



Serving the Vending and Refreshment Services Industry

Providing Nutritional Information and Informed Choice

ISSUE:

During the past 20 years, there has been a dramatic increase in obesity in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates more than one-third of U.S. adults (34.9%) are considered obese. With an understanding of the current obesity problem in the United States, NAMA is committed to providing its members with the tools needed to offer informed choices each time a consumer visits a vending machine, cafeteria or micro market. The industry takes seriously its commitment to providing nutritional information and product options.

NAMA has communicated and served as a resource to many federal government agencies on issues related to 'better for you' vending, calorie disclosure, the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Smart Snacks in Schools rules, and the General Services Administration's (GSA) Health and Sustainability Guidelines for Federal Concessions and Vending Operations. NAMA will continue to be an active partner with these and other agencies to promote solutions that support both consumer and industry needs related to food and beverage choice and nutritional information.

NAMA POSITION:

NAMA opposes inequitable banning of or discrimination in the sale of food or beverages from refreshment services industry delivery channels, especially if done because vending is the particular mode of merchandising. Vending and Micro Markets are retail channels that provide reliable, affordable, and convenient means for consumers to purchase food, snacks, and beverages. However, restricting or banning certain items because they are sold in these channels is not an effective tactic to influence informed consumer choice or to curb obesity rates. Further, such restrictions or bans may cause additional economic harm to many small, family-owned vending businesses and the elimination of thousands of industry related jobs.

NAMA strongly supports pro-active efforts to address the epidemic of obesity. NAMA is actively involved in helping its members promote informed choices through innovative programs that assist in informing consumers about better for you option. NAMA's FitPick program, a nutrition outreach initiative introduced in 2005, was recently redesigned and now includes new tools and standards developed by nutritional experts that can be used by vending and micro market operators. This program is in use nationwide and has been adopted by many government agencies as their nutrition standard for refreshment services. In fact, the FitPick SELECT standard mirrors the USDA's Smart Snacks in Schools vending standard.