

**Abstract Title:** Dietitians' Identification of Top Barriers to Healthy Food Environments  
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**Introduction:** The food environment can support people to make healthier food choices, or it can be a barrier to healthy eating. Dietitians play an important role in influencing policies that support healthier food environments. Dietitians of Canada is committed to providing decision-makers with evidence-informed recommendations to address barriers to healthy food environments.

**Objective:** To identify Dietitians of Canada member priorities for advocacy action to improve food environments.

**Methods:** An online survey listing 11 barriers to healthy eating environments, based on published frameworks and current DC member advocacy, was developed and pre-tested with 10 dietitians. It was announced to all DC members and available from December 1 to 16, 2016; with one reminder email. The survey asked respondents to choose 3 of the listed barriers as the top priorities for action, identify other barriers if not included in survey choices, and identify supports needed for advocacy.

**Results:** 484 respondents completed all questions. Almost all respondents (99%) indicated that it was important for DC to advocate for healthier food environments. The top 6 barriers identified were insufficient food skills to support healthy eating (42% of respondents), pricing of healthier food options relative to less healthy options (40%), and not enough income to purchase healthy foods (33%), availability of healthy foods where children and youth learn and play (33%), marketing of foods and beverages (29%), availability of foods with too much fat, sugar, or sodium (20%). Diverse supports are needed including evidence summaries, infographics or other visuals, position papers, and key messages in brief formats. Respondents were generally representative of overall DC membership in area of practice, location, and years of practice as a dietitian.

**Conclusions:** Dietitians of Canada members' priorities for action on healthier food environments include food skills, relative pricing, and food security; foods available to children and youth, marketing, and availability of foods high in sugar/salt/fat. Supports for individual action are varied and must be evidence-based.