

Developing Culturally Relevant Asian Meals for Sound Generations' Meals on Wheels

Dorothy Nguyen, MPH Nutrition Student and Dietetic Intern

INTRODUCTION

Sound Generations' Meals on Wheels (MOW) currently serves over 6,000 older adults living in King County. The current MOW menu offers an array of vegetarian, vegan, low-sodium, kosher, and halal-certified meals. Clients have reported that they are generally satisfied with the meal options, but several clients have recently voiced the need for more culturally relevant meals. **Specifically, clients have commented on the lack of appropriate Asian meal options.** Given that roughly 11% of Sound Generations' clients identify as Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander **there is a need for more culturally relevant meal options on the MOW menu.**

BACKGROUND

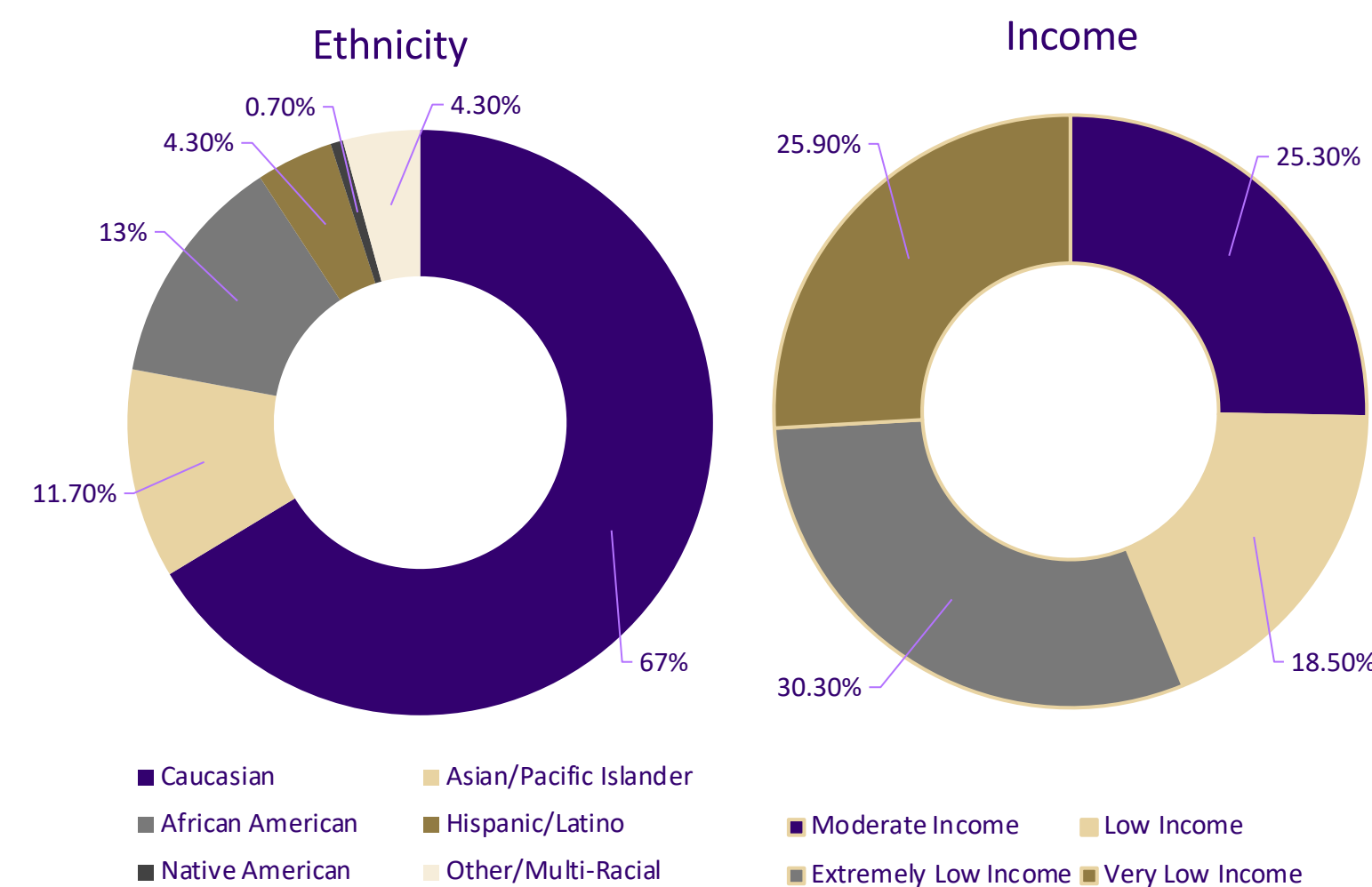
> Multiple studies have found that different cultural groups attribute unique values to various foods. These values often drive consumption patterns and eating habits.¹

> A recent study demonstrated that the identification of older adult's dietary preferences allowed for the creation of nutritious meals that aligned with participants' food behaviors.²

> Providing culturally appropriate foods can potentially help to support healthy aging in a population of diverse older adults.

1. Burns C. Seeing food through older eyes: The cultural implications of dealing with nutritional issues in aged and ageing. *Nutr Diet.* 2009;66(4):200-201. doi:https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-0080.2009.01370.x
2. Predieri S, Sotis G, Rodinò P, et al. Older adults' involvement in developing satisfactory pasta sauces with healthy ingredients. *Br Food J.* 2018;120(4):804-814. doi:10.1108/BFJ-06-2017-0358

Sound Generations Client Demographics



PROJECT GOALS

- Identify meals that older Asian adults currently living in King County want to see on the MOW menu
- Develop a survey and conduct phone interviews with clients who identify as Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander
- Use the results of the survey to create ≥7 new culturally appropriate meals that use traditional Asian ingredients and flavors
- Ensure that each meal meets 1/3 daily recommended intake (DRI) for older adults
- Produce nutrient fact sheets for each meal
- Collaborate with a local catering company to source affordable and high-quality ingredients



Packaged meal trays getting prepared for delivery (2019).

METHODS

- Validated client satisfaction surveys were identified via a brief needs assessment and literature review
- Survey included questions on client food preferences and ordering habits
- Asian, Asian American, and/or Pacific Islander clients were identified, contacted, and attempted to survey
- Survey results were analyzed, and desired meals were identified
- ESHA Food Processor was used to create nutritionals and verify each meal met 1/3 DRIs
- Ingredients were sourced through a current vendor list
- Ingredients that were not already sourced through contracted vendors were identified and sourced

SURVEY PARTICIPATION

69 Active Asian/Asian American Clients (59 Households)

9 clients declined to participate (7 households)

22 clients could not be reached (19 households)

38 clients surveyed (33 households)

RESULTS

The following meals were developed for Sound Generations MOW:

- Sesame crusted pollock with broccoli, cauliflower and carrots in a ginger, garlic, sesame, and soy sauce, and mandarin oranges.
- Tofu stir fry with broccoli, carrots, onion, red peppers, celery, mushroom, and water chestnuts in a sweet and sour sauce, and garlic sautéed spinach
- Meatballs in a coconut, ginger, garlic, and lemongrass sauce with broccoli, sugar snap peas, red peppers, bean sprouts, and water chestnut, and garlic sautéed spinach
- Sweet and sour fish with bell peppers, carrots, pineapple and spinach, and stir-fried mung bean sprouts.
- Chicken teriyaki with broccoli, carrots, onion, red peppers, celery, mushroom, and water chestnuts, and a potato croquette
- Vegetable lo mein with broccoli, carrots, onion, red peppers, celery, mushroom, and water chestnuts, and mandarin oranges
- Veggie peanut noodles with broccoli, cauliflower, and carrots, and fruit cocktail
- Beef bibimbap with bean sprouts, scallions, carrots, and spinach, and fruit cocktail

Nutrition Facts	
servings per container	
Serving size	(386g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	360
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 17g	22%
Saturated Fat 6g	30%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 490mg	21%
Total Carbohydrate 36g	13%
Dietary Fiber 5g	18%
Total Sugars 5g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 18g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 217mg	15%
Iron 11mg	60%
Potassium 903mg	20%

Image 1.

Basic Components	
Gram Weight (g)	390.61
Calories (kcal)	377.18
Calories from Fat (kcal)	157.41
Calories from SatFat (kcal)	58.29
Protein (g)	18.29
Carbohydrates (g)	35.84
Total Dietary Fiber (g)	5.32
Total Soluble Fiber (g)	0
Dietary Fiber (2016) (g)	5.32
Soluble Fiber (2016) (g)	0
Total Sugars (g)	5.35
Added Sugar (g)	0
Monosaccharides (g)	0.32
Disaccharides (g)	0.18
Other Carbs (g)	3.65
Fat (g)	17.53
Saturated Fat (g)	6.48
Mono Fat (g)	1.69
Poly Fat (g)	0.45
Trans Fatty Acid (g)	0
Cholesterol (mg)	30.00

Image 2.

Sample nutritionals from the "Meatballs with Coconut Milk, Garlic, Ginger, and Lemongrass Sauce" meal. Image 1 depicts the nutrition label that will accompany the meal. Image 2 depicts a more detailed breakdown of some nutrients.

LESSONS LEARNED

Completing this project remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic presented unique challenges and opportunities:

- It is important to take extra initiative to ask questions that may seem obvious in an in-person setting
- Taking extra initiative can help to build relationships with preceptors and supervisors while working remotely
- Conducting client surveys remotely allowed for the opportunity to connect with more community members than would have been possible in-person
- Resources such as the Language Line can be used to effectively communicate with community members
- A registered dietitian's scope of practice in a public health nutrition setting is very broad and there are opportunities to be involved at multiple levels of the socioeconomic model

Acknowledgements

This project was funded by MOW. Many thanks to my preceptor, Stefanie Sismaet, MS, RD, CD for her support, flexibility, guidance and mentorship throughout this project. Additional thanks to the MOW team members, Adam Porter, Melissa Pallanes, Paul Lacine, Maia McCoy, and Brigitte d'Autremont for their support. Thank you also to all the MOW clients and client representatives who contributed to this project and provided feedback to help make this project relevant and useful.