

PUBLIC POLICY

A Healthier Urban Jungle

By Thomas Farley, M.D., M.P.H., New York City's Health Commissioner

- 1 **A RESEARCHER ONCE** told me that progress in biomedical science could be measured by 11. Long ago we understood only the differences between sick and healthy individuals, but now we have zoomed through organs and cells into studying sick and healthy molecules. This type of thinking has led some to search for the solution to the national epidemic of obesity within our body's cells.
- 2 They won't find it there. We will reverse this epidemic not with a better microscope but rather with a better macroscope — not through genetics or physiology but through sociology and economics. In New York City (NYC), where we must reach millions of people who are overweight or headed there, we are using public policy and economic incentives to create a healthier food environment.
- 3 Food is now ubiquitous, cheap, calorie-dense, and delivered to us in superphysiologic portion sizes. While there has been much talk of "food deserts" and the shortage of healthy foods in low-income neighborhoods, in fact most of us live in food swamps, where we drown in food laden with excess calories. Today it is hard to imagine a building without a soda vending machine or an intersection without a fast-food outlet. At bodegas in the South Bronx, the most prominent shelf items are three-liter bottles of soda, selling for \$2 each, and huge bags of chips. Those chips pack about five calories per gram, which is more than 10 times the calorie density of a carrot.
- 4 It is far easier to describe this "obesogenic" food environment than to change it for the better. In NYC we have been trying to nudge the system toward offering a healthier mix of products in human-size portions. We provide "Health Bucks" — \$2 vouchers to use at farmers' markets — to people in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP (formerly known as food stamps), as an incentive to buy low-calorie-density fresh fruits and vegetables. We encourage bodega operators to stock lower-calorie foods, and we have adopted zoning and financial incentives to draw supermarkets into neighborhoods that have nothing but bodegas. We are also improving the quality of foods sold in school cafeterias, while removing calorie-dense beverages from school vending



machines. And we have established nutrition standards for foods sold or distributed by all city agencies, which together deliver some 225 million meals every year.

5 In 2008 NYC started requiring chain restaurants to post the calorie counts on their menus and menu boards. The immediate effect has been modest: about 25 percent of customers who see the calorie counts use them in choosing what to buy, and those who do so purchase about 100 fewer calories per meal. The greater potential payoff is that restaurants, ashamed to post a count of more than 1,000 calories for a sandwich, may 14.

6 Any effort to create a healthier food environment must address sugar-sweetened beverages, which account for a third to a half of the 300-calorie increase in Americans' daily diets over the past 30 years. Sugar-sweetened drinks have been linked to obesity or weight gain in both observational studies and randomized clinical trials. New York City has supported state legislation that would balance the incentives to supersize by placing a penny-per-ounce excise tax on sugary drinks. Economic models suggest that a 10 percent increase in price would reduce the sale of these beverages by about 8 percent.

7 Last fall NYC proposed a demonstration project to test the effect of ending the subsidy of sugar-sweetened products in the SNAP program. The measure would address a basic contradiction in public policy. When we are telling New Yorkers in every possible way that sugar-sweetened beverages cause obesity and diabetes, how can we justify giving vouchers to get these products for free, especially as part of a nutrition program? Our initiative could also change incentives in the market. If bodegas cannot sell three-liter bottles of sugary soda through the SNAP program, maybe they will promote something healthier that is SNAP-eligible.

8 Surveys that we have conducted show that adults have cut back somewhat on sugar-sweetened beverages since 2007. Those same surveys track self-reported height and weight in adults, and we actively monitor fitness and body mass index among the city's 1.2 million public school students. It is far too early to know if the changes we have made are affecting obesity rates. We are more than 30 years into this epidemic, and reversing it will take more than a few. But we believe we have found the right target. Unless our vision of a brighter future is a majority of Americans taking an antiobesity pill every day, it is our environment that needs to change, not our physiology.

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Tekst 4 A healthier urban jungle

1p 11 Which of the following fits the gap in paragraph 1?

- A numerous significant discoveries
- B our closer analysis of metadata
- C radical changes in the field
- D the ever-shrinking size of our focus
- E the number of successful dissertations

“we are using public policy and economic incentives to create a healthier food environment” (laatste zin alinea 2)

1p 12 In welke alinea('s) geeft Thomas Farley voorbeelden van dergelijke maatregelen die de overheid heeft genomen?

Noteer het nummer/de nummers van elke alinea waarin sprake is van een uitgevoerde overheidsmaatregel.

1p 13 What is the function of paragraph 3?

- A to demonstrate the relationship between food and nutrition
- B to explain why junk food has become inexpensive
- C to illustrate the link between food choice and social class
- D to show that nowadays junk food is too readily available

1p 14 Which of the following fits the gap in paragraph 5?

- A adapt their marketing strategy
- B contribute to prevention of obesity
- C lower their prices
- D reduce their portion sizes

1p 15 Geef van elk van de volgende beweringen aan of deze wel of niet overeenkomt met de inhoud van alinea 6 en 7.

- 1 The New York project proved that a sugar tax causes a decrease in the sale of sugar-sweetened drinks.
- 2 People who are part of the SNAP programme can purchase sugary sodas without having to pay the full price.

Noteer het nummer van elke bewering, gevolgd door “wel” of “niet”.

The following quote can be found on

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21391993>

Obesity and its associated co-morbidities represent one of the biggest public health challenges facing the western world today. Although environmental factors have driven the recent rise in the prevalence of obesity, the heritability of body weight is high and there is evidence that genetic variation plays a major role in determining the susceptibility to weight gain.

- 1p 16 How does this quote relate to the final paragraph of the text?
- A It discusses the relevance of the conclusion of the New York report.
 - B It presents a different perspective than the New York City health group.
 - C It questions the validity of the assumptions underlying the New York research.
 - D It refutes the outcome of the New York City survey.

“Eating is individual behavior, so why should we focus on the environment instead of educating people to make better choices? The simple answer is that people haven’t changed over the past three decades. We’re the same creatures we were in the 1970s, but the world we inhabit has changed radically.”

Bovenstaande alinea is verwijderd uit de tekst.

- 1p 17 Na welke alinea heeft dit stuk tekst oorspronkelijk gestaan? Noteer het nummer van die alinea.

Bronvermelding

Een opsomming van de in dit examen gebruikte bronnen, zoals teksten en afbeeldingen, is te vinden in het bij dit examen behorende correctievoorschrift, dat na afloop van het examen wordt gepubliceerd.