



PRESS



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HEALTHIER OPTIONS

Some vending machines offer alternatives to junk food

By David Quick

The healthy-eating message is getting through to some kids. Sixth-grader Sadie Dubay, who was standing at the only vending machine at the new state charter Palmetto Scholars Academy, knew exactly what she wanted and why. She slipped a dollar into a Yo Naturals vending machine, picked some Veggie Chips and explained her choice.

"I like Veggie Chips because other chips are greasy, are really bad for you and really don't taste that good," said Dubay, adding, "My dad has Type 2 diabetes and I don't want to get it."

If all kids were as forward thinking as Sadie, America might not be facing the national health care train wreck that many experts predict.

Piece of obesity puzzle

As another school year starts, many schools will start focusing on health with wellness councils -- faculty and parents who will find ways to improve and inspire health on campuses -- in an effort to help head off the crisis related to obesity.

Sadie Dubay, a sixth-grader at the new Palmetto Scholars Academy at the Navy Yard at Noisette, likes the vending machine at the school because it offers alternatives such as Veggie Chips, which she described as "being less greasy" and healthier than a conventional chip brand.

Vending machines and what they tend to offer, cheap junk food, are part of that picture.

Changes already have taken place, largely by soft drink vendors who vow not to stock sugary soft drinks in machines, according to Walter Campbell, director of nutrition and food services for the Charleston County School District.

Food services, he adds, has nothing to do with vending, which is an issue between individual schools and food vendors.

Weighing in on 'healthy vending'

When it comes to snacking, nothing really compares to whole, fresh veggies or fruits, but in the real world, we rush out the door in the morning and hurry through our day. Vending machines are part of most of our lives. And, unfortunately, most of what is offered in the machines is junk food.

David Carroll, owner of East Coast Organic and a Mount Pleasant resident, recently bought the rights to Yo Naturals vending in the Charleston area and is in the process of figuring out products that balance health, taste and cost.

As the vendor, Carroll, not Yo Naturals, selects the products that are stocked in the machines.

Healthier options in vending may be on the verge of breaking into schools in the Charleston area.

David Carroll, an industrial supply businessman, bought the rights to Yo Naturals earlier this year as part of his new business, Mount Pleasant-based East Coast Organic. He started it after getting a health wake-up call himself: a diagnosis of prostate cancer last year.

"It made me think more about what we breathe and eat and drink," says Carroll, who has since been treated for his cancer. "I started eating differently and feeling better."

Like many, Carroll thinks the change has to start with kids because adults have bad habits that are hard to break.

"If we can teach kids that you can eat more healthy without sacrificing taste, that's a step in the right direction," says Carroll.

After only two months of trying to get Yo Naturals machines set up, Carroll has them at the Family Circle Cup Tennis Center, Jewish Community Center, some East Shore Athletic Clubs and two schools, Palmetto Scholars Academy and Porter-Gaud's high school.

He faces numerous challenges in taking on the business, from resistance of school administrators because of district contracts with soft drink companies (the Pepsi contract with the Charleston County district expires July 15, 2012) to getting kids to accept healthier vending options and making it work financially.

"One of the reasons the guys in the vending business are resistant to change is that they can buy a bag of chips for 20 cents and sell it for 65 cents. You can't do that selling healthy products, and they like that profit margin," says Carroll.

Healthier, not healthy

Carroll acknowledges that not all of his products are healthy because, to some degree, vending products have to be processed and packaged. But he thinks that most of the products are healthier than standard fare in machines.

Dr. Ann Kulze, a Charleston-based wellness expert and author of the new book "Eat Right for Life," gave a sample of products in the Yo Naturals machine at Palmetto Scholars Academy a mixed review and was particularly critical of "puffed" starch products because of the high glycemic index. However, she applauded Carroll for offering, generally, healthier options.

Kulze says a key to offering healthy snacks means following a few parameters: 200 calories or less, trans-fat free, less than 35 percent of the calories from sugar (exclude fresh fruit and dairy) and less than 35 percent of calories from fat (excluding nuts and seeds). She adds that another benchmark for carbohydrate snacks is having at least 3 grams of fiber.

"I certainly see healthy vending offerings as a simple and effective way to change the nutritional environment of schools," says Kulze, noting that snacking is inevitable and traditional snack foods in machines are devoid of nutrition. "Healthy snacks can bring in good stuff and shove out the bad stuff. ... If it's not there, it's not an option."

Gaining allies

Despite being in the early stages of the vending business, Carroll is gaining allies in his efforts to get machines into schools. Wally Burbage saw the Yo Naturals machine at the Family Circle Tennis Center, where both he and Carroll play tennis. Burbage's daughter is a freshman at West Ashley High School, and he said he was shocked at the lack of healthy vending options at the school. "I plan to talk to the PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) about it," says Burbage.

For some principals, a vending machine with healthier options is the only option. Palmetto Scholars Academy Principal Steve Driscoll says he doesn't plan to put another vending machine at the school because nutrition is a key component of the school's physical education program. "The vending machine is a downfall of many a good diet," says Driscoll. "There are things you won't find at home that you'll find in a vending machine."



EASTCOASTORGANICVENDING.COM

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The Healthy Vending Company



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East Coast Organic

snack naturally




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PRODUCT

EAST COAST ORGANIC, LLC provides an amazing selection of over 200 natural and organic healthy snack and drink choices that are available for vending machine programs. Our snacks are designed to encourage everyone to make healthy choices. We offer delicious alternatives to potato chips, candy and soda which are typically found in other vending machine programs. Instead, adults and children can enjoy these snacks ... and more!

-  **CHIPS** ~ Veggie Chips
- ~ Organic Granola and Cereal Bars
- ~ Baked Snacks
- ~ Yogurt
- ~ Fruits
- ~ Nuts
-  **BARs** ~ Pirates Booty
- ~ Pop Chips
- ~ Clif Bars
- ~ Apple Crisps
- ~ Organic Juice
- ~ V8 Fusion
- ~ Silk Soy Milk
- ~ Juices
-  **FRUIT** ~ Vitamin-enhanced Beverages and Water

We provide the highest quality healthy snacks and choose the products that sell the best for your particular location and customers. That takes the guess work out of trying to get kids and adults to try our products. All our healthy snacks are fresh and are displayed in a colorful vending machine that fits into any décor or location without being distracting.

East Coast Organic, LLC knows that snacking is an important part of our busy lifestyles. Over 30% of the daily nutritional value comes from eating snacks between meals. Healthy vending machine programs are designed with the special nutritional needs of today in mind. Our fun eye-catching vending machines and programs are proven to get people interested in eating healthy food and trying new things.

If you are interested in adding a healthy vending machine at your location, please contact us today for more information.

MACHINE

Natural & Organic Snacks

Healthy and Organic Drinks

EAST COAST ORGANIC, LLC vending machines have 24/7 remote monitoring access - you can watch your machines. Machines accept cash or credit/debit card payment. The machines are chilled by the 1/2 plus hp compressor and has a heated triple-pane glass front to reduce condensation. The door system also provides more insulation in critical areas. This machine provides the operate flexibility and the option to have a machine that can furnish a greater selection of products. The "Electronic Eye" system guarantees product delivery or gives a refund.

Technical Specs: Height 72"; Width 39"; Depth 36"; Power 7 amps; Weight 700 lbs.



24/7 Remote Monitoring
Accept Credit/Debit Card Payment

Bill Validator/Coin Machine

Graphics Kit

Delivery Bin

AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Are you involved in your children's school and want to do something about the lack of healthy snacks for kids? Does your corporate office need a wellness program and healthy alternatives to fast food? East Coast Organic, LLC has an easy solution, but we need your help with getting in touch with the right people who make these decisions.

Please contact us with the following information so we can introduce our healthy vending machine programs:

The Name of the School Principle, Head of the Parent Teacher's Association, Food Service Manager or Human Resources Contact; including a phone number or email where we can get in touch with them to share the benefits of our unique healthy vending machine programs.

Schools, businesses and other organizations can take part in our special school healthy vending machine programs which provide natural and organic products for the benefit of students and patrons. Schools and other organizations can earn money through our special profit sharing program too!

MISSION

EAST COAST ORGANIC, LLC provides free healthy vending machine programs designed to introduce all natural and organic snacks into places where children and adults have had little to no choice in the kinds of foods and beverages available in between meals – to fight the battle against obesity and poor nutrition.

CALL DAVID CARROLL AT
843.564.3308

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