

6-4

Assessing and Mapping Food Advertisements

In the previous tasks in Part 6, the team learned more about food security. There are many things that influence what people choose to eat. Food choice is one main issue to consider when thinking about food security in the community. Understanding what influences people's decisions about what foods they eat will help the team when considering the problem question: **How do we ensure good nutrition for all?**

Food advertising is one thing that is known to influence decisions about what foods people choose to eat. Marketing teams for companies use TV and online commercials, billboards and signs, magazines and other strategies to try to get you to buy their food products. Assessing these advertisements and knowing where they are located in your community is the first step in understanding what is influencing food choices, and how that could be affecting the past, current, and future food security in your community.


Objective



In this task, the team will assess a variety of food advertisements and the marketing strategies used to make them. Then the team will identify and map the locations of food advertisements within your research site. The team will use this analysis to think about how this advertising may affect food choices and food security in your community.



In this task, the team will be focusing on the following questions from the question map:

- **What effects do food advertising and news have on food and nutritional security?**
- **What evidence could we collect to help define food- and nutrition-related problems in our community?**

1. Go to the Task 6-4 folder and get [Examining Food Advertisements](#) and the example advertisements. 
2. As a team, use this resource to learn about different advertising and marketing techniques companies use to get people to buy their products.



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3. Conduct an assessment of each of the example advertisements using the guiding questions in the task folder.
4. Go to the Task 6-4 folder and get the *Assessing Food Advertisements—Food Journal Product/Brand Advertisement Analysis* instructions. 
5. Follow the instructions and use the food journals you have collected in Part 3 to gather and analyze the advertising of food products people are eating in your community.
6. Go to the Task 6-4 folder and get the *Assessing Food Advertisements—Mapping Community Food Advertising* instructions. 
7. Follow the instructions to identify, map, and assess the locations of physical food advertising in your research site.
8. Discuss as a team:
 - Which foods seem to have the most advertising in your community?
 - Which foods seem to have the least advertising in your community?
 - Why do you think some foods have more advertising than others?
 - What are some of the negative sides of the food products that you don't see in the ads?
 - Based on your community research, how might advertising be affecting the food security of your community?
 - What suggestions would you make to the community when thinking about food advertising in the future?
 - How might understanding food advertising and where it is located be useful when thinking about the problem question: **How do we ensure good nutrition for all?**

Hooray! You completed Task 6-4. Check it off the task list. *Go to Task 6-5!*





Task 6-4. Examining Food Advertisements

Food companies use a variety of techniques to encourage people to buy and eat more of their products.

Here are a few of the techniques they use.

Looking good: The food in the ads looks better than real life. Extreme close-ups trigger our senses of taste and smell, making us crave that food.

Celebrities: Ads with celebrities or famous people put a familiar face on the product. For kids, the celebrity may be a cartoon, movie, or TV character.

Health claims: Many ads claim or imply that the product is good for you. While they may convince you to buy, these claims are often unclear or inaccurate.

Claims about taste or popularity: Many ads describe the food's deliciousness or popularity. These claims are often exaggerated or unsupported.

Overdoing it: Ads may show big portion sizes or people who can't stop eating the product, which encourage you to eat a lot.

Ads everywhere: Ads are put in many places—magazines, websites, buses, billboards, movies, displays, packaging, and clothing—to constantly remind you about the product.

Contests, games, or gear giveaways: Contests, games, and giveaways encourage people to buy food products for reasons other than the food.

Coupons: With money-saving coupons, companies entice people to buy their brand over another.

Movies and TV: Companies pay money to have their products prominently placed in movies and TV shows, which helps create an emotional connection.

Donations: Companies donate money or equipment to schools and charities for each box top or label you collect, which encourages you to buy more and creates brand loyalty.





- 1. Analyze the following food advertisements. For each ad, identify:**
 - What product is the ad selling?
 - Which food groups does the product contain?
 - What is pictured in the ad?
 - What does the ad highlight: quality, taste, price, health, environment, something else?
 - Which marketing techniques from the list above were used in the ad?
 - How does the ad make the food more appealing?
 - What else might the ad be selling besides food?
 - Who is the target audience for the ad? Is the ad aimed at kids or teens?
 - How is the message or visual design directed to the intended audience?
 - How effective is the ad? Do you think you have been influenced by the ad? Why or why not?



Advertisement #1: McDonald's Big Mac Hamburger

Ad Analysis



Advertisement #2: Nesquik Chocolate Milk



Ad Analysis



Advertisement #3: KFC Fried Chicken



Ad Analysis





Food Journal Product/Brand Advertisement Analysis

1. Using the food journals you collected in Task 3-1 and Task 3-2, create a list of food products and brands eaten by people in your community.
2. Research and collect advertisements for the products/brands on the list, if they advertise. Places to look for advertisements include:
 - On line
 - Social media
 - Magazines
 - TV commercials
 - Billboards and signs
 - Food packaging
 - Talk with the community partners you identified in Task 2-6
3. Analyze these food product advertisements.
 - What product is the ad selling?
 - Which food groups does the product contain?
 - What is pictured in the ad?
 - What does the ad highlight: quality, taste, price, health, environment, something else?
 - Which marketing techniques from the list above were used in the ad?
 - How does the ad make the food more appealing?
 - What else might the ad be selling besides food?
 - Who is the target audience for the ad? Is the ad aimed at kids or teens?
 - How is the message or visual design directed to the intended audience?
 - How effective is the ad? Do you think you have been influenced by the ad? Why or why not?

Discuss as a Team

1. Which food groups have more advertising?
2. Why do you think some food groups have more advertising than others?
3. What are some of the negative aspects of food products that you don't see in the ads?
4. How might understanding food advertising be useful when thinking about the problem question, *How do we ensure good nutrition for all?*





Task 6-4. Assessing Food Advertisements

Food Journal Product/Brand Advertisement Analysis

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Task 6-4. Assessing Food Advertisements

Mapping Community Food Advertising

Locating and mapping where food advertising is found in public places can be helpful, for a variety of reasons. It can make you aware of the general types of advertising found in different places. It may also help you understand the company's marketing strategies. Finally, it will help you determine which type of foods and food groups are most and least advertised in your community. This could be helpful in Part 7 when you are developing your action and communication plan for your community.

1. On your research site map from Task 2-1, create a symbol in the legend for food advertising.
2. Identify locations where food advertisements are found or sold. Examples include:
 - a. Billboards or signs posted around the community
 - b. Places where magazines and newspapers with food advertisements in them are sold
 - c. Buildings or sports stadiums with food company sponsors clearly marked on them
 - d. Clothing stores that sell clothes with food brands on them, such as Coca-Cola.
3. Mark the locations on your research map where these advertisements are located. If you find the majority of food advertisements are outside of your research site, consider expanding the boundaries of your research site map to include them. Or you can create a separate map specifically for this advertising data. You decide.
4. Make a list detailing the contents of each advertisement.
 - What product is the ad selling?
 - Which food groups does the product contain?
 - What is pictured in the ad?
 - What does the ad highlight: quality, taste, price, health, environment, something else?
 - Which marketing techniques were used in the ad?
 - How does the ad make the food more appealing?



- What else might the ad be selling besides food?
 - Who is the target audience for the ad? Is the ad aimed at kids or teens?
 - How is the message or visual design directed to the intended audience?
 - How effective is the ad? Do you think you have been influenced by the ad? Why or why not?
5. Identify any patterns for where different food ads are located in your community. Are they clustered around certain locations? Are they close to similar businesses or schools?
 6. How do you think advertisement location may affect food decisions in your community?
 7. How could this information be helpful when thinking about the problem question, *How do we ensure good nutrition for all?*