Author's response to reviews

Title: Food Access and Perceptions of the Community and Household Food Environment as Correlates of Fruit and Vegetable Intake among Rural Seniors

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Response to Reviewers

We thank the reviewers for taking their time to review our manuscript and providing insightful comments and suggestions for improving our article. We will address the comments by reviewer.

Reviewer: Peter Hannan

Minor essentials:

1. Why present separately data for fruit and vegetables separately. The paper makes no case for the examination of fruit separate from vegetable. Data are very similar for both distance measures and for model coefficients. The paper will be much more readable, especially the paragraph Statistical Analyses, and the results, as well as the tables. The latter half of that Statistical Analyses paragraph is very hard to follow and should be reworked, especially under simplification of presentation.

   RESPONSE: We have changed our wording to “fruit and/or vegetable intake.” In “Measures” section, we now mention that “Fruit and vegetable intakes were separately measured…” The examination of fruit and vegetables separately is justified based on separate dietary recommendations for fruit and vegetables. The results justify reporting separate and combined intake of fruit and vegetables. Statistical Analyses section modified for clarity.

2. Somewhat related, the title of Table 6 and 7 are identical, which is impossible.

   RESPONSE: Table 6 and 7 have been re-titled to identify fruit in one table and vegetables in the other.
Discretionary items:

1. The use of “association ..to” in at least two places where I would expect “..with..”

   RESPONSE: Changes made as suggested.

2. Abstract Results: “Perceived and objective measures of food store access.” This sentence does not make sense.

   RESPONSE: Incomplete sentence removed. The following was rewritten: “Our analyses revealed that objective and perceived measures of food store access – increased distance to the nearest supermarket, food store with a good variety of fresh and processed fruit, or food store with a good variety of fresh and processed vegetables – were associated with decreased daily consumption of fruit, vegetables, and combined fruit and vegetables, after controlling for the influence of individual characteristics and perceptions of community and home food resources. “