

Are You a Smart Shopper?

You're on your way to the grocery store after work to pick up a couple items for dinner – tortillas and black beans. But as you enter the store, you smell the delicious aroma of the rotisserie chicken from the deli and decide to have that for dinner instead of tacos. You then think to grab a bag of salad mix to serve with the chicken, but on your way to the produce section you spot a huge display of Lays chips at the end of one of the aisles: *Buy one get one free!* Two bags of chips later, you're on your way to check out when you remember that you're out of milk. As you trek to the dairy section (at the opposite end of the store) you see that your favorite yogurt is on sale . . . and grab three of them. Finally, with the rotisserie chicken, chips, yogurt, and salad mix stacked against your chest and the milk dangling from a spare finger, you head to a check-out aisle wondering what happened to the tortillas and black beans you entered the store for in the first place. *Sound at all familiar?*

The average grocery store contains 30,000 food choices. And it's not an accident that those food choices are arranged the way they are . . . with staple items spread across the outer edges of the store, high-profit products displayed on end-of-aisle shelves, and a deli filled with grab-and-go style food right inside the doors.
Why?



According to a 2007 study, 70% of purchasing decisions are made in-store, and 68% of in-store purchases are impulse buys! The researchers of this study advised the American Grocers Association that the grocery store is a compelling and ideal marketing canvas. +No kidding! But Consumers are beginning to speak up about feeling overwhelmed by the abundance of choices and confused by the wide array of health claims on food labels.

Grocery stores as a site for nutrition education. The number of supermarket companies bringing on nutrition professionals is growing tremendously to meet the consumer demand for cooking classes, dietary advice, and store tours (Aase, S. (2007). Supermarket Trends. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 107(8), 1286-1287).

Shopping Smart in Missoula. The Eat Smart Program offers free Supermarket Tours to groups of ten or more. The tour includes hands-on discussion about supermarket product placement and marketing, nutrition basics, food label reading, and the selection of healthy foods in a grocery store. The workshop is also available as a virtual tour, which can be held at a variety of locations (worksites, assisted living facilities, schools, etc). **For more information call (406) 258-3827 or email rohfleischk@ho.missoula.mt.us.**

- For more on the consumer study cited in this newsletter:
<http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/news/ng.asp?n=80325&m=1FNUO04&c=uyywbncrazkakx>
- For more on marketing strategies as well as an aisle-by-aisle guide to supermarket buying, check out the book *What to Eat* by Marion Nestle (picture, right).

