



# Using The Blend to Prove ROI

## Proving ROI is Key

It's no secret that when making decisions at retail, it always comes down to ROI. As a retail dietitian who's launching a new campaign around healthy eating, you may be responsible for proving the ROI of your program.

Retailers today are facing great pressure and a number of challenges to improve their bottom line such as shrink, over-saturation of stores, low margins on certain products, and increasing labor costs. Looking at the current state of retail industry, today it's more important than ever for you to be able to prove ROI on your initiatives/campaigns.

The question at hand becomes how can you as the retail dietitian push healthy choices while still improving volume and the bottom line? One solution to this challenge is pushing the healthy choices that aren't viewed as a sacrifice and that don't compromise on taste. These are the healthy choices that will drive volume.

## The Blend: A Healthy Choice That Drives Volume

For consumers looking for easy ways to eat healthier, The Blend is a healthier option that's not viewed as a sacrifice, rather a surprising, welcome solution. The Blend is the concept of blending meat and mushrooms together to allow consumers to enjoy healthier versions of the recipes they love like burgers, tacos, meatballs, meatloaf, pasta sauces, etc. One of the benefits of The Blend is that it's totally customizable – you can blend any type of mushrooms with any type of meat in any ratio. What started as a concept has now evolved into a product served at restaurants and colleges and universities all over the country, and most recently, at some retailers.

## Blend Pilot Programs

The Mushroom Council is looking to strategically partner with a few select retailers to test The Blend at the deli, meat department, or prepared foods section to help introduce The Blend to consumers. The goals here being to provide healthier options to shoppers, increase mushroom sales and consumption, and work with retailers to understand the effectiveness of the Council's support and impact on sales.

## How to Prove ROI for The Blend To Your Retailer

1. Introduction of a new value-added product offering.
2. Potential cost savings by replacing a portion of protein with mushrooms.
3. Reduce shrink in the produce department by using mushrooms that don't meet visual specifications (but are perfectly edible and safe to eat) to blend into meat-based products.
4. Support retailer's commitment to health and wellness and potentially elevate existing wellness platform.
5. Retain customer loyalty by demonstrating your commitment to shoppers, giving them delicious solutions to eat healthier.

## RD Testimonials

*"As a mushroom lover myself, it has been a pleasure introducing The Blend to Weis Markets customers through cooking demos, magazine/social media content and sampling events. Not only do they find the technique to be incredibly easy, but they feel good knowing that it's improving the nutritional value and flavor of their family's favorite recipes...educating customers on The Blend has also proven to be an effective way to produce positive sales results in the mushroom and meat categories."*

**Beth Stark, RDN, LDN**



*"I started using The Blend almost two years ago, so I jumped on the opportunity to share this trend with my customers... and the results were outstanding. Not only did sales increase on mushrooms and meat, we made many new friends by showing them a quick, tasty way to add nutrition to their family meals!"* - **Meredith McGrath, RD, LDN**

*"The Blend is the exact type of unique, creative, and applicable concept that is perfect for the retail nutrition space. It makes for a great demo, object lesson, or talking point for store tours. The creative use of mushrooms in this fashion fulfills so many objectives: increase fiber, decrease saturated fat, and boost veggie intake. Every retail RD should have The Blend. in their personal toolkit!"*- **Allison Kuhn, MS, RDN, LD**



## Supporting The Blend

As a retail dietitian, there are a few ways you can help support The Blend:

1

Be an advocate for The Blend

2

Educate your retailer, staff, and shoppers on the nutrition benefits of The Blend

3

Sell in the pilot-program to your retailer and manage its execution

4

Lead in-store Blend demos

5

Promote The Blend through various channels like traditional media, social media, ad circulars, community events, etc.

Interested in learning more about how the Mushroom Council can support a Blend pilot program at your retailer? Visit [www.mushroomsatretail.com](http://www.mushroomsatretail.com) for more information.

Visit [mushroomcouncil.com](http://mushroomcouncil.com) for the latest news, recipes and blog posts.

