

# Innovative Strategies for Stronger Military Nutrition Environments



**May 20, 2026**

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[OneOp.org/learn/160108/](https://OneOp.org/learn/160108/)

# About OneOp

*Supporting your work so you can better support military families.*

## Who We Are


A DoW & Cooperative Extension partnership supporting professionals who serve military families.

## Our Mission

Strengthening military family service providers through accessible, research-informed learning.

## What We Offer

Free, online professional development through webinars, podcasts, courses, and more.



# OneOp

**Readiness. Knowledge. Network.**

The views expressed in this presentation do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Department of War, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Government or OneOp. The mention of any entity or product is for informational purposes only.

This material is based upon work supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Office of Military Family Readiness Policy, U.S. Department of Defense under Award Number 2023-48770-41333.

# Today's Presenters



**Katie Kirkpatrick, MS, RD, CSSD**

*Military Nutrition Environment  
Project Manager*  
Henry M. Jackson Foundation



**Jonathan Scott, PhD, RD, CSSD, LD, FAND**

*Associate Professor*  
Department of Military and  
Emergency Medicine  
Uniformed Services University

# Today's Presenters Cont.



**Maj Amanda Diaz, MS, RD**  
*Health Promotion Element Chief*  
Ramstein AB, Germany



**Maj Carrissa Thomas, MS, RD, CSSD**  
*Nutritional Medicine Flight Commander*  
Nellis AFB, Las Vegas

# Learning Objectives

## Webinar Overview

This webinar will describe research efforts to improve the nutrition environment at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina as well as outside the continental U.S. (OCONUS) installations.

1

Describe how the nutrition environment impacts nutrition readiness for military service members and their families.

2

Illustrate how the military nutrition environment assessment tool (mNEAT) can be used by public health professionals, registered dietitians, food service leaders, health promotion specialists, and providers to assess the food environment.

3

Identify practical ways to improve the nutrition environment at your installation or workplace.

# Tools to transform your nutrition environment

Katie Kirkpatrick MS, RD, CSSD  
Project Manager, Military Nutrition Environment Team  
Henry M. Jackson Foundation, in support of Uniformed Services University



Military Nutrition Environment

# Disclosures

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The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions or policies of The Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine, Inc. Mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations does not imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

# What drives food purchases?

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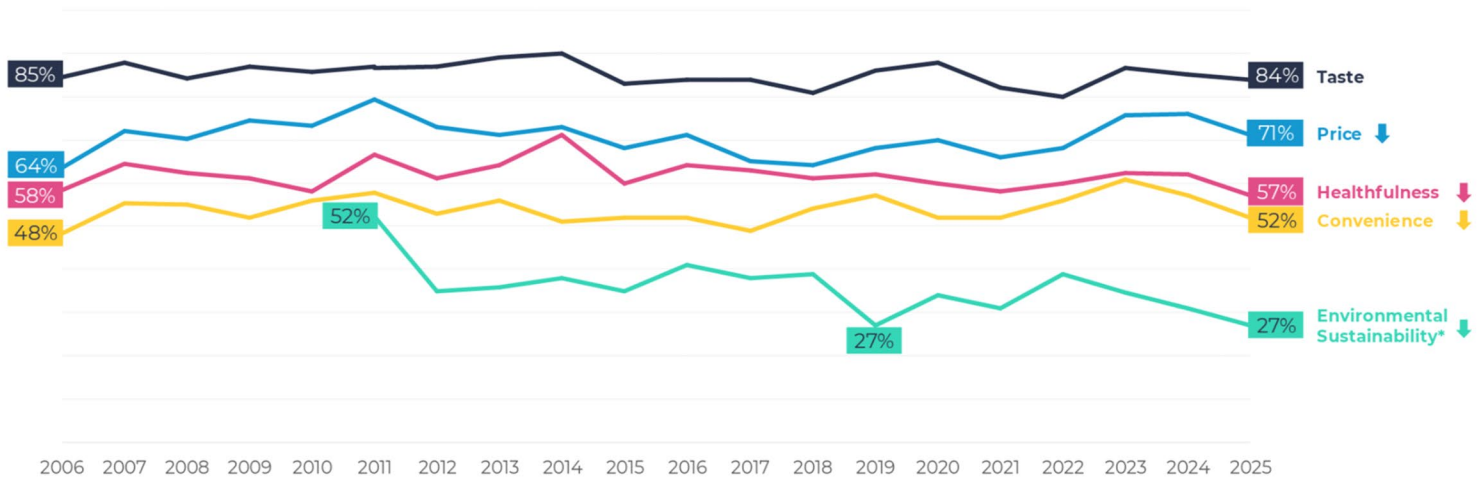
- A. Convenience
- B. Environmental sustainability
- C. Healthfulness
- D. Price
- E. Taste

Amy S. will create Zoom poll

# Taste has been the top food and beverage purchase driver since 2006

For 20 consecutive years, Americans have considered taste a stronger driver of food and beverage purchases than price, healthfulness, or convenience. Since 2011, environmental sustainability has consistently ranked below these factors.

**Food and Beverage Purchase Drivers Over Time**  
 (% 4-5 Impact out of 5)



[TREND 2006-2025] G12 How much of an impact do the following have on your decision to buy foods and beverages? (n=3,000)  
 Note: Responses were rated on a 1-5 scale, where 1 = "No impact" and 5 = "A great impact"  
 Note: Arrows indicate statistical significance vs. 2024.  
 \*In 2019, "Sustainability" was changed to "Environmental Sustainability"



Source: USU



Source: DVIDS



Source: USU



Source: USU



Source: DVIDS



Source: DVIDS

# Definitions

## **Military Nutrition Environment (MNE)**

All foods, beverages, and dietary supplements available in military settings.

## **Military Nutrition Environment Assessment Tool (mNEAT)**

A standardized tool to evaluate the built food environment on healthy-food policy, availability, and promotion across nine venue types on military installations.



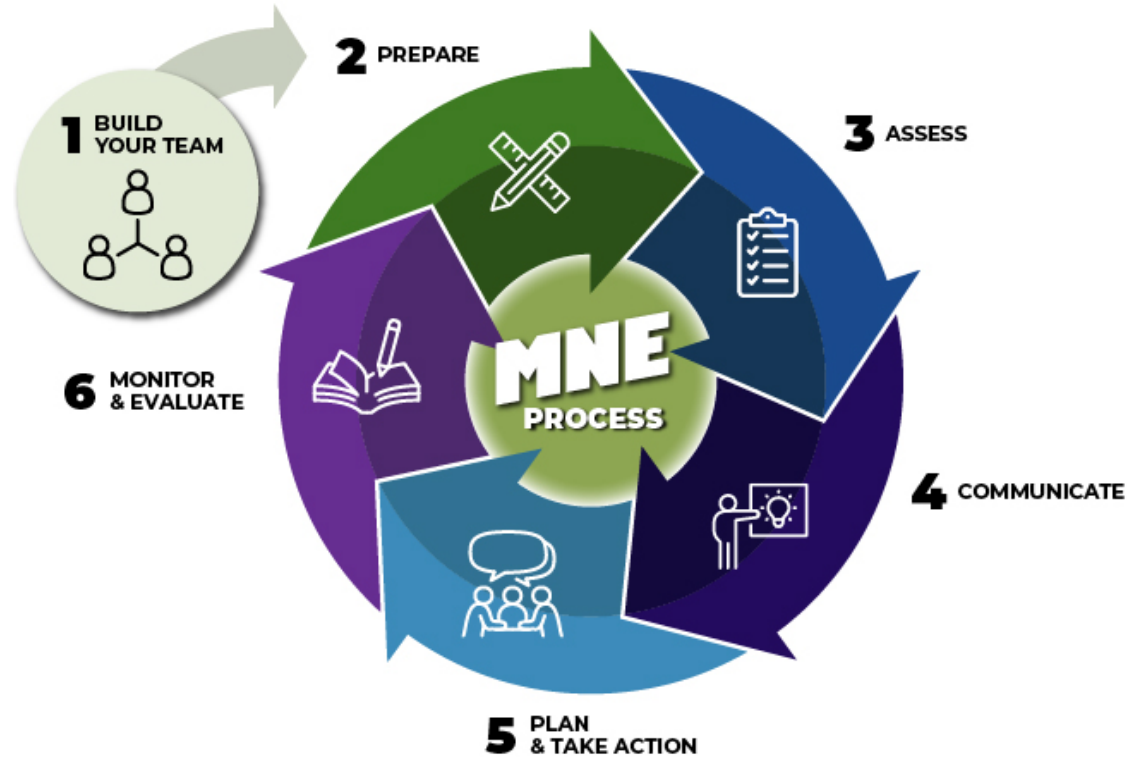
# Opportunities for Nutritional Readiness



Impacts  
readiness

# MNE Improvement Process

A framework to  
assess and  
improve the local  
food environment



# 1: Build your team



## Action items

- Gather a variety of stakeholders
- Look for support, resources, and collaboration



## Tips from the field

- Leadership support and stakeholder engagement are top facilitators



# 2: Prepare



## Action items

- Use the **Nutrition Environment Landscape Inventory** to gather information on your local food environment
- Identify goals and priorities



## Tips from the field

- Review team's resources to develop an assessment plan
- Utilize technology and maintain communication



# 3: Assess



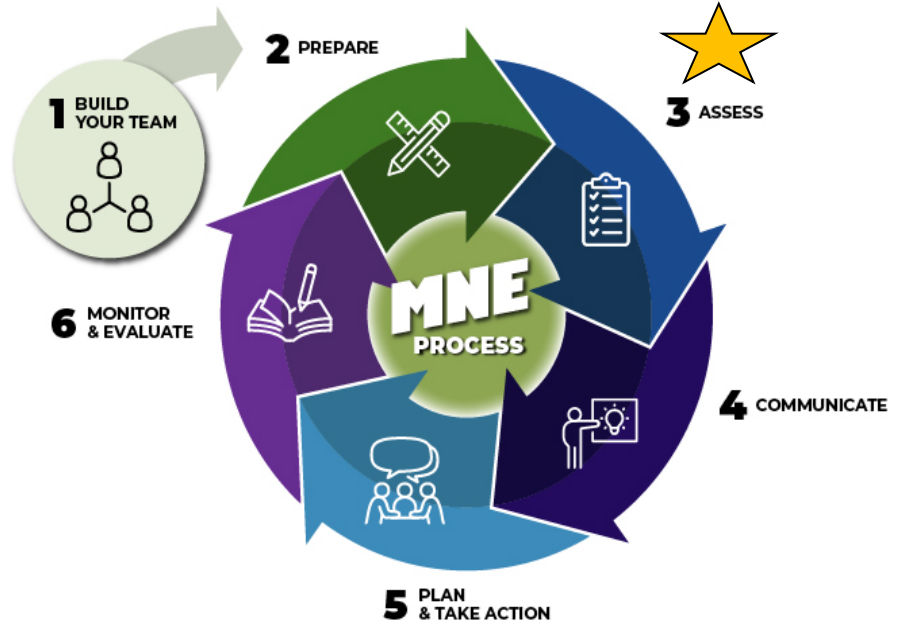
## Action items

- Use the **military nutrition environment assessment tool (mNEAT) app** to evaluate across 9 venue types and 3 key categories:
  - Food policy
  - Food availability
  - Behavioral design



## Tips from the field

- Communicate with food venues about your assessment plans
- Take and upload photos in mNEAT app



# 4: Communicate



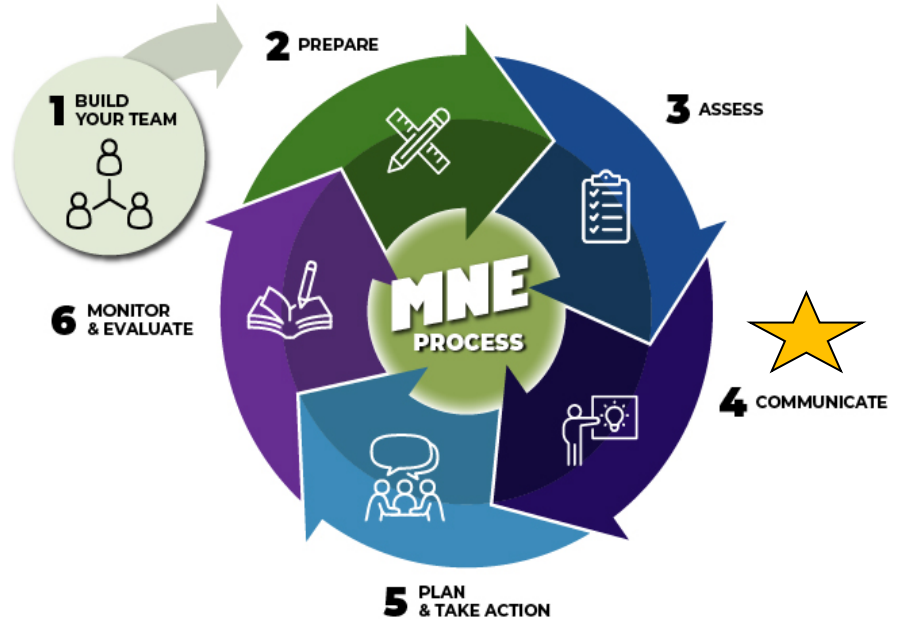
## Action items

- Share mNEAT results with food venue operators
- Inform **leadership** about the impact of MNE and share mNEAT results



## Tips from the field

- Communicate areas of success
- Identify mutually beneficial opportunities
- Use photo to convey scores



# 5: Plan & Take Action



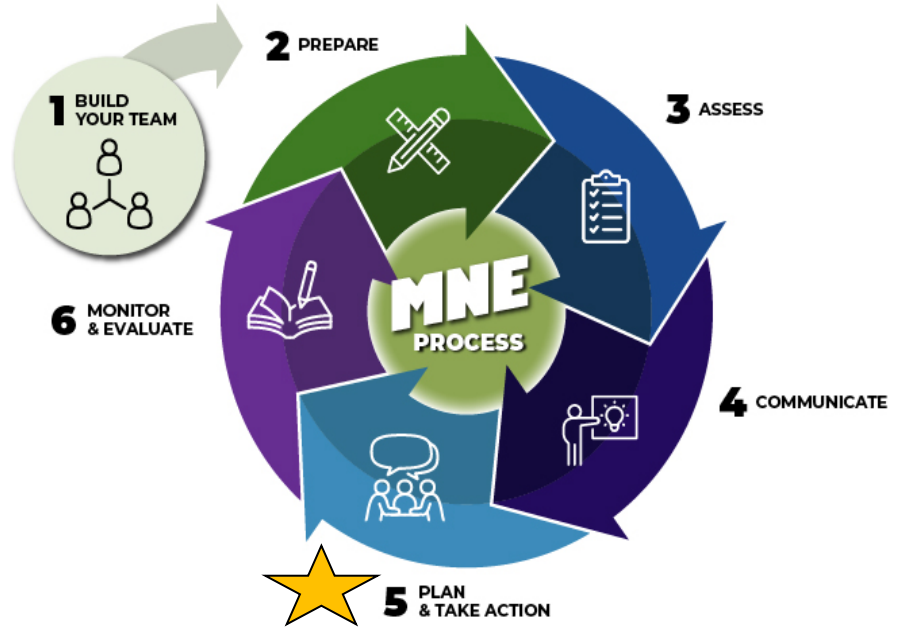
## Action items

- Determine a food venue and strategy
- Use **mNEAT's action plan** to develop, track, and report interventions



## Tips from the field

- Leverage existing relationships and initiatives
- Consider “low hanging fruit”, easy wins, and supportive partnerships
- Use available programs, such as Go for Green®/Fueled to Fight®





# 6: Monitor & Evaluate



## Action items

- Track progress
- What could be changed or improved for better outcomes?
- Reevaluate using mNEAT



## Tips from the field

- Obtain feedback from Service Members, diners, stakeholders (surveys, focus groups, informal discussions)
- Identify what further support is needed



# How will you transform your nutrition environment?



Source: DVIDS



Visit MNE website



Check out my local MNE



Start a conversation about MNE



Sign up for mNEAT

# Thank you!



[HPRC-online.org/nutrition/mne](https://hprc-online.org/nutrition/mne)



[mne@usuhs.edu](mailto:mne@usuhs.edu)

# Marine Corps Community Services Non-Appropriated Fund Healthy Eating Pilot Study

Jonathan Scott, PhD, RD  
Associate Professor  
Military and Emergency Medicine  
Uniformed Services University



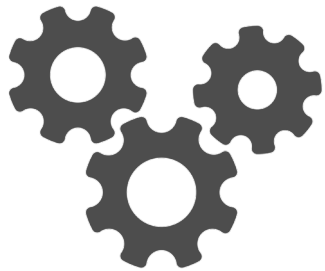
# Dr. Scott Disclosures

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The author has no financial interests or relationships to disclose.

# Study Objectives



## Feasibility

Understand the feasibility and acceptability of implementing F2F nutrition interventions in non-appropriated fund food environments.



## Impact

Determine the impact of nutrition interventions on mNEAT scores and purchasing behaviors.

# Fueled to Fight® Signage



# The Team

- **USU Team:** Katie Kirkpatrick, Melissa Rittenhouse, Deb Robinson, Jonathan Scott, Zina Abourjeily

- **MCCS Team:**

- Headquarters:

- Ric Pomeroy: Branch Head – Food, Hospitality, and Commercial Recreation
- Paul Williamson: Supervisory Food and Beverage Program Manager

- Camp Lejeune & Marine Corps Air Station New River:

- Sarah Wiltgen: Assistant Chief of Staff, MCCS Marine Corps Installation East
- Chris Alger: Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff, MCCS Marine Corps Installation East
- Anthony Rogers: Director, Food & Beverage Division, MCCS Lejeune-New River
- Patrick Larkin: Director, Services Division, MCCS Lejeune-New River
- Charlotte Car, Food Operations Manager, Food & Beverage Division, MCCS Lejeune-New River
- Sonia Sargeant, Manager, French Creek Snack Bar, MCCS Lejeune-New River

Site 1

# Snack Bar



Source: CHAMP

- ▶ **Who?** Active-duty Marines, civilians, contractors, dependents
- ▶ **What?** Quick-service snack bar with made-to-order sandwiches, prepared sandwiches, and sides
- ▶ **Where?** Co-located in high-volume Marine Mart (convenience store)
- ▶ **When?** M–F 0600–1600

# Interventions in Action: Grab & Go Refrigerator



# Interventions in Action: Grab & Go Refrigerator

Attention grabber to highlight the healthier cooler and identify Green options

Stickers to highlight Green options

Fill available space with more high-selling Green options (fruit)



Food-promotion poster highlighting healthier options and how to customize them

F2F window cling to highlight row of Green options

# Interventions in Action: Food-promotion material in venue entry



**LOOKING FOR SOMETHING FILLING?**

**LOAD UP ON VEGGIES  
CHOOSE WHOLE WHEAT**

|                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>DELI SANDWICH</b><br> | <b>BREAKFAST SANDWICH</b><br> |
| <b>SALAD</b><br>         | <b>BURRITO</b><br>            |

**FAST FUEL  
TO POWER YOUR DAY**

# Interventions in Action: Food-promotion message on menu board



# Interventions in Action: Attention grabber to promote healthier sides and highlight Green options in the cooler



**ON THE GO?**

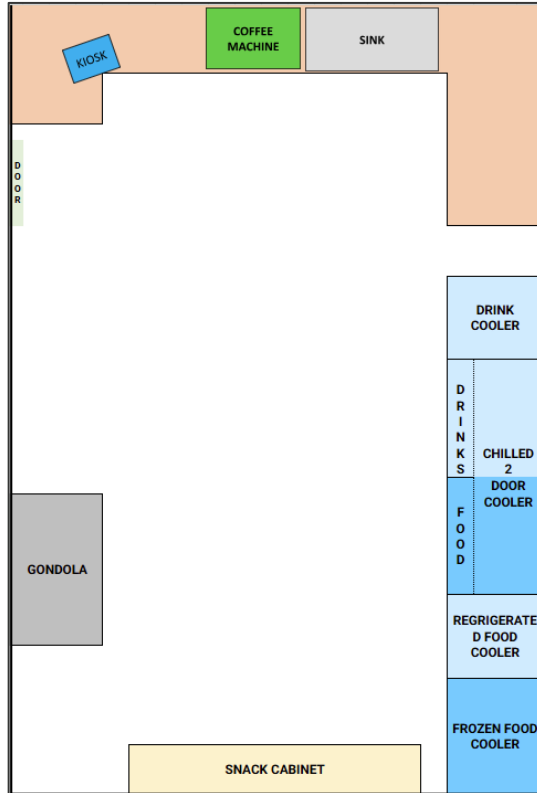
Fuel your day  
with fresh choices

- ✓ **Roasted Red Pepper Hummus & Pretzels**  
A savory snack with a crunch
- ✓ **Fresh Fruits**  
Colorful, juicy, and naturally sweet
- Yogurt Parfaits**  
Layers of creamy goodness with berries
- Italian & Spicy Italian Wraps**  
Freshly made and packed with flavor

LOOK IN THE **GRAB-N-GO COOLER**  
BY THE COFFEE  
**Grab yours today!**

# Site 2

# Micro Mart



Source: MCCS

- ❖ **Who?** Active-duty Marines, retirees, Transition Readiness office staff
- ❖ **What?** Unattended market with drinks, snacks, and packaged frozen sandwiches and meals
- ❖ **Where?** In an office building that also holds training classes
- ❖ **When?** M-F 0800-1600 (building hours)

# Interventions in Action: Micro Mart drink cooler



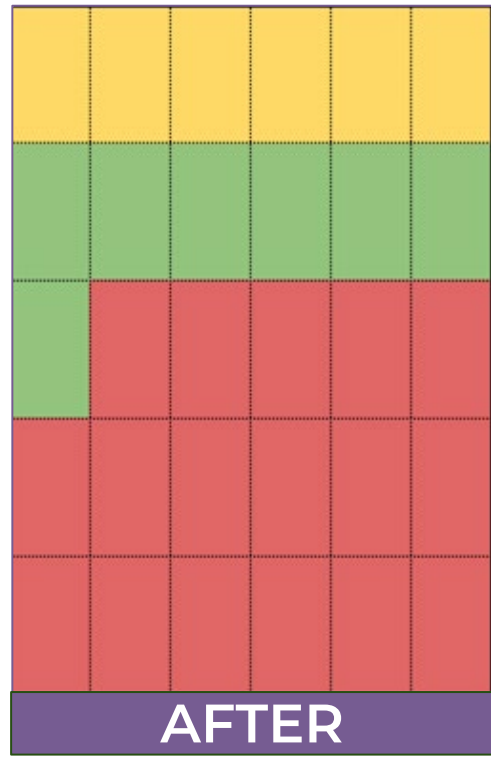
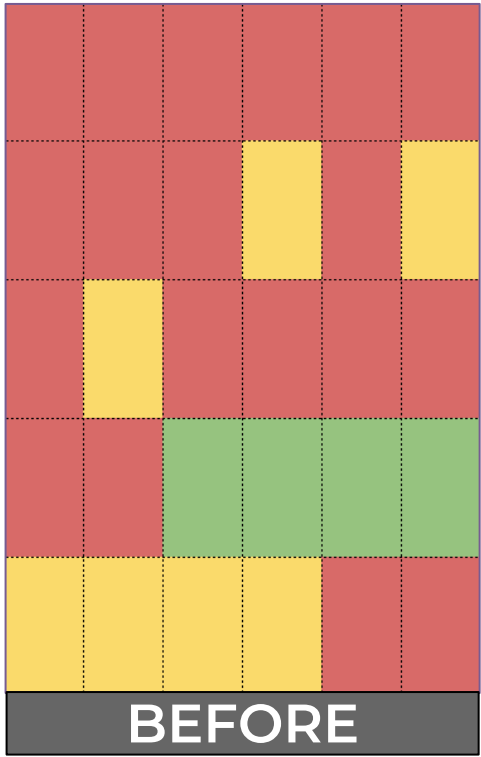
**BEFORE**

Source: CHAMP



**AFTER**

# Interventions in Action: Micro Mart drink cooler planogram



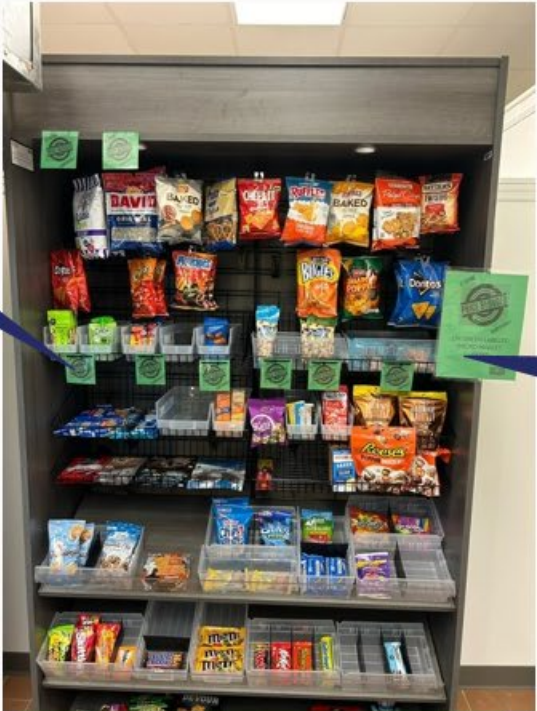
# Interventions in Action

## Micro mart food promotion



**BEFORE**

Tags to highlight items



**AFTER**

Call out for reduced price

# Interventions in Action: Micro Mart Food Promotion

**FAST FUEL**  
TO POWER YOUR DAY  
AT YOUR MCX MICRO MART

**PROTEIN**  
PROTEIN BAR | TUNA | NUTS | HUMMUS

**HYDRATION**  
WATER | TEA | SPORTS DRINKS


**ENERGY**  
FRUITS | OATMEAL | EGGS | BEANS

**MCX<sup>24</sup>**  
MICRO MART



**PRICE REDUCED!**

**TEMPORARILY**  
**ON GREEN-LABELED**  
**MICRO MART ITEMS.**

 **MCX<sup>24</sup>**  
MICRO MART

# Interventions in Action: Micro Mart Marketing



Source: CHAMP, MCCS

A graphic advertisement for MCX Micro Mart. At the top, there are three icons: a blue water drop, a green syringe labeled 'PROTEIN BAR', and an orange lightning bolt. Below the icons, the text reads 'HUNGRY? THIRSTY?' in large white letters. Underneath, it says 'Refuel & rehydrate at MCX MICRO MART' and 'Find us in the back of the building'. The hours 'MONDAY-FRIDAY 08:00-16:00' are listed in white. At the bottom, the logo 'MCX<sup>24</sup> MICRO MART' is displayed in white and yellow.

# Site 3

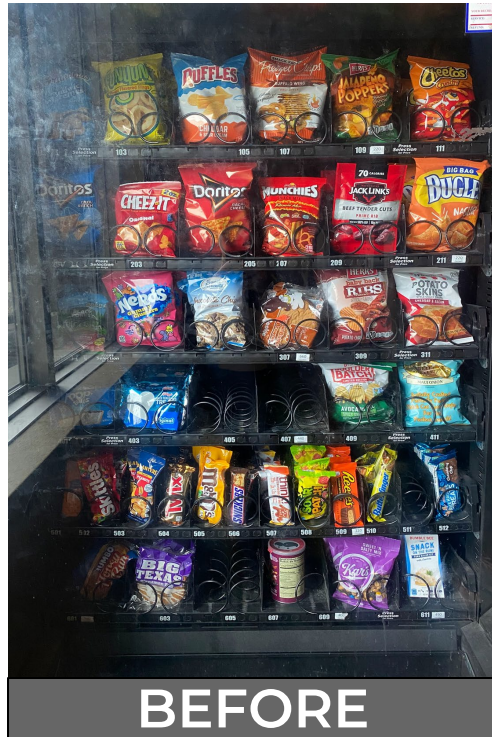
# Vending Machines



Source: MCCS

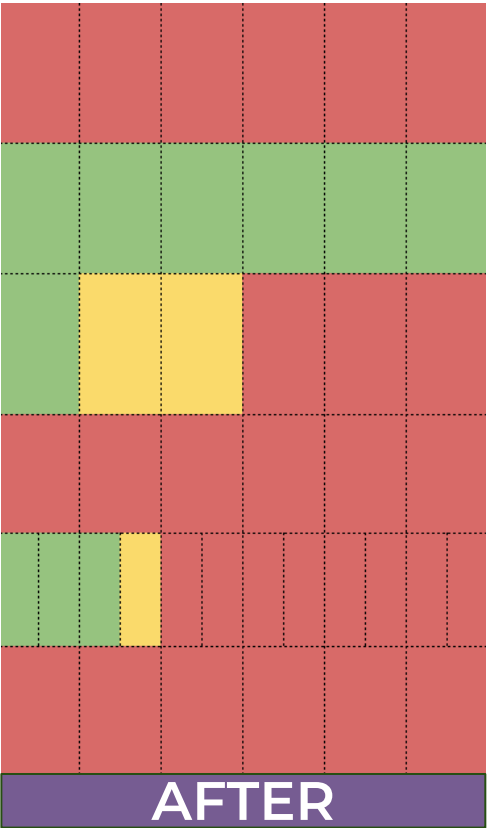
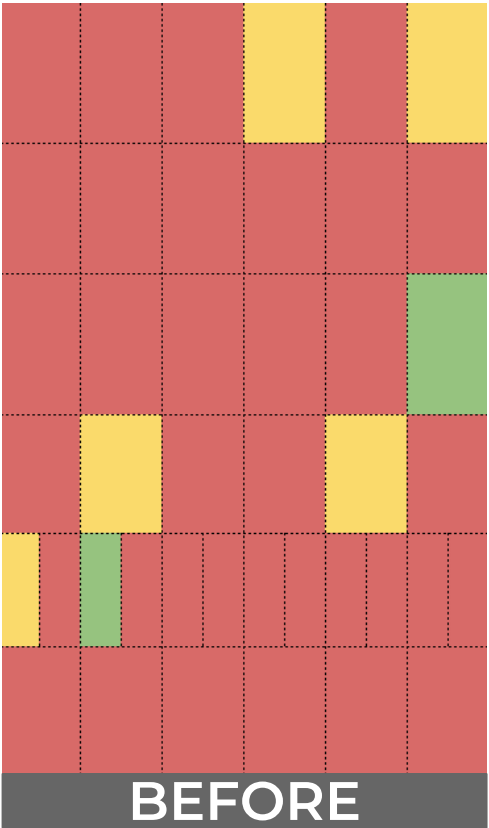
- ❖ **Who?** Active-duty Marines living in barracks
- ❖ **What?** A set of 3 vending machines: one snack, one drink, and one cold food
- ❖ **Where?** Barracks
- ❖ **When?** 24/7

# Interventions in Action: Vending Snack Machine



Source: CHAMP, MCCS

# Interventions in Action: Vending Snack Machine Planogram



# Interventions in Action: Vending Snack Machine Cont.

Stickers to highlight  
Green options

Red options in slots  
below eye level



F2F window cling to  
highlight rows of Green  
options

Source: CHAMP

# Interventions in Action: Vending Machines Food Promotion



Source: CHAMP, MCCS


## FAST FUEL TO POWER YOUR DAY

What are you looking for?

|                    |  |   |   |   |
|--------------------|--|---|---|---|
| PROTEIN?           | <br>PROTEIN BAR | <br>TJUNA    | <br>NUTS            | <br>HUMMUS       |
| QUICK ENERGY?      | <br>GRANOLA BAR | <br>FRUIT    | <br>CEREAL BAR      | <br>PRETZELS     |
| HYDRATION?         | <br>WATER       | <br>ICED TEA | <br>SPARKLING WATER | <br>SPORTS DRINK |
| SOMETHING FILLING? | <br>HUMMUS      | +   | <br>PRETZELS        | Combine something <b>HIGH PROTEIN</b><br>with something <b>ENERGIZING</b>                           |



PRICE!  
REDUCED!



TEMPORARILY  
ON **GREEN-LABELED**  
VENDING ITEMS.



# Key Findings



# What Changes Increased mNEAT Scores? Baseline to post-intervention time period

| <b>mNEAT category</b> | <b>Snack bar</b> | <b>Micro mart</b> | <b>Vending</b> |
|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Food Policy           | 0%               | 0%                | n/a            |
| Food Availability     | +8%              | -1.4%*            | n/a            |
| Behavioral Design     | +8%              | +10.8%            | +100%          |
| Overall               | +16%             | +9.4%             | +100%          |

n/a Vending assessment does not score category

\*Freezer outage and low stock in fridge at the time of assessment led to an unexpected decrease in food availability score



# Other Findings:

## Availability of, sales from, and profit from green-coded items

| Venue            | Availability of items<br>(bi-weekly avg) |   | Quantity of items sold<br>(bi-weekly avg) |   | Profit<br>(bi-weekly avg) |   |         |
|------------------|--|---|---|---|---------------------------|---|---------|
|                  | G  | R | G   | R | G                         | R | Overall |
| Snack Bar        | ↑  | — | —   | — | —                         | — | ↑       |
| Micro Mart       | ↑  | ↓ | ↑   | ↑ | ↑                         | ↑ | ↑       |
| Vending Machines | ↑  | ↓ | ↑   | ↑ | ↑                         | ↑ | ↑       |

— Data not available

# Acknowledgements

Thank you to MCCS headquarters, MCCS Lejeune-New River, and all food service staff for their support in implementing this pilot study.

# QUESTIONS?



[HPRC-online.org/nutrition/MNE](https://hprc-online.org/nutrition/MNE)



[HPRC-online.org/nutrition/go-green](https://hprc-online.org/nutrition/go-green)



[@GoForGreenG4G](https://www.facebook.com/GoForGreenG4G)



[jonathan.scott@usuhs.edu](mailto:jonathan.scott@usuhs.edu)



[mneat@usuhs.edu](mailto:mneat@usuhs.edu)





# Improving the Nutrition Environment at Laughlin AFB

Maj. Amanda Diaz, MS, RD

Health Promotion Element Chief

Registered Dietitian

Ramstein Health Promotion, 86th Medical Group, Ramstein Air Base

*We Are Laughlin*

# MAJ Diaz Disclosures

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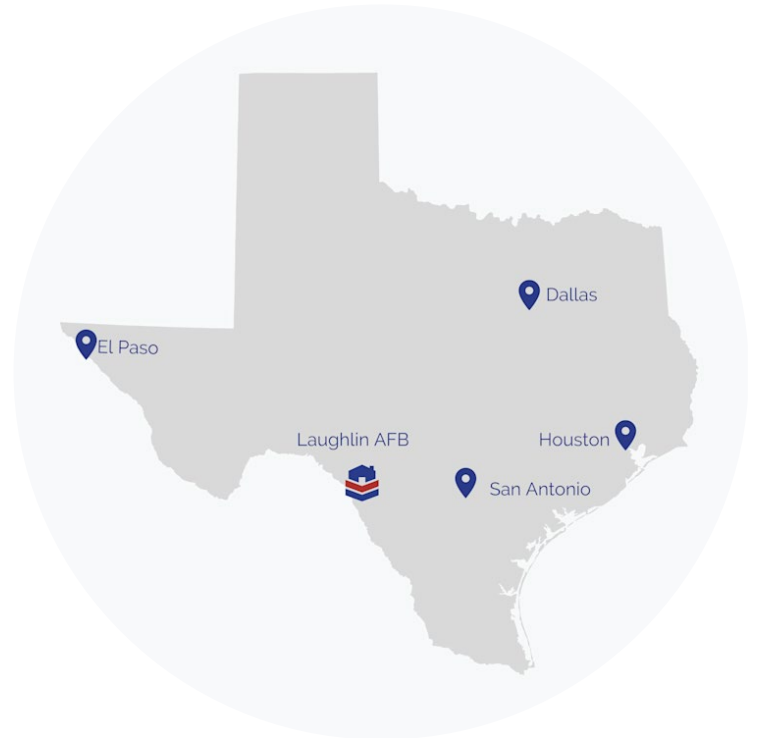
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The opinions shared today are my own and do not represent the views of the Air Force or DoW. I also have no conflicts of interest to report.

# Laughlin AFB, Texas 2024 Demographics

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- Largest Unit Pilot Training (UPT) Base
- Total Force Strength: 2,721
- Additionally Supports
  - Deployers for Operation Lone Star
- Location: Southwest Texas
  - Border of Mexico
    - ~2 hrs- San Antonio
    - ~2.5 hrs- San Angelo



# Laughlin AFB, Texas

## Duty Title & Role

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Operational Support Team: multi-disciplinary team of medical and human performance professionals that provide evidenced-based intervention to optimize performance and mission readiness.

- Dietitian
- Physical Therapist
- Licensed Social Worker

### Embedded Units

- Civil Engineer Squadron
- Force Support Squadron
- Security Forces



# Laughlin AFB, Texas Food Environment

- No DFAC
- Commissary
- Cactus Lanes Bowling
- Silver Wings
- Club XL
- The Grounds (coffee/smoothie bar)
- Food Trucks
- MicroMarkets

**XL EATS FOOD TRUCK OCT. SCHEDULE**

**LONE STAR BBQ**  
OCT 07-10  
Tue & Thu: 11am-1pm - Outdoor Track Parking Lot  
Mon-Thu: 4:30pm-8:30pm - Outdoor Track Parking Lot

**ZEN-BITES ASIAN FUSION**  
OCT 14-18  
Mon: 5:00pm - 7:00pm  
Tue & Thu: 11am-1pm, Tues-Thu: 4:30pm-8:30pm  
Friday Pop-up: 4:30pm-8:30pm - Golf Course

**FIT-FUEL KITCHEN**  
OCT 21-25  
Tue & Thu: 11am-1pm, Mon-Thu: 4:30pm-8:30pm  
Friday Pop-up: 11am-1pm - Laughlin Dr

**BELLA VITA ITALIAN**  
OCT 28-01  
Tue & Thu: 11am-1pm, Mon-Thu: 4:30pm-8:30pm  
Friday Pop-up: 11am-1pm - Laughlin Landing

**MORE INFO:** [LAUGHLIN.FSS.COM](http://LAUGHLIN.FSS.COM)

**Silver Wings**  
Hours of Operation

|              |        |      |
|--------------|--------|------|
| Sun          | Closed |      |
| Mon          | 0700   | 1600 |
| Tue          | 0700   | 1600 |
| Wed          | 0700   | 1600 |
| Thu          | 0700   | 1600 |
| Fri          | 0700   | 1600 |
| Sat          | 0700   | 1600 |
| Night Flying | Closed | 2000 |

Emergency Contact  
Command Post (833) 298-6167

breathe easy

We Are Laughlin

# Healthy Workplace Nutrition Environment Policy

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- Snack Bar Guide
- Healthy Meeting Toolkit
- Healthy Lifestyle Guide
- Unit Health Policy



*We Are Laughlin*

# Diners, Drive-Ins, & Dorms

Connect & support nutrition & meal prep efforts between the MDG and M&FRC

- Classes
  - Nutrition Basics
  - Grocery Shopping: Shop your way to Healthy lifestyle
  - Nutrition on-the-Go: How to stay healthy with limited resources
  - Nutrition and Physical Fitness
- Cooking demos
  - Egg bites
  - Overnight oats
  - Pre/post workout snacks
  - Healthy ramen
  - And more

**DINERS,  
DRIVE-INS,  
& Dorms**

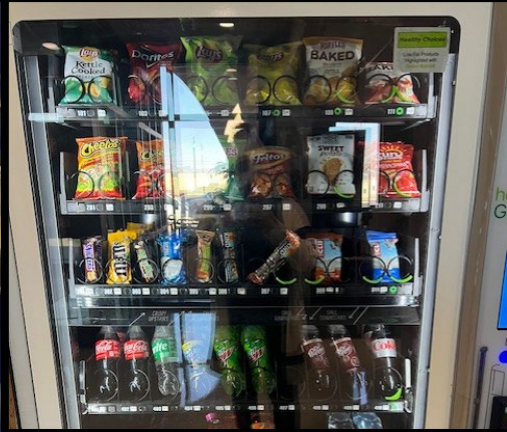
JOIN THE M&FRC, HEALTH PROMOTION, OST & CRAFT FOR AN INTERACTIVE COOKING CLASS DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR AIRMEN WITH BUSY SCHEDULES!

ON THE MENU: OVERNIGHT OATS  
TOPIC: NUTRITION BASICS

OPEN TO ALL AIRMEN; TARGETED FOR DORM RESIDENTS  
MARCH 20TH @ 1700  
LOCATION: HANGAR 47  
REGISTRATION: CONTACT THE M&FRC @ 830-298-5620  
MOTIVATIONAL MOMENT: SPIRITUAL FITNESS BY CHAPLAIN PATAUAVE

HeRO HEALTH PROMOTION CRAFT

*We Are Layton*



# Grab N' Go Kiosks/Vending Machines

- Vending Machines
  - Fit Pick Program
  - Locations
- Grab N' Go Kiosks
  - 3 Locations
    - MDG
    - Student building
    - Security Forces Squadron (SFS)
  - Nutrition labels
  - Food Choices



Just extending a short note that you should be proud of your efforts and your legacy continues to show impact back here at Laughlin. The FSS completed their Grab 'n Go installation inside of SFS and it's operational as of today!

Maj Robert Stone  
Security Forces Squadron Commander



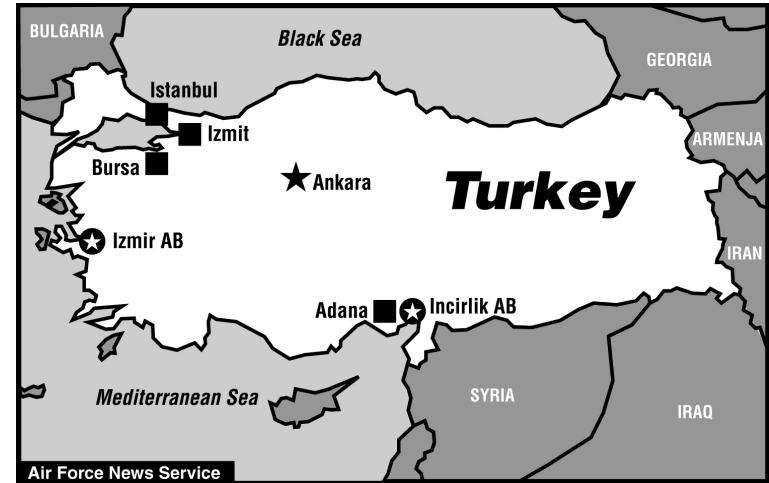
**Improving the Nutrition  
Environment at Incirlik AB**

# Incirlik Air Base, Türkiye 2023 Demographics



- Total Force Strength: 2,493
- Total Force w/Allies: 3,700
- Additionally Supports:
  - 2 Tenant Units
  - 5 Geographically Separated Units (GSUs)
  - U.S. Consulate in Adana
- All U.S. military lives on base, along with other allies
- Curfew for off-base activities

Location: South Türkiye



# Incirlik Air Base, Türkiye

## Duty Title & Role

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Health Promotion Element Chief: Oversaw clinic to optimize performance through targeted nutrition, fitness, sleep, & tobacco prevention efforts

- Dietitian
- Diet Therapy Technician

Short Tour-1 year



# Incirlik Air Base, Turkiye Food Environment

- Sultans Inn DFAC
- Roadhouse
- Lakeside Cafe
- Commissary
- Bun-D
- Starbucks
- Big City Bowl & Diner
- BX/Express
- Other Turkish food establishments



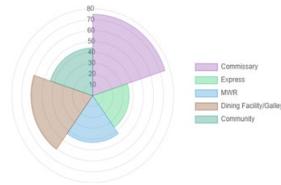


# Incirlik's mNEAT Results

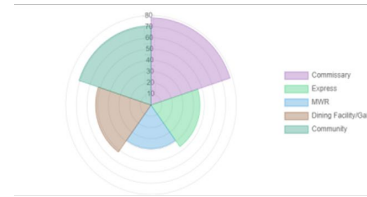
## Military Nutrition Environment Assessment Tool (mNEAT)

Annual assessment of nutrition environment across DoD

- Nutrient Availability
- Behavioral Design
- Food Policy



2024 Results – 52% Adequacy



2023 Results – 51% Adequacy



2022 Results – 66% Adequacy

The current nutrition-related environment of IAB only moderately supports a performance-based, nutrient-dense dietary pattern.

# Commissary Collaboration

**Incirluk AB Health Promotion**  
Mar 19 · 🌐

Join Us for a National Nutrition Month® Celebration!

Celebrate National Nutrition Month® with us this Friday at the commissary! Take a guided tour and discover how food connects us through informed choices.

- Learn how to navigate the commissary and read nutrition labels with confidence.
- Find ways to balance your nutrition while still enjoying the foods you love.
- Easily identify Dietitian-Approved items (look for the green thumbs-up!) for smarter shopping.

Don't miss this opportunity to shop smarter and eat better—see you there!



**Incirluk AB Health Promotion**  
Jun 10 · 🌐

Chipotle Day (Wednesday, 11 June)! 🌱

Join Health Promotion and your Commissary as we spice things up with flavor and wellness!

Come grab a tasty chipotle-inspired bite AND learn how small changes in your food choices can have a big impact on your long-term health. 🌱💪

👉 Did you know? Choosing lean proteins, fiber-rich beans, and colorful veggies (like the ones in your favorite chipotle bowl) can boost energy, support heart health, and keep you fuller longer—all without sacrificing

INCIRLUK COMMISSARY & AIR FORCE HEALTH PROMOTION PRESENTS

## CHIPOTLE DAY!

CHIPOTLE CHICKEN  
CILANTRO LIME RICE  
CORN SALSA  
FRUIT CUP WITH TAJIN

BEANS  
GUACOMOLE  
PICO DE GALLO

**\$12.00**

11 JUNE 2025  
10:30 - 13:00

NEED HELP MAKING DECISIONS IN THE COMMISSARY?

JOIN INCIRLUK'S HEALTH PROMOTION TEAM FOR A COMMISSARY TOUR!

FRIDAY, MARCH 21 @ 1700

Learn About:

- 📄 Nutrition Label Reading
- 🍷 Healthy Meal/Snacks Ideas
- 🔄 Healthy Swaps
- 👤 Commissary nutrition programs
- ⚠️ Misleading marketing

Scan QR Code to Register

Food Connects

HEALTH PROMOTION United States Air Force



# AAFES Updates



# Commissary Updates



**Before**



**After**



**Before**



**After**

# Big City Diner Updates



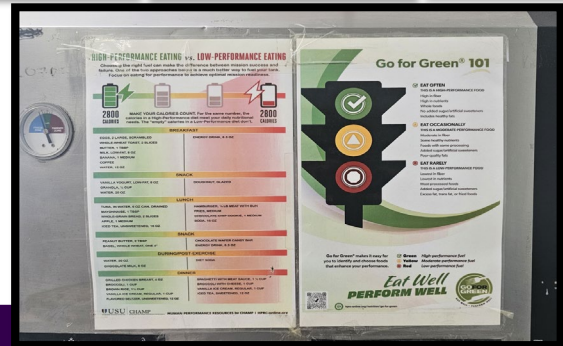
# GSU- Site K Updates



Before



After



# Lessons Learned

- **Logistical Challenges**

- Overseas and remote installations face unique food supply challenges due to shipping timelines, vendor contracts, and reliance on products sourced from both the continental U.S. and international suppliers.
- Implementing nutrition initiatives in remote settings frequently requires flexibility and creative problem-solving due to operational and logistical constraints.

- **Vendor & Stakeholder Engagement**

- Building rapport with vendors and food service managers through both nutrition environment working groups and individual collaboration can improve communication, increase buy-in, and support implementation efforts.
- Developing nutrition standards, Go for Green materials, and nutrition information for food establishments is highly time-intensive and often relies on existing recipes, free databases, or manual analysis due to limited standardized resources.

# Lessons Learned Cont.

- **Staffing & Program Sustainability**

- Short tour lengths, staffing turnover, and gaps between assigned dietitians can make it difficult to sustain long-term nutrition environment initiatives, particularly in positions staffed by a single dietitian.
- Large-scale nutrition environment improvements often require higher-level leadership support, standardized systems, and broader organizational investment to create sustainable change across installations.



# Improving the Nutrition Environment at Ramstein Air Base

Carrissa Thomas, Maj, USAF, BSC, MS, RD, CSSD

Nutritional Medicine Flight Commander

99th Medical Support Squadron, 99th Medical Group, Nellis Air Force Base

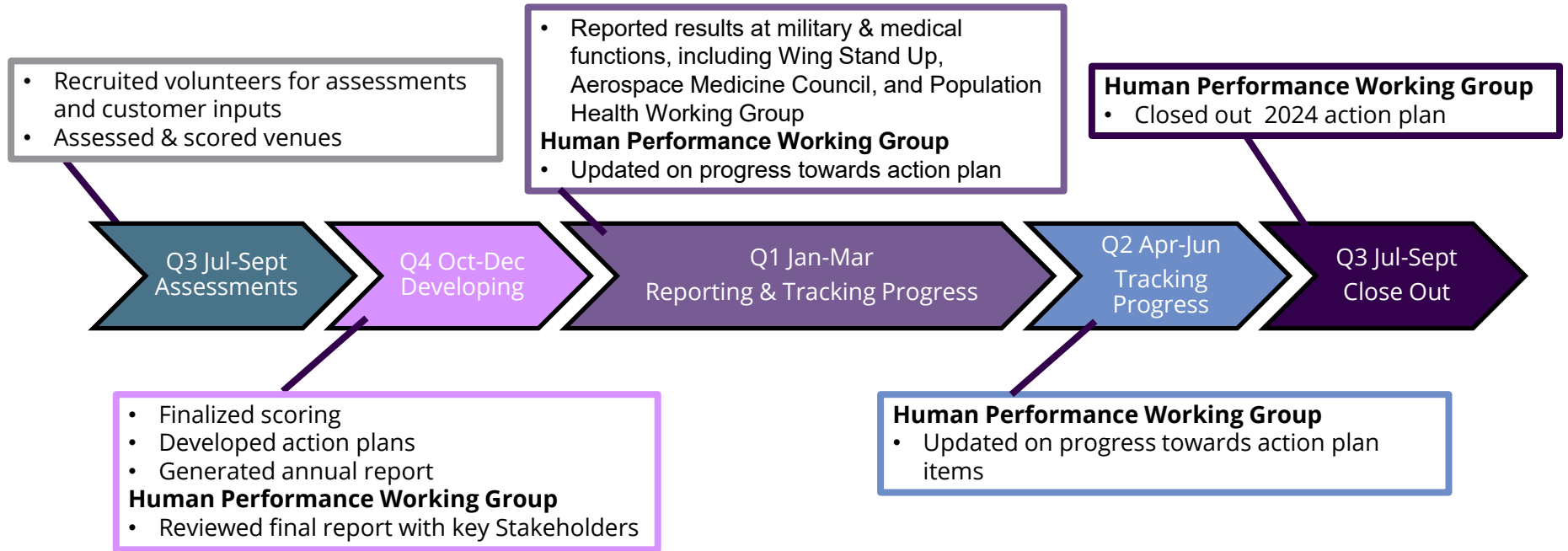
# MAJ Thomas Disclosures

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The views expressed are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Air Force, the Department of War, or the U.S. Government. I have no relevant financial relationships or conflicts of interest to disclose.

The opinions shared today are my own and do not represent the views of the Air Force or DoW. I also have no conflicts of interest to report.

# Ramstein mNEAT Timeline



# Q3 Jul-Sept - ASSESSMENTS

## Volunteers

- Meetings & flyers to recruit
  - Dining Facility Food Forum (quarterly)
  - Community Action Team
  - Medical Group staff
  - Radio segment & flyers to email distros
- In-person trainings on scoring system
- Paper copies for walk throughs as small teams
- Notes/feedback afterwards



# Q3 Jul-Sept – ASSESSMENTS Cont.

1. Updated list of all venues in region (Ramstein, Vogelweh) & managers or POCs
2. Selected venues to assess for that year
  - Noting mNEAT recs for minimum number of venues for the population/options
3. Reached out to POCs to schedule dates for assessments
4. Organized volunteer schedules and trainings
5. Assessed venues per schedule
  - Answered venue specific questions on paper copies of surveys
  - 5-20 minutes to meet with POCs and/or managers
    - Ask survey questions as needed (5-20 minutes)
    - Feedback on new initiatives / visions for improvement in the future as well as barriers to making improvements
  - 15-60 minutes for each assessment
  - Note feedback from customers & volunteers
  - 5-10 minutes to transcribe electronically later & generate score

# Q4 Oct-Dec – DEVELOPING

## Finalizing Scoring & Developing Action Plan

1. Electronic scoring on mNEAT website
2. Developed the action plan
  - Emailed individual reports to managers & POCs
  - Meeting versus email traffic with managers & POCs for action plan input
    - What is feasible to fix in 1 year
    - Who could help make it happen
    - Projected timeline for completion

### SAMPLE

#### Ramstein Nutrition Environment Action Plan

The Human Performance Working Group developed an action plan to continue to increase the accessibility and availability of healthier food options on Ramstein and Vogelweh.

#### DFAC

- Display signage promoting healthy choices within the DFAC I.E. napkin holders
- Ensure “green coded” items are the first/most prominent selection available in the category I.E. hot vegetables, starchy sides, proteins

#### Commissary

- Increase amount of pre-cut, pre-packaged convenience fruits and vegetables
- Increase healthy pre-packaged snack options located in checkout aisles

#### MWR

- Train Food and beverage staff in healthy food menu offerings. Instruct staff to encourage healthy eating per AFI 34-101 11.13
- Promote healthier items outside the entrance, so health messaging is visible upon entry

# Q4 Oct-Dec – DEVELOPING Cont.



- **Generating Annual Report & Command-Ready Presentation**
  - Executive Summary
  - Discussion of Results
  - Comparison to Previous Year
  - Action Plan
  - PDF Score Reports for reference
  - Pictures from assessments

# Q4 Oct-Dec – DEVELOPING

## Generating Annual Report + Command-Ready Presentation

### SAMPLE Executive Summary

The Military Nutrition Environment Tool (mNEAT) is a needs assessment that is standardized across the Department of Defense (DOD). The purpose of the mNEAT is to enable stakeholders at military installations to assess the nutrition environment and create policies that promote and support healthy eating. Ramstein Health Promotion staff and volunteers are tasked with completing the assessment annually. The Human Performance Working Group is responsible for conducting the surveys, creating an action plan, and working to track progress throughout the year.

### SAMPLE Discussion of Results

The overall nutrition environment for Ramstein and Vogelweh improved by 5% over the past year. While surveys and scoring are updated annually, we still believe that this increase is significant and demonstrates trends in a positive direction. The area of greatest improvement was the community, where the score increased from 71% to 100%, followed by the dining facilities which saw a 15% increase in their combined scores from Ramstein and Vogelweh venues. The area of least improvement was the fast-food category, where the score only increased by 4%



Photo: Community Action Team assists with assessments of fast-food establishments

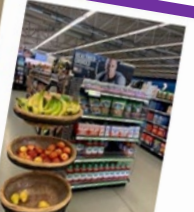


Photo: Vogelweh Express Healthier Choices end cap and fruit display



Photo: DFAC Fruit

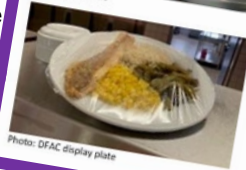


Photo: DFAC display plate



Photo: Ramstein Express assessments

# Q4 Oct-Dec – DEVELOPING

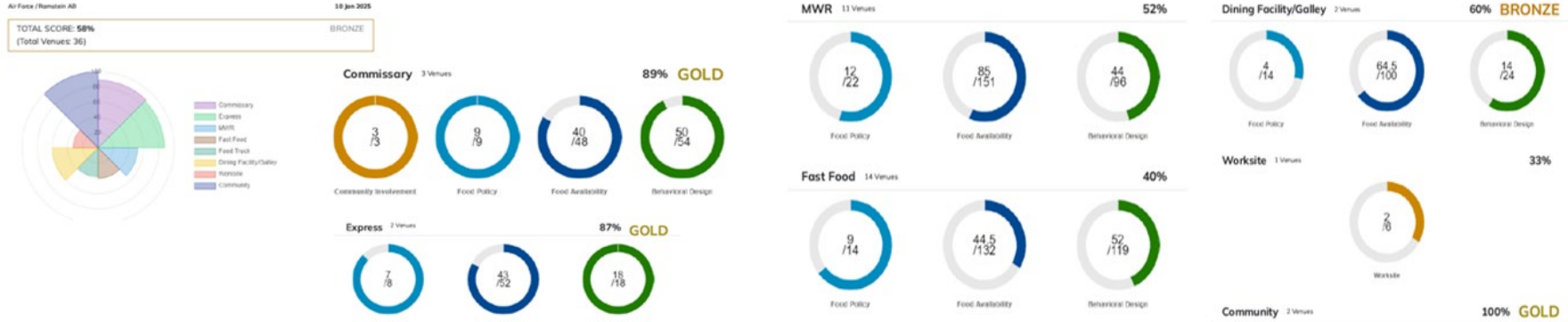
## Human Performance Working Group – Quarterly Meeting

- Inviting managers & POCs, volunteers, & medical group personnel & leaders
- Present report findings
- Finalize action plan
- Prepare tailored presentations for various audiences



# Q1 Jan-Mar – REPORTING & TRACKING PROGRESS

- Reporting results at military & medical functions:
  - Wing Stand Up
  - Aerospace Medicine Council
  - Population Health Working Group



# Q1 Jan-Mar – REPORTING & TRACKING PROGRESS Cont.

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## **Human Performance Working Group – Quarterly Meeting**

- Managers, POCs, volunteers, medical group personnel & leaders
- Update on progress towards action plan

# Q2 Apr-Jun - TRACKING PROGRESS

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## Updates to military & medical functions:

- Quarterly to Aerospace Medicine Council
- Quarterly to DFAC food forum
- Quarterly Human Performance Working Group meeting
- Biannual updates to Population Health Working Group

# Q2 Apr-Jun - TRACKING PROGRESS Cont.

| Venue        | Improvement Actions per Action Plan  | Status      |
|--------------|--|-------------|
|              | Offer Go for Green 3.0 training to staff quarterly   | In Progress |
| DFACs        | Make 1-3 of the following items available during all meals: high fiber cereals, whole grain breads, low fat cheeses, and/or high protein yogurts               | MET         |
|              | Offer vegetables and black bean burgers at short order grill   | NOT MET     |
|              | Increase healthy food offerings available near checkout to include 1-2 of the following items tuna, turkey, chicken, hardboiled eggs, nuts, fruit, and salads. | MET         |
| Commissaries | Add 2-3 fresh, whole, or pre-cut, convenience fruit or vegetables next to at least one checkout aisle.   |             |
|              | Promote the Women, Infants, and Children Overseas (WICO) program. See document for more details.   | NOT MET     |

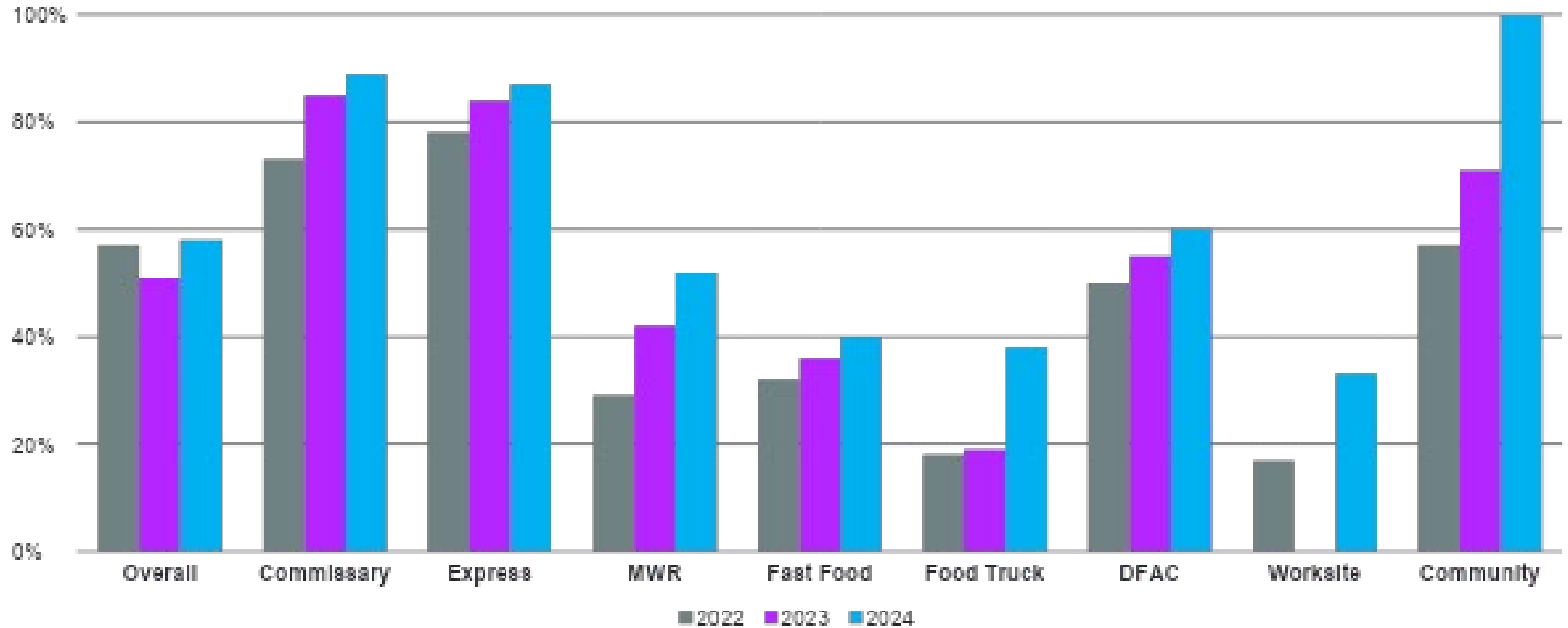
# Q3 Jul-Sept – CLOSE OUT

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## **Human Performance Working Group - Quarterly Meeting**

- Closing out that year's action plan items with venue managers & POCs

# Ramstein Key Results / Improvements '22-'24



# Ramstein Key Results / Improvements '22-'25

## Nutrition Education

- Executed quarterly Go4Green training
- Standardized Nutrition coding
- Ensured up to date signage posted for customers

## Mission-Ready Nutrition

- Expanded healthy grab-n-go options
- Maintained fully stocked salad and fruit bars
- Increased immediate access to nutritious meals

## Community Engagement

- Instituted quarterly food forum for direct feedback from patrons
- Drove data-informed menu & operational improvements

## Environmental Stewardship

- Customer driven sustainability initiative to utilize reuseable containers
- Reduced single-use waste

# Ramstein Key Results / Improvements '22-'25 Cont.

- Geographically Separated Units (GSUs)
  - Chievres, Belgium
  - Lajes, Portugal
  - Moron, Spain
- Resumed annual assessments / corrected 3-5 year gap (since COVID)
- Reestablished GSU stakeholders & points of contact to restart action plans



# Ramstein Air Base Lessons Learned

- Creating lasting partnership with key stakeholders yields best results long term
- Keep managers involved in the action plan process or items are forgotten
  - Some franchises may have less wiggle room for policy changes than others
- Expanding this beyond Ramstein – Reengaging with GSUs was highly popular & seemed to have a good impact on morale
- Learn & utilize the technology options to maximize efficiency
  - Think iPad or tablet for real-time scoring to discuss with manager on the spot & brainstorm action plan ideas
  - Action planning capabilities in mNEAT website

Q&A?



**Insights and Best Practices from the  
USDA Summer Meal Programs**  
June 11, 2026

# Upcoming Webinar: Register Now

The Summer Meal Programs are USDA-funded, state-administered program providing free, nutritious meals and snacks to children 18 and younger in low-income areas during the summer, when school is not in session. Join experts from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service and leaders from a summer site near Fort Bragg for a professional development webinar focused on expanding access to nutritious summer meals for children.

 [OneOp.org/learn/160129](https://OneOp.org/learn/160129)

# Claim Continuing Education Credits



## Continuing Education

Approved for **1.5** CE credits from the following organizations:

- American Association for Family and Consumer Sciences
- Commission on Dietetic Registration
- National Commission for Health Education Credentialing
- Certificate of Attendance



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Complete the evaluation and post-test on the event page

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