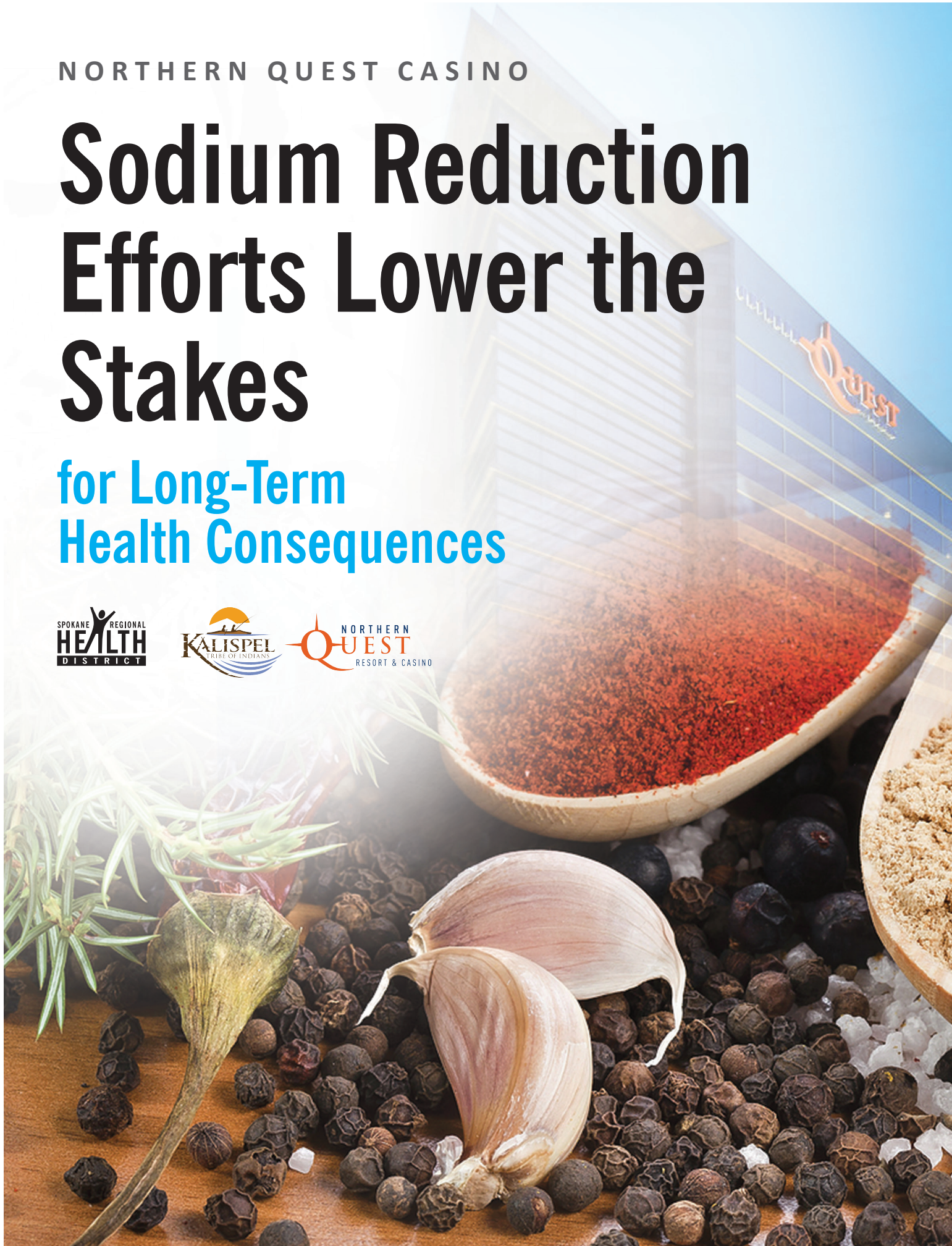


NORTHERN QUEST CASINO

Sodium Reduction Efforts Lower the Stakes

for Long-Term
Health Consequences



Northern Quest Casino Te

February 201

PRODUCT	mgNa SAVED
No salt added diced tomatoes	3,164,728
Lower sodium ketchup	4,929,408
Total Saved	8,094,136



Total Milligrams of So

Equivalent to 71 containers (2

*USDA recommended daily allow



The Challenge

As more people depend on cafeterias and restaurants for a large percentage of their daily food, it is important that these food outlets work toward sodium reduction. Food served at these locations often contains high amounts of sodium before they even reach the plate. This can lead to eating more than 1,000 milligrams of sodium above the recommended amount.

Lower sodium options are available but are often overlooked for fear of losing customers. Additionally, managers and cooks, in fast-paced food service environments, don't have the time to find lower sodium products and create recipes using these products.

In Spokane County, where one in three adults has high blood pressure, reducing sodium in these foods may be one of the ways to help lower customers' blood pressure and their possible risk for heart disease and stroke.

About Northern Quest

Northern Quest Casino has 14 on-site restaurants. One of the largest employers in Spokane, the casino employs approximately 1,300 people to provide 24-hour, 7-days-a-week access to the hotel, restaurants and casino. Northern Quest Casino has a special kitchen, called the Team Member Dining Room, with its own chef devoted to making employee meals. As a benefit of working for Northern Quest, employees receive a free meal for every full shift worked. This adds up to 9,100 meals per week and provides a great opportunity to invest in employee's health.



Team Member Dining Room

16 - July 2016



Sodium Saved: 8,094,136

(26 oz/ea) or 12,141 tsp of salt*

Average of salt for an adult is 1 tsp



What Worked and Why

With the support of Robert Rogers, Northern Quest Casino's Director of Food and Beverage; the casino's Executive Chef, Mike Thornton; and Team Member Dining Room Chef Peter DiSantis, SRHD shared worksite examples with Northern Quest of how others achieved sodium reduction.

Chef DiSantis and SRHD analyzed his Southwestern dishes and discovered that they were high in sodium due to commercial seasonings. SRHD provided a recipe for a sodium-free taco seasoning for Chef DiSantis and his sous chef to try. Additionally, Chef DiSantis and his cooks taste tested no-added-salt diced tomatoes in several recipes and decided that the tomatoes worked well in tacos, meatloaf and pasta dishes.

After discovering that lower sodium ketchup was available from distributors, and popular among other venues, Chef DiSantis purchased the product for the Team Member Dining Room. Staff did not notice a difference and the change was made permanent.

Additionally, Chef DiSantis, in his efforts to adopt Washington Department of Health's (DOH's) *Healthy Nutrition Guidelines*, started providing fruit-infused waters that employees really appreciated. Chef DiSantis used yet another stealth health approach to reduce sodium by removing salt shakers from tables and putting them in a different part of the dining room. Studies show that when extra effort is required to get to a salt shaker, people opt to eat the meal without adding salt. The Team Member Dining Room continues to stock fresh fruits and salads as part of their commitment to employee health. For employees who prefer lighter items, Chef DiSantis and his staff now regularly serve baked fish and chicken at least once a week.

Sustainability

Chef Peter DiSantis continues to purchase lower sodium products and sustain other healthy changes due to positive feedback from employees. He and his staff incorporated the new taco seasoning blend and other lower sodium recipes into the employee menu cycle. In four short months, Peter DiSantis and his team achieved a savings of 8,094,136 milligrams of sodium. In common measurements this is 71 rounds (26 ounces each) of salt, or 12,141 teaspoons of salt. They are committed to continuing this work as well as looking for other opportunities to expand their healthy offerings.

Spokane Regional Health District's Role

Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD) worked with DOH and two other local health jurisdictions to implement a three-year Sodium Reduction in Communities grant (2014-2016) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). SRHD used the following methods to help partners make changes.

- Encourage organizations to follow Washington Department of *Health's Healthy Nutrition Guidelines* (or similar guidelines).
- Assist partners in identifying key recipes and strategies to reduce sodium by at least 25 percent.
- Work with food vendors to increase the availability and accessibility of lower sodium products.
- Help with signage and placement of low sodium foods to increase visibility and customer awareness while maintaining or increasing sales of these items.
- Increase food service directors and cooks' knowledge of hidden sources of sodium and offer culinary training to increase flavor enhancement skills.



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