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Mobile and Home-based Vendors' Contributions to the Retail Food Environment in Rural South Texas Mexican-origin Settlements

Zulema Valdez^{a,1}, Wesley R Dean^b, and Joseph R Sharkey^b

^aDepartment of Sociology, Texas A&M University, TAMU 4351, College Station, TX 77843-4351, USA

^bProgram for Research in Nutrition and Health Disparities, School of Rural Public Health, Texas A&M Health Science Center, MS 1266, College Station, TX 77843-1266, USA

Abstract

A growing concern with high rates of obesity and overweight among immigrant minority populations in the U.S. has focused attention on the availability and accessibility to healthy foods in such communities. Small-scale vending in rural, impoverished and underserved areas, however, is generally overlooked; yet, this type of informal activity and source for food is particularly important in such environs, or “food desserts,” where traditional forms of work and mainstream food outlets are limited or even absent. This exploratory study investigates two types of small-scale food vending that take place in rural *colonias*, or Mexican-origin settlements along the South Texas border with Mexico: mobile and home-based. Using a convenience sample of 23 vendors who live and work in Texas *colonias*, this study identifies the characteristics associated with mobile and home-based food vendors and their businesses and its contributions to the rural food environment. Findings reveal that mobile and home-based vending provides a variety of food and beverage options to *colonia* residents, and suggests that home-based vendors contribute a greater assortment of food options, including some healthier food items, than mobile food vendors, which offer and sell a limited range of products. Findings may contribute to the development of innovative policy solutions and interventions aimed at increasing healthy food options or reducing health disparities in immigrant communities.

Keywords

Rural Food Environment; Self-employment; Colonias; Mexican Americans; Mexican Immigrants; Poverty; Mobile Food Vendors; Obesity; Potential and Realized Food Access; Food Desert

Introduction

The 1,248 mile South Texas-Mexico border region is one of the fastest growing areas of the United States. Of the 400,000 people who live in counties along the border, the percent of Latinos exceeds 86 percent, the majority of whom are US-born (64%) and of Mexican-

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¹Correspondence: Zulema Valdez, zvaldez@libarts.tamu.edu.

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origin (Sharkey, 2011, Census Bureau, State, 2012). A demand for low cost housing in this area has resulted in the development of more than 2,294 *colonias* along the South Texas-Mexico border. *Colonias* consist of unincorporated, rural Mexican-origin settlements that often lack basic infrastructure, such as paved roads, street lights, and running water (Sharkey, 2011, State, 2012). The *colonias* of south Texas are located in a region with a higher than national-level prevalence of obesity and related chronic diseases such as diabetes (Institute for Health Promotion Research, 2010). Hidalgo County, where the *colonias* in this study were located, is the location of more than 70% of Texas *colonias*. Hidalgo is a persistent poverty county and among the ten poorest U.S. counties (Fronczek, 2005). The 2010 Census described the population of Hidalgo County as 89.8% Hispanic or Latino, with 34.8% of families below poverty level (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). These *colonias* are located in areas with high rates of food insecurity (Sharkey et al., 2011), poor access to grocery stores and supermarkets (Sharkey et al., 2009), and poor health-related quality of life (Mier et al., 2008). The retail food environment is implicated in this relationship, as researchers observe the availability of and access to healthy food at a reasonable price, “a prerequisite for adopting a healthful diet,” is constrained in such communities (Azuma, 2010) (p.1), especially in the functionally rural *colonias* of South Texas (Sharkey et al., 2011, Sharkey et al., 2009). The greater cost (Morris et al., 1992, Smith and Morton, 2009, Dunn et al., 2011), more limited variety (Kaufman, 1999), and lower perceived quality (Dean and Sharkey, 2011) of food in rural than urban settings, and a paucity of public transportation (Smith and Morton, 2009, Sharkey et al., 2010), are factors that contribute to poor food access for rural populations.

Research on the retail food environment has traditionally examined such venues as supercenters, supermarkets, grocery stores and fast-food and full service restaurants (Creel et al., 2008, Sharkey and Horel, 2008, Sharkey et al., 2009), and non-traditional sites such as dollar stores (Creel et al., 2008, Block and Kouba, 2006), convenience stores (Block and Kouba, 2006, Creel et al., 2008, Sharkey et al., 2010, Bustillos et al., 2009), farmers markets (Herman et al., 2006, Conrey et al., 2003) and *pulgas* or flea markets (Dean et al., 2011b, Dean et al., 2011a). In rural areas, economic restructuring and the consolidation of the retail industry has led to a decline of supermarkets and large grocery stores (Lyson and Falk 1993; Blanchard and Matthews, 2007), or a “distancing out” of rural populations from traditional food outlets (Blanchard and Matthews, 2007, Wright Morton and Blanchard, 2007). In the absence of larger retail food outlets, residents’ reliance on non-traditional outlets, which tend to stock a limited supply and variety of healthy food at higher prices, increases (Giusti, 2011, Crowley et al., 2006, Sharkey et al., 2009). These areas of limited food access, or what some researchers label “food deserts,” typify most of the non-metropolitan counties in Texas (Blanchard and Matthews, 2007, Blanchard and Lyson, 2002, Dean et al., Forthcoming). In Mexican-origin communities in particular, the excess supply of low-skilled labor and the demand for alternative sources of food are two aspects of the social context that are associated with a rise in two forms of microenterprise: mobile- and home-based food vending (Rochín, 1998). Mobile and home-based food vending activities differ with respect to the location of food preparation and distribution. Mobile food vendors generally prepare and/or sell food items and beverages in the street or other public places using a push-cart, bicycle or van (see Image 1), whereas home-based food vendors prepare and sell food items out of the house (see Image 2).

Research on microenterprise, specifically mobile- or home-based food vending, has focused on urban areas of immigrant and minority settlement and concentration (Tester, 2010, Rajman, 2001, Morales, 2009, Odoms-Young, 2009, Menjivar, 2002, Zlotniski, 2006, Light, 2004, Portes, 1987, Portes, 1994b). This research is multifaceted and includes investigations of the structural forces that condition its emergence (Rajman, 2001, Zlotniski, 2006, Light, 2004, Portes, 1987, Portes, 1994a), its impact on obesity and other

health related concerns (Cummins, 2006, Tester, 2010, Raijman, 2001, Morales, 2009, Odoms-Young, 2009), its contributions to the retail food environment (Cummins, 2006, Tester, 2010, Raijman, 2001, Morales, 2009, Odoms-Young, 2009), and on-going debates regarding the extent to which such activity is or should be regulated (Morales, 2009, Diller, 2011). These studies acknowledge the potential contributions of non-traditional food outlets to the retail food environment and appreciate the likely impacts of such outlets on immigrant and minority health disparities. Fewer studies have actually examined such outlets or revealed what types of food items are available for purchase (potential access) (Dean et al., 2011b, Grigsby-Toussaint et al., 2010), or are purchased by consumers (realized access) (Sharkey et al., 2011). This limited research suggests that alternative food outlets condition community members' potential and realized access to food, thereby contributing significantly to the retail food environment. For example, Tester and colleagues (2010) revealed that mobile food vending near schools contributed significantly to the after-school snacking habits of Mexican-origin children. While most mobile food vendors offered for purchase items that were calorie dense and nutrient-poor, 30 percent of the items sold were nutritious fruits and vegetables (Tester et al., 2010).

Although limited in number and scope, studies of mobile food vending in rural areas of immigrant and minority settlement suggest the activity is ever-present where families and children reside and similar to that in urban settings, with respect to providing access to healthy and less healthy food items in underserved areas (Dean, 2011, Sharkey, 2012b, Rochín, 1998, Dean et al., 2011a). For example, a recent community assessment of Texas *colonias* in the study communities found 52 percent of 610 households reported the use of alternative food outlets, with the majority (60 percent) purchasing food from mobile food vendors (Sharkey, 2012b). The most popular item purchased was ice cream, in line with the urban food environment study conducted by Tester and colleagues (2010). A significant portion of the rural consumer population also purchased *elotes* (corn on the cob or kernels in a cup) from mobile food vendors, the same as urban dwellers (Tester, 2010). The development of microenterprise in rural areas of high Mexican-origin concentration is not surprising, as group members, on average, possess low human capital (education and work experience) and poor proficiency in the English language; maintain traditional gender roles, which negatively affect women's labor market participation and integration disproportionately; and among foreign-born immigrants, are often undocumented (Valdez, 2006). These factors alone or in combination inhibit Mexican-origin men and especially women from formal employment and instead prompt them to work informally (Raijman, 2001, Ramirez and Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2009, Valenzuela Jr, 2003). Among *colonia* residents in California, for example, Rochín and colleagues (1998) found that food vending provided an alternative to formal work for *colonia* residents who faced high unemployment (Rochín, 1998). Taken as a whole, the early evidence to date suggests that alternative food outlets, and small scale vending in particular, thrive in concentrated areas of Mexican-origin settlement and contribute markedly to the food environment. Whereas some researchers suggest that food vending benefits both workers and consumers by facilitating workers' economic mobility and providing consumers with access to healthy food items (Morales and Kettles, 2009), others argue that food vending may result in vendors' economic stagnation or decline, or provide easy access to less healthy foods, such as energy-dense snacks (Azuma et al., 2010).

This study builds on prior observations of the existence of alternative sources of foods and beverages in *colonias* and explores mobile food and home-based vending in rural *colonias* along the South Texas-Mexico border to uncover its contributions to the rural food environment (Sharkey, 2012c). The study profiles small-scale vendors, who are also *colonia* residents, and considers how social aspects of *colonias*, such as the absence of formal work and the lack of mainstream food establishments, facilitate the emergence and salience of

vending in rural areas of Mexican-origin concentration. The study is unique in that it includes a preliminary examination of home-based vending, an overlooked economic activity that is practiced almost exclusively by women. Women are often ignored in studies of informal work or vending, in part because they tend to work in the “lower tier” of the informal economy, often in the home (Kucera and Xenogiani, 2009); in other words, they are a vulnerable and hard-to-reach subgroup within an already vulnerable and hard-to-reach population. Anecdotal evidence observed by the authors during the data collection phase of this study and in ongoing research suggests, however, that home-based women vendors are ubiquitous in the *colonias* and are likely to contribute significantly to the rural food environment. By considering how social barriers and structural forces facilitate and condition vending, this preliminary study takes seriously the relationship between social context and food access in disadvantaged communities. Findings may encourage policy makers to develop new interventions that improve access to healthy foods and reduce immigrant and minority health disparities in obesity and overweight.

Methods

A study of 50 Mexican-origin mother-child dyads to assess the relationship between the home and neighborhood environment and children’s dietary intake was conducted in 40 spatially-selected *colonias* (at least one *colonia* in each of 20 census block groups) in two large areas of *colonias* along the Texas-Mexico border (Sharkey, 2012a). The sample for the present study included a convenience sample of mobile and home-based food vendors who were recruited by *promotora*-researchers and market foods and beverages in the 40 study *colonias*. Vendors were identified through *colonia* observations by *promotora*-researchers and referrals from residents and other vendors. Vendors were sampled to reflect the different types of food vendors and primary food marketed (e.g., prepared hot foods, packaged salty and sweet snacks, *elote* (corn), *paletas* (ice pops), and ice cream. Letters of invitation (in Spanish) to participate in the study were personally delivered by team *promotora*-researchers; the study was explained to each vendor; and the interviewer-administered survey was scheduled. All protocols were approved by the Texas A&M University Institutional Review Board.

The survey instrument was modified from prior work and included demographics (gender, date of birth, education, residence, and employment status), characteristics of the business and work (length of time in business, initial investment, marketing area, percentage of household income from vending, hours of vending, food products sold by season, advertising, source of food products, scheduling strategy, and target customer), working conditions (influence of adverse weather, holidays, and need for repairs), and perceived relationships with customers in the *colonias* (importance to customers, knowledge of customers, participate in solving community problems, connected with customers, and trust). All survey questions were translated into Spanish using a translation-back translation approach. Community partners and *promotora*-researchers verified the translation accuracy and appropriateness to ensure semantic, conceptual, and normative equivalence. Descriptive statistics examined data by type of vendor: mobile and home-based.

Results

Demographic Profile of Vendors

Table 1 displays the demographic characteristics of the mobile food and home-based, small-store vendors, separately. Although the sample size is small (mobile food vendors, n=13; home-based vendors, n=10; total, n=23), notable differences observed between the two subgroups suggest distinct trends. The vast majority of mobile food vendors were men (12 out of 13, or 92%), whereas eight out of ten home-based, small store owners were women

(80%). Mobile food vendors, with a mean age of 36, tended to be younger than small store owners, whose mean age was 46. Additionally, small store owners were consistently less educated than mobile food vendors overall. Finally, all vendors reported living in the *colonias*, although home-based store owners resided in the *colonias* longer.

Characteristics of Business and Work

Mobile food vendors reported fewer years of vending than small-store owners. Regarding their class of worker status, mobile food vendors overwhelmingly identified as full-time employees (wage-workers), unlike home-based store owners, who were more likely to identify as part-time, self-employed workers. Another difference between mobile food vendors and home-based owners concerned seasonal work. Whereas home-based vendors worked year-round, the majority of mobile food vendors worked during the spring and summer months only, reportedly returning to their country of origin (Mexico) during fall and winter.

Working Conditions

Consistent with full-time employment, mobile food vendors logged more weekday hours than their home-based counterparts. Most vendors worked on Saturdays only; however, 40 percent of home-based vendors worked on Sundays as well. The most prevalent form of transportation among mobile food vendors (n=13) was the push-cart, followed by the van and finally, the bicycle. Van drivers were the only mobile food vendors who reported being self-employed, and 3 out of the 4 van drivers identified as such. Van drivers spent approximately 100 dollars a week on gas, on average. In contrast, home-based vendors spent less than 40 dollars a week on gas, to purchase rather than to sell products. Regarding travel time to work, push-cart and bicycle vendors, all of whom identified as employees, traveled approximately 5 miles to work; by the end of the work day they reported traveling 10 miles, on average. Van drivers and home-based vendors reported negligible travel time to/from work.

Characteristics of the Vending Business

Mobile food vendors reported contributing a higher percentage of household income than home-based vendors. Although the mean startup cost (in dollars) was similar across the two types of vending activities, a lower startup cost was associated with home-based vending (40% of home-based vendors started their small businesses with 200 dollars or less). In contrast, self-employed mobile food vendors, all of whom owned a van, required approximately 2500 dollars in startup costs. Regarding family participation, half of all home-based vendors relied on adult family members to help with their businesses and 10 percent reported the assistance of children. In contrast, approximately 20 percent of mobile food vendors relied on adult family members only.

Contributions to the Food Environment

Table 3 displays the food items offered by small-scale vendors. Items included hot or prepared *taqueria* foods (tacos, tamales), *elotes* (prepared corn with toppings), and hot dogs; fruits and vegetables (whole or cut); a variety of snacks categorized into salty/fried (chips, *chicharrones*/fried pork skin), sweet (candy, pastry), or frozen (ice cream, *paletas*/ice pops); and beverages, which included sugar-sweetened (fruit water with added sugar, soda), juice (natural, no added sugar) and bottled water. Home-based vendors offered and sold a greater variety of items to consumers. For example, half of all home-based vendors offered and sold *taqueria* food items, whereas one third of mobile food vendors only offered *elotes* as the sole prepared food item. Around 30 percent of vendors offered healthier foods such as fruits and vegetables; however, most offered a variety of less-healthy options. All mobile food vendors

sold *paletas*, or ice pops (less than 30 percent sold any other product). Most home-based vendors offered sugar-sweetened beverages and salty/fried snacks for sale, but were less likely than mobile vendors to sell frozen and sweet snacks. Few home-based vendors and no mobile food vendors offered healthier beverage items (juice with no added sugar or bottled water).

Discussion

When compared with mobile food vendors, home-based, small store vendors started their businesses with less start-up capital (as little as 200 dollars) and operated their businesses with less government oversight. They were generally self-employed, older women with low educational attainment who worked part-time in the home. Unlike mobile food vending, home-based businesses were generally open year-round for fewer business hours. As a consequence of the part-time nature of the labor force and limited business hours, home-based vending contributed a smaller percentage of the overall household income of vendors than mobile vending. Given the characteristics associated with home-based vendors and their businesses, this form of small scale vending activity is in some ways characteristic of a lower-tier of informal activity, where women are generally over-represented (Kucera and Xenogiani, 2009). In keeping with previous research, home-based women vendors appear to engage in marginal self-employment to generate a supplementary income (Rajiman, 2001). At the same time, home-based vending is a somewhat more permanent occupation than mobile vending, as it takes place year round by vendors who reside and work in the *colonias*, and have done so for a longer tenure than their mobile food vendor counterparts, on average. Because the majority of home-based vendors are self-employed and work without a county permit, they capitalize on their greater autonomy to offer a greater assortment of foods than mobile vendors do, which contributes to greater diversity in the *colonia* retail food environment. In addition to selling the ubiquitous ice pops, salty snacks, and *elotes*, many home-based vendors also sell hot or prepared foods (including *taquería* food), sweet snacks, whole or cut-up fresh fruits and vegetables, sugar-sweetened beverages and healthier beverage choices, such as juice (with no added sugar) or bottled water.

Mobile food vending, in contrast, is dominated by full-time male wage-workers whose earnings make up a larger proportion of their overall household income than those of home-based vendors. The conditions and characteristics associated with mobile food vending suggest that it may be characterized as a “more formal” economic activity than home-based, marginal self-employment; however, it is still considered an informal sector, low-wage, low-skilled activity. Furthermore, the majority of mobile vendors lived in the *colonias* for a shorter period of time and return to their country of origin for half of the year (in fall and winter). The seasonal nature of the work suggests that this activity is easy to move in and out of, and is likely attractive to temporary workers, or “birds of passage” (Piore, 1980), who do not see living in the *colonias* or the United States as a permanent home. Since mobile food vending occurs on the street or in public places it is more regulated than home-based vending, as fully 100 percent of mobile food vendors report holding a county permit. Under these conditions, it is not surprising that these vendors offer and sell a limited range of products, determined by the owner and constrained by county permit. Typically, mobile food vendors offer and sell ice pops (the temperature is easily regulated by the freezer attached to the push-cart or bicycle), although a smaller percentage of street vendors also offer and sell pre-packaged, salty snacks or *elotes*. Interventions aimed at increasing healthy food options available from push-cart and bicycle mobile food vendors must take into account the class of worker status of vendors and the extent of government oversight on this activity.

Conclusion

Although primarily observed in the Southwest, *colonias* are not the sole site of increasing Latino rural settlement in the United States (Crowley et al., 2006). From 1980 to 2000, the rural Latino population has doubled, with half of all rural Hispanics now residing outside of the Southwest, in “new destination” areas of the South, Midwest and Northeast (Crowley et al., 2006, Durand et al., 2005, Guzman, 2001, Fry, 2008). Like their Southwestern counterparts, the Latino population in these new areas is likely to be of Mexican-origin, foreign-born, and often unauthorized. This population is also disproportionately “young, poorly educated and badly paid – circumstances that increase the risk of poverty,” especially in rural areas (Durand et al., 2005)(p.8). As a microcosm of the rural Mexican-origin population in the US, this exploratory study hints at the contributions of alternative food outlets to the food environment of Latino populations in both traditional and “new destination” areas of rural Latino settlement, and how they may condition immigrant and minority health disparities.

The food that vendors provide is convenient, cheap and culturally acceptable, if likely contingent, in that the food selection is based in part on the vendor’s social status and the degree of government oversight. Because home-based vendors are more likely to be self-employed, they maintain more autonomy over what they sell. This subgroup is more likely to sell a greater variety of food; a closer examination of these vendors may inform policy that encourages home-based vendors to sell healthier food items. Likewise, self-employed mobile food vendors, who typically own a van and require a modest financial investment, have more autonomy and greater resources to purchase and store healthy foods than their wage-worker, push-cart or bicycle vendor counterparts, whose food selection (ice pops almost exclusively) is determined by the owner. Yet, because mobile food vending tends to be more regulated than home-based vending overall, the degree to which self-employed mobile food vendors can alter product selection is likely constrained. Consequently health interventions aimed at increasing the access to and availability of healthy food options via small-scale vending must take into account the class of worker status of the vendor and the degree of government oversight.

The implementation of nutritional policy and interventions involves coordinating policy goals with the larger environment, a process fraught with difficulties arising from the complexity of these environments (Field 1985). This study points policy actors to distinct layers of this complexity, specifically the relationship between vendors, children and families, and other *colonia* stakeholders. Failing to consider these complexities during the implementation of any policy intervention will inevitably lead to unintended and possibly undesired consequences (Pressman et. al. 1984; Field 1985). For example, mobile food vendors who live in *colonias* and derive from 50 to 100% of their income from providing food to other residents will likely have their livelihood impacted by household interventions. This will in turn impact the *colonia* economy. There is a complex social interdependency between vendors and other residents. Vendors see themselves as providing a service to their food-insecure community; an integral element of the informal social support system of their *colonia*.

The ubiquity of microenterprises in South Texas *colonias* reveals a resiliency and adaptive creativity among *colonia* residents as they confront a disadvantaged social context that is characterized by limited food access and availability and few employment opportunities. Small-scale vendors fill a void by selling a variety of food to *colonia* residents; vending also provides work and income for *colonia* resident-vendors. Vending must be preserved and perhaps expanded in such communities, even as attempts are made to improve the food environment through interventions that target this activity.

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Highlights

We compare two types of microenterprise: mobile food and home-based vending.

We examine the characteristics of vendors, businesses, and the food environment.

Vendors provide a variety of culturally acceptable food items to colonia residents.

The variety of food items offered is related to the type of vending activity.

Vendors' relative autonomy and oversight differs by the type of vending activity.

Figure 1. Mobile Food Vendor with Customers

Figure 2. Home-based Small Store

Table 1

Individual Demographic and Business Characteristics of Mexican-Origin Mobile Food and Home-based Small Store Vendors in South Texas Colonias (n=23)

Percent or Mean (mean $\pm$ s.d.)	Mobile Food Vendors	Home-Based Store Owners
Age	(36 $\pm$ 12.3)	(46 $\pm$ 15.0)
16–25 years	15.4	10
26–35 years	38.5	10
36–45 years	23.1	30
46–55 years	15.4	30
56–65 years	7.7	0
66–75 years	0	20
Gender		
Male	92.3	20
Female	7.7	80
Nativity	n/a	
U.S.-born		40
Foreign-born		60
Years of Education	(7.7 $\pm$ 3.8)	(6.3 $\pm$ 4.0)
Less than high school	38.5	70
Some high school	38.5	10
High school graduate	23.1	20
<i>Colonia</i> resident	100	100
Years residing in <i>colonia</i>	(3 $\pm$ 2.2)	(6 $\pm$ 5.1)
1 year or less	30.8	20
2 – 4 years	38.5	30
5 – 7 years	30.8	10
8 years or more	0	40

Note: “n/a” indicates that the survey instrument for this population did not provide a question to elicit this information.

Table 2

Business Characteristics of Mobile Food and Home-based Small Store Vendors and their Businesses in South Texas Colonias (n=23)

Percent or Mean (mean $\pm$ s.d.)	Mobile Food Vendors (n=13)	Home-Based Store Owners (n=10)
<u>Vendor Characteristics</u>		
Years vending in <i>colonia</i>	(2.2 $\pm$ 2.0)	(3 $\pm$ 2.7)
1 year or less	46.2	40
2 – 5 years	46.2	40
Over 5 years	15.4	20
Class of Worker		
Self-employed (owner)	23.1	90
Employed (wage-worker)	76.9	10
Labor force participation		
Full-time	84.6	40
Part-time	15.4	60
Seasonal Worker (spring & summer only)	69.2	n/a
<u>Working Conditions</u>		
Weekday Hours Worked	8.4 $\pm$ 3.4	8.1 $\pm$ 2.9
0 to 7	30.8	44.4
8 or more	61.6	55.6
no response	7.7	10
Work Saturday	100	90
Work Sunday	0	40
Gas per week (in dollars)	(103 $\pm$ 17.6) [¥]	(36.7 $\pm$ 18.0)
Distance traveled to start work	(4.75 $\pm$ 8.3) [‡]	n/a
Distance traveled to end work	(10.2 $\pm$ 9.7) [‡]	n/a
<u>Business Characteristics</u>		
Startup cost (in dollars)	(2667 $\pm$ 288.7)	(2766 $\pm$ 3505.3)
0 to 200	0	60
2500 to 3000	100	0
5000 to 10000	0	40
Family participation	(.23 $\pm$.44)	(.6 $\pm$.52)
Adults	23.1	50
Children	0	10
County Permit	100	50
Type of Vehicle		n/a
auto/van	30.8	
bicycle	23.1	
push cart	46.2	
%Household income generated	(51.9 $\pm$ 18.7)	(38.5 $\pm$ 14.2)
Less than 50%	30.8	50
50% – 99%	61.5	50

Percent or Mean (mean $\pm$ s.d.)	Mobile Food Vendors (n=13)	Home-Based Store Owners (n=10)
100%	7.7	0
Weekly Earnings (in dollars)	n/a	(89 $\pm$ 88.6)

Note: "n/a" indicates that the survey instrument for this population did not provide a question to elicit this information.

[‡] Among van drivers only.

[†] Applicable to push-cart and bike employees only.

Table 3

Contributions of Mobile Food and Home-based Small Store Vending to the Food Environment in the South Texas Colonias (n=23)

	Mobile Food Vendors (n=13)	Home-Based Store Owners (n=10)
<u>Contribution to Food Environment</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Products sold		
Hot or prepared foods	30.8 [‡]	50
Fruits and vegetables (whole, cut)	30.8 [‡]	30
Snacks		
Salty/fried (i.e. chips)	30.8	70
Sweet (i.e. candy, pastry)	23.1	50
Frozen (i.e. popsicles)	100	50
Beverages		
Sugar-sweetened (i.e. soda)	7.7	70
Bottled water	0	30
Juice (no added sugar)	0	20

Note:

[‡] Includes corn only (prepared, corn on the cob).