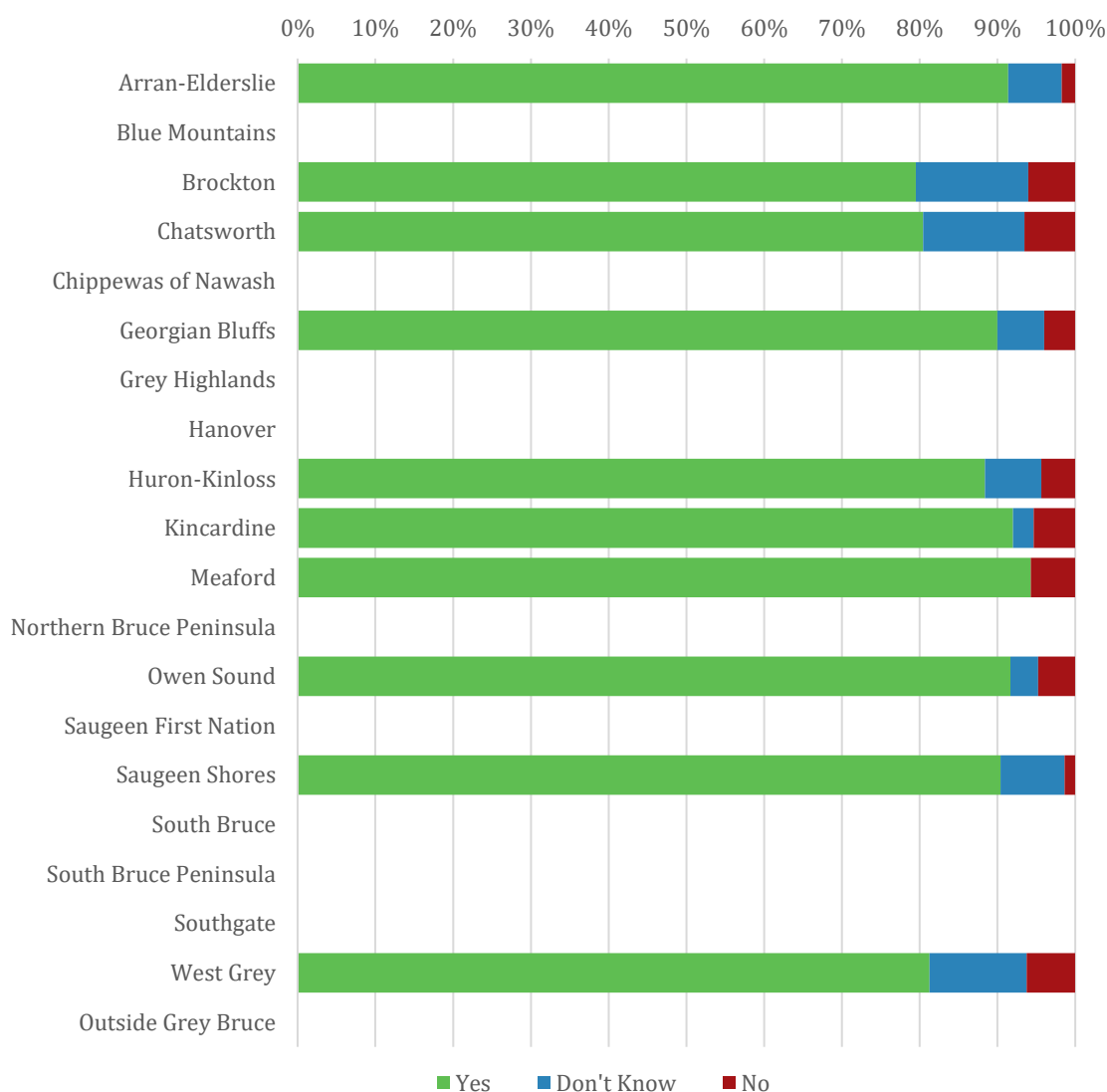
**Table 11: Would you like to see more healthy food and drink options available at recreation spaces?**

Response	Percentage	Count
Yes	88%	644
No	5%	33
Don't know	8%	55
Total Responses		732

Respondents who indicated that they would not like to see more healthy food and drink choices were invited to elaborate with a text response. The most common reason was because they see [unhealthy] foods offered at recreation spaces as a “treat” or “reward”. Other reasons included concerns that offering healthy food choices would be “forcing” healthy options on people, or taking away their ability to choose what they want to eat; or that offering more healthy choices may lead to decreased revenues.

Figure 2 displays the results of the question broken down by the municipality in which respondents indicated they reside. The variation among municipalities for the proportion of respondents who *would* like to see more healthy options ranged from 79% to 94%. The variation for those who *would not* like to see more healthy options ranged from 1% to 8%, and for those who *didn't know* from 0% to 14%. Results for municipalities with fewer than 30 responses are not reported in the table since the small sample size means the estimate might not be representative of the municipality's actual rate. Full results can be found in Table 14 (Appendix D).

**Figure 2: Would you like to see more healthy food and drink options available at recreation spaces?  
(By Municipality)**



## Support for Removal of Candy Machines from Recreation Spaces

Respondents were asked whether or not they would support the removal of candy machines from recreation spaces. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of respondents *would* support candy machines being removed, and 22% *would not*. The remaining 9% didn't know if they would support removal. (Table 12)

**Table 12: Would you support candy machines being removed from recreation spaces.**

Response	Percentage	Count
<b>Yes</b>	69%	504
<b>No</b>	22%	162
<b>Don't know</b>	9%	66
Total Responses		732

Respondents who indicated that they *would not* support the removal of candy machines were invited to elaborate with a text response. The most common reasons cited were that it should be up to the individual or the parents to choose whether or not they buy candy for themselves and/or their children and that candy machines are used as a treat or reward for children after playing a sport or as an incentive for siblings who are waiting. Other reasons included that the machines only dispense a small portion of candy, they are an option for an inexpensive treat, and concerns about potential revenue loss for the facility or vending machine operators. A small number of respondents noted that they would not want to lose the candy machines because they are available when concessions are not, because of the nostalgia associated with buying candy at a recreation space, or because candy is a “good, quick source of energy”.

At the end of the survey some respondents expressed their support for the removal of candy machines. Examples of the comments included:

*I would love, love, love...to see the removal of the candy machines!!*

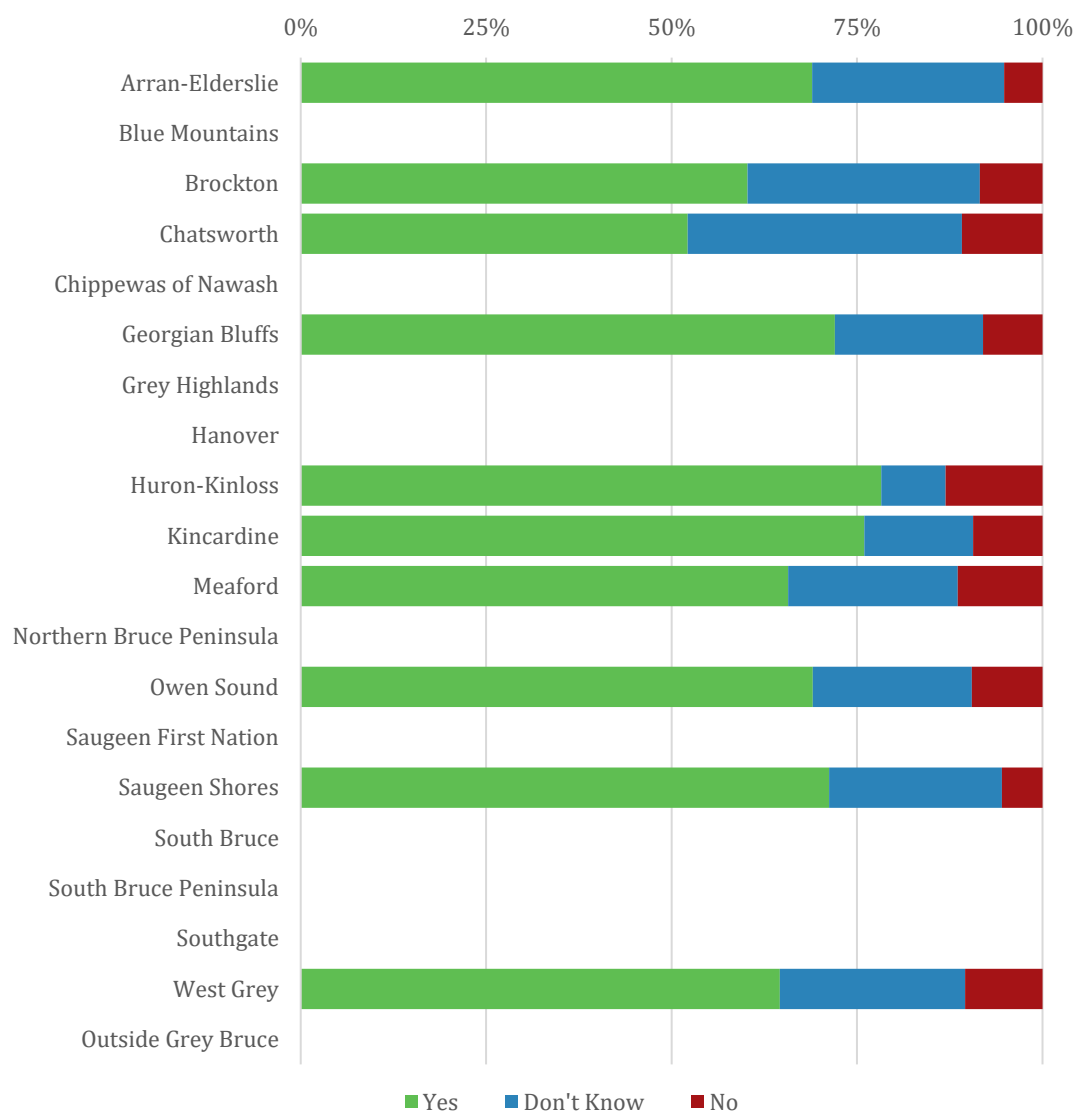
*Please remove candy machines. The kids only ask for candy because they see it. If those machines weren't there the kids wouldn't even know. They'd forget after the first few visits.*

*I can't stand the candy machines at the [recreation spaces I visit], as soon as you walk in the main entrance of the building. I dread the argument I have with my kids every time we go....over the candy that's presented right to them every time.*



Figure 3 below displays the results of the question broken down by the municipality in which respondents indicated they reside. The variation among municipalities for the proportion of respondents who *would* support candy machines being removed ranged from 52% to 78%. The variation for those who *would not* support candy machines being removed ranged from 9% to 37%, and for those who *didn't know* from 4% to 13%. Results for municipalities with fewer than 30 responses are not reported in the table since the small sample size means the estimate might not be representative of the municipality's actual rate. Full results can be found in Table 15 (Appendix D).

**Figure 3: Would you support candy machines being removed from recreation spaces? (By Municipality)**



## Local Food Provider Suggestions

Respondents were asked to record the name and contact information for any businesses or individuals they know who might be able to offer some local food options at recreation spaces. Over 100 respondents made suggestions which will be shared with interested municipal and recreation contacts as appropriate.

## Respondents' Comments and Suggestions

At the end of the survey, all respondents were invited to provide suggestions or comments related to food and drink in recreation spaces. The majority of respondents left general positive comments about the merit of the survey and the overall goal of increasing healthy food and drink choices in local recreation spaces. Some examples of comments included:

*I believe the role of the community is to offer healthy options. Thanks for the opportunity to have this conversation.*

*Thank you for sending out this survey! Finally together we can have a voice. At times the arenas were becoming a "not so fun" place to go as often my children left in tears over the refusal to purchase candy or junk...or at times I left with guilt having given in knowing the food they were eating had no nutritional value. We need to work together to have healthy active kids.*

*I'm so glad someone is looking at this. The food options are poor and I cringe every time my kids want to go to the booth.*

*I would love if there were healthier choices at our recreational facility. I have always questioned the content in our snack booth.*

*Would love to see healthy options and would LOVE to see some of the crap disappear.*

*It would be real nice to see some healthy options. The Goderich YMCA arena has healthy options and the kids love it.*

*This can't come soon enough...can't wait to have something healthy choose from! Hope they're front and centre.*

*Thank you for taking the time to conduct this survey, I would love, love, love to see healthier choices!*

*I hope this survey results in some change because it is definitely the right time.*

*This topic is very important...it is worth putting energy into this endeavor!*

*Thanks for taking the communities input into consideration!*

*Please don't give up. Please keep moving this forward.*

Many respondents noted that the current food and drink offerings at recreation spaces are contrary to the health promoting activities in which people are there to partake. They noted that the inclusion of healthy food choices would help to further support a healthy lifestyle for individuals and families. Some examples of comments included:

*As a family we visit recreational spaces as part of a healthy lifestyle. It would be great if the food options complimented that.*

*Providing HEALTHY food options is of the utmost importance. Creating healthy habits in all children should be a very high priority. It is a terrible example to have sport facilities serving mostly just candy and fried foods. I would LOVE to see better choices available.*

*I hate that we bring our kids to do something good with / for their bodies and then "reward" them with sugar crap.*

*I think this is such an important matter for our community...we need to change the culture at these facilities. Children need to relate 'being physically active with eating and feeding their bodies in a healthy manner'. Not 'being physically active and receiving a crap treat for their hard efforts on the ice'.*

*If you are promoting healthy lifestyles, shouldn't that include diet? It's outrageous that this is not already an option. They've long ago realized that this type of food doesn't belong for sale at a school. Time to move forward, and at least give kids an option.*

*We are at these centres to support our children in living a healthy lifestyle through physical activity. The food/drinks that are offered should support healthy eating.*

*It would be nice to see healthier options at rec spaces in Grey Bruce, especially for participants, but also family/friends that come to watch. The unhealthy options seem to ring opposite choices of the ones we'd like our children to follow. We need to practice what we preach.*

*I would love to see healthy snacks and treat options for kids and families to enjoy after partaking in a sporting activity. I hear families ask why there are not better choices regularly and what message we are sending to the kids by not having better options available to them.*

*Children should be visiting these spaces to learn about healthy lifestyles, not be bombarded by junk food. I don't want my kid expecting an unhealthy snack after each healthy activity.*

*I have always found it contradictory to have the athletes play their game and then the only canteen options are deep fried or pre-packaged junk. We should be promoting all around health.*

*I'm very happy to see a movement towards healthy eating, especially in recreational spaces which should promote health.*

Many respondents noted that they spend a lot of time in recreation spaces, often during meal times, and emphasized the added convenience that would come with having access to healthier food options. Some examples of comments included:

*Parents spend a lot of time in these spaces, some more than they spend at home. And recreational activities are SO often during meal times (evening hockey practice, soccer, morning swim lessons, etc.). I would love to see this change! It doesn't have to be all local, homemade and organic of course, but choosing a few of those options where feasible would make a difference for sure.*

*Our family is at a rink somewhere 6 days out of 7 for at least 7 months of the year. I lug food to feed a family of 6 at least one meal a day in an arena somewhere. Any healthy options would be most welcome.*

*I would very much appreciate having the opportunity to purchase more healthy snacks at the arena as we spend a great deal of time there with 4 children and busy work schedules.*

*I would love for healthier food options to be offered at recreation spaces. Quite often there is not enough time for a full meal before the sporting event so if we could grab something healthy to eat on the way home, it would be helpful. Also great for parents to eat while watching their child.*

*Fresh, healthier options would be great. Healthier options when we need it would save the added stress of getting food ready to take for already busy families.*

*So many families use the recreation facility, especially with hockey/skating in the winter months. Many families are rushing after work to take kids to practice and have no option other than eating at the rink. It would be absolutely incredible to see healthy options.*

*[The healthy options at the recreation space I visit are limited]. Everything else is candy, and highly processed junk food. Other arenas have wraps and fresher options. Salad would be great - moms spend a LOT of time in hockey rinks! I think if families knew they could get a nutritious quick meal at the rink they would do so instead of quickly eating at home first because they don't want to let their kids eat fried chicken on a white bun or french fries AGAIN.*

*I would very much appreciate the opportunity to purchase healthy snacks/meals at the arena. We spend many, many hours there all winter.*

Some respondents gave suggestions regarding operation of the concession booths such as, extending and posting hours of operation, having consistent hours, and keeping vending machines well-stocked and in working order. There were some suggestions about partnering with local businesses, teaming up with young entrepreneur programs, giving students summer jobs at concession facilities that aren't in operation (e.g., at ball fields), seeking the input of concession operators, and ensuring healthy options are easy to prepare. There were also requests for nut-free

recreation spaces and food options as well as gluten-free, and vegan/vegetarian food options, posting ingredient listings, and food allergy safety training for staff. Some respondents also suggested moving unhealthy choices like candy to the back and having healthier options at the front, and removing energy and sports drinks.

There were also suggestions for more water fountains and/or water-bottle refill stations. Some examples of comments included:

*Facilities should have an easy place to refill water bottles. A water fountain is okay, but it is not easy to fill a re-usable water bottle.*

*Easier access to clean, cold tap water for refilling bottles without asking someone at the counter to fill your bottle or using a fountain would be nice.*

*We need proper water fountains in the gym area and in the arena area. Many people do not like getting drinking water from dirty taps.*

*Having more water bottle fill stations...would be beneficial. I often take a bottle of water and I always looking for a refill somewhere.*

Some respondents emphasized the importance of having choice (both healthy and unhealthy). Others pointed out that the affordability of healthy food options would be important and would impact sales. A small number of respondents expressed concern that adding healthier options would increase food preparation and kitchen requirements, affect revenue and potentially result in closure. A small number left comments expressing a general lack of support for increasing healthy choices available in recreation spaces. However, it's possible that some respondents may have misunderstood the intent of the initiative which is not to remove all unhealthy choices, but rather to add more healthy choices. The majority of respondents left positive comments about the merit of the survey and the goal of increasing healthy food and drink choices in local recreation spaces.

## Appendix A – Grey Bruce Recreation Space Food & Drink Survey

### Grey Bruce Recreation Space Food & Drink Survey

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We would like to know about the types of food and drink you buy for yourself and/or for your children at recreation spaces (e.g., arenas, sports fields) in Grey Bruce. We would also like to know about what new types of food you might like to see in addition to what's already offered. This is a short survey that should take about 5 minutes to complete. You may receive multiple invitations for this survey, but please complete it only once. Responses must be submitted before the survey closes on Thursday, June 30, 2016.

This survey is being conducted by the Grey Bruce Health Unit, in partnership with PLAY in Bruce Grey. Your answers will be completely anonymous and presented only with all other responses combined. Choosing to participate, or to not participate, will not affect the service you receive or will receive in the future from the Grey Bruce Health Unit or any recreation spaces in Grey Bruce.

Your opinion is important to us and we appreciate you taking the time to complete this survey. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact: Kathryn Forsyth, Public Health Dietitian, at [k.forsyth@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca](mailto:k.forsyth@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca).

Sincerely,

*The Grey Bruce Health Unit  
PLAY in Bruce Grey*

**Click the "next" button below to get started.**

**Are you the parent or guardian of any children under the age of 18 who visit recreation spaces?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**In which municipality do you live?**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Arran-Elderslie                          | <input type="radio"/> Meaford                  |
| <input type="radio"/> Blue Mountains                           | <input type="radio"/> Northern Bruce Peninsula |
| <input type="radio"/> Brockton                                 | <input type="radio"/> Owen Sound               |
| <input type="radio"/> Chatsworth                               | <input type="radio"/> Saugeen First Nation     |
| <input type="radio"/> Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation | <input type="radio"/> Saugeen Shores           |
| <input type="radio"/> Georgian Bluffs                          | <input type="radio"/> South Bruce              |
| <input type="radio"/> Grey Highlands                           | <input type="radio"/> South Bruce Peninsula    |
| <input type="radio"/> Hanover                                  | <input type="radio"/> Southgate                |
| <input type="radio"/> Huron-Kinloss                            | <input type="radio"/> West Grey                |
| <input type="radio"/> Kincardine                               | <input type="radio"/> Outside Grey Bruce       |

**First we'd like to know about any food and drinks that you buy at recreation spaces. A "recreation space" is any: arena, recreation centre, soccer field, ball field, or swimming pool that is open to the public.**

**How often do you buy food for yourself or your family when visiting a recreation space?**

	At every visit	Often	Occasionally	Never	Not applicable (the recreation spaces we visit do not have this)
From a snack bar/canteen/concession booth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
From a vending machine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**How often do you buy drinks for yourself or your family when visiting a recreation space?**

	At every visit	Often	Occasionally	Never	Not applicable (the recreation spaces we visit do not have this)
From a snack bar/canteen/concession booth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
From a vending machine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Which drinks do you buy?**

Select all that apply.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bottled water  | <input type="checkbox"/> Slushies                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin water  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports drink (e.g., Gatorade, Powerade) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White milk     | <input type="checkbox"/> Pop                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chocolate milk | <input type="checkbox"/> Smoothie                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee/tea     | <input type="checkbox"/> Milkshake                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hot chocolate  | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy drink                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Juice          | <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify... _____          |

Now we'd like to know about any food or drinks that are brought from home to be consumed at recreation spaces.

**How often, if at all, do you bring food from home to recreation spaces for yourself or your family?**

- ☐ At every visit
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Never
- ☐ Don't know

**Which food(s) do you bring from home for yourself or your family?**

Select all that apply.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit              | <input type="checkbox"/> Protein / energy bars                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sandwiches         | <input type="checkbox"/> Veggies                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soup               | <input type="checkbox"/> Chips                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pizza              | <input type="checkbox"/> Popcorn                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gummy fruit snacks | <input type="checkbox"/> Homemade snacks, please specify: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Granola bars       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify... _____         |

**How often, if at all, do you bring drinks from home for yourself or your family?**

- ☐ At every visit
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Never
- ☐ Don't know

**Which drinks do you bring from home for yourself or your family?**

Select all that apply.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bottled water                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Juice                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tap water in a reusable bottle | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports drink (e.g., Gatorade, Powerade) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin water                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Pop                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White milk                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Smoothie                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chocolate milk                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy drink                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee/tea                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Protein shake                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hot chocolate                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify... _____          |



**If the following items were offered for purchase at the recreation spaces you visit, which ones would you consider buying?**

Select all that apply

- ☐ Fresh fruit smoothie
- ☐ Whole fruit
- ☐ Sliced fruit
- ☐ Veggies and dip
- ☐ In-house/freshly made energy bars
- ☐ Granola
- ☐ Bagel with apple slices
- ☐ Frozen yogurt popsicle
- ☐ Yogurt
- ☐ Yogurt parfait with granola and fruit
- ☐ Hummus and crackers
- ☐ Guacamole and tortilla chips
- ☐ Tuna salad or turkey & veggie pita pocket
- ☐ Bean and cheese quesadilla
- ☐ Oatmeal pancakes with yogurt and fruit
- ☐ Chili
- ☐ Homemade soup and biscuit
- ☐ Homemade mac and cheese
- ☐ Pulled pork on a bun
- ☐ Other, please specify... \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ None of the above

**If more healthy food and drink choices were available how would it affect your decision to buy food at a recreation space?**

- ☐ I would buy more
- ☐ I would buy the same amount
- ☐ I would buy less
- ☐ Don't know

**Would you like to see more healthy food and drink options available at recreation spaces?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

**Why not?**

**Would you support candy machines being removed from recreation spaces?**

(Vending machines not included)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

**Why not?**

**Do you know anyone who might be able to offer some local food options at recreation spaces? If so, please type the name and contact information below.**

(If not, please leave blank)

**Please use the space below to type any other comments or suggestions about food and drink at recreation spaces in Grey Bruce.**

## Appendix B – Survey Invitation

Dear [PLAY Committee Member]:

Thank you for agreeing to distribute the Recreation Space Food and Drink survey on behalf of PLAY in Bruce Grey and the Grey Bruce Health Unit. Below is your survey link which is unique to your municipality.

Survey link: [insert here]

1. Please email this survey link to your contacts for groups who use recreation spaces in your municipality by the end of May 2016. This could include (but is not limited to):
  - a. Minor sports associations including hockey, broomball, ringette, baseball, soccer, swimming, skating, etc.
  - b. Other community groups/individuals using the recreation facility, including seniors, parents, children and youth.
2. In the email to your user group / sports association contacts, please ask them to forward the email and survey link on to all of their contacts for their association or group. Feel free to use the wording below in your email:

*You are being sent this email as a representative of a sports association or other group who uses recreation spaces (e.g., arenas, sports fields) in our municipality. PLAY in Bruce Grey and the Grey Bruce Health Unit are conducting a survey about the types of food and drink that patrons buy when visiting recreation spaces in Grey Bruce, and what types food you might like to see offered.*

*Please forward this survey link to your contacts for the user group that you represent and ask them to complete it by June 30, 2016. The survey should take about 5 minutes to complete.*

*Survey link: [insert here]*

*Thank you for your help in getting this survey out to the users of our recreation spaces.*

*Sincerely,*

*[Your name]*

3. In addition to emailing the survey link to your user group / sports association contacts. Please feel free to post the link to your municipal website or social media account(s).
4. Once you have sent the email to your user groups / sports associations, please email [name] with a list of who you shared the survey with (no names of individuals necessary, just the name of the user group or sports association and, if known, the approximate number of people in that group/association).
5. We will send you two reminder emails over the course of the survey period that we will ask you to forward on to your user group / sports association representatives.

Thank you for your assistance in distributing this survey. If you have any questions please contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,  
[Name]

## Appendix C – User Group Survey Distribution

### 2016 Recreation Space Food & Drink Survey User Group Survey Distribution

Adult curling
Adult recreational hockey teams
Adult soccer
Athletic associations
Ball hockey
Broomball
Community centre/pool users
Figure skating clubs
Football
High school soccer / hockey teams
Hockey and skating schools
Men's and ladies fastball
Men's and ladies slo-pitch
Minor baseball
Minor curling
Minor hockey
Minor lacrosse
Minor soccer
Pickle ball / table tennis / lawn bowling clubs
Rugby
Senior A hockey teams
Seniors groups
Special Olympics
Speed skating
Summer sports teams
Swim teams
Youth programs

## Appendix D – Selected Survey Results by Municipality

**Table 13: If more healthy food and drink choices were available how would it affect your decision to buy food at a recreation space? (By municipality)**

Municipality	More	Same	Don't Know	Less	Total
<b>Arran-Elderslie</b>	34 (59%)	18 (31%)	0 (0%)	6 (10%)	58
<b>Blue Mountains</b>	6	0	0	2	8
<b>Brockton</b>	44 (53%)	26 (31%)	3 (4%)	10 (12%)	83
<b>Chatsworth</b>	20 (44%)	19 (41%)	2 (4%)	5 (11%)	46
<b>Chippewas of Nawash</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Georgian Bluffs</b>	25 (50%)	18 (36%)	2 (4%)	5 (10%)	50
<b>Grey Highlands</b>	14	5	2	3	24
<b>Hanover</b>	8	1	2	5	16
<b>Huron-Kinloss</b>	35 (51%)	22 (32%)	2 (3%)	10 (15%)	69
<b>Kincardine</b>	43 (57%)	14 (19%)	2 (3%)	16 (21%)	75
<b>Meaford</b>	19 (54%)	12 (34%)	1 (3%)	3 (9%)	35
<b>Northern Bruce Peninsula</b>	1	1	0	0	2
<b>Owen Sound</b>	57 (68%)	18 (21%)	2 (2%)	7 (8%)	84
<b>Saugeen First Nation</b>	7	8	0	1	16
<b>Saugeen Shores</b>	46 (63%)	18 (25%)	0 (0%)	9 (12%)	73
<b>South Bruce</b>	7	8	0	1	16
<b>South Bruce Peninsula</b>	10	8	0	3	21
<b>Southgate</b>	4	3	0	0	7
<b>West Grey</b>	25 (52%)	14 (29%)	1 (2%)	8 (17%)	48
<b>Outside Grey Bruce</b>	5	4	0	0	9

\*Percentages for municipalities with fewer than 30 responses are not reported in the table since the small sample size means the estimate might not be representative of the municipality's actual rate.

**Table 14: Would you like to see more healthy food and drink options available at recreation spaces?  
(By municipality)**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Arran-Elderslie</b>	53 (91%)	4 (7%)	1 (2%)	58
<b>Blue Mountains</b>	8	0	0	8
<b>Brockton</b>	66 (80%)	12 (15%)	5 (6%)	83
<b>Chatsworth</b>	37 (80%)	6 (13%)	3 (7%)	46
<b>Chippewas of Nawash</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Georgian Bluffs</b>	45 (90%)	3 (6%)	2 (4%)	50
<b>Grey Highlands</b>	19	3	2	24
<b>Hanover</b>	12	1	3	16
<b>Huron-Kinloss</b>	61 (88%)	5 (7%)	3 (4%)	69
<b>Kincardine</b>	69 (92%)	2 (3%)	4 (5%)	75
<b>Meaford</b>	33 (94%)	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	35
<b>Northern Bruce Peninsula</b>	1	1	0	2
<b>Owen Sound</b>	77 (92%)	3 (4%)	4 (5%)	84
<b>Saugeen First Nation</b>	8	0	0	8
<b>Saugeen Shores</b>	66 (90%)	6 (8%)	1 (1%)	73
<b>South Bruce</b>	16	0	0	16
<b>South Bruce Peninsula</b>	18	3	0	21
<b>Southgate</b>	7	0	0	7
<b>West Grey</b>	39 (81%)	6 (13%)	3 (6%)	48
<b>Outside Grey Bruce</b>	9	0	0	9

\*Percentages for municipalities with fewer than 30 responses are not reported in the table since the small sample size means the estimate might not be representative of the municipality's actual rate.

**Table 15: Would you support candy machines being removed from recreation spaces? (By municipality)**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Arran-Elderslie</b>	40 (69%)	15 (26%)	3 (5%)	58
<b>Blue Mountains</b>	8	0	0	8
<b>Brockton</b>	50 (60%)	26 (31%)	7 (8%)	83
<b>Chatsworth</b>	24 (52%)	17 (37%)	5 (11%)	46
<b>Chippewas of Nawash</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Georgian Bluffs</b>	36 (72%)	10 (20%)	4 (8%)	50
<b>Grey Highlands</b>	18	5	1	24
<b>Hanover</b>	13	3	0	16
<b>Huron-Kinloss</b>	54 (78%)	6 (9%)	9 (13%)	69
<b>Kincardine</b>	57 (76%)	11 (15%)	7 (9%)	75
<b>Meaford</b>	23 (66%)	8 (23%)	4 (11%)	35
<b>Northern Bruce Peninsula</b>	0	2	0	2
<b>Owen Sound</b>	58 (69%)	18 (21%)	8 (10%)	84
<b>Saugeen First Nation</b>	3	2	3	8
<b>Saugeen Shores</b>	52 (71%)	17 (23%)	4 (6%)	73
<b>South Bruce</b>	12	2	2	16
<b>South Bruce Peninsula</b>	17	3	1	21
<b>Southgate</b>	2	3	2	7
<b>West Grey</b>	31 (65%)	12 (25%)	5 (10%)	48
<b>Outside Grey Bruce</b>	6	2	1	9

\*Percentages for municipalities with fewer than 30 responses are not reported in the table since the small sample size means the estimate might not be representative of the municipality's actual rate.

