



EFNEP



Serving Bertie, Chowan, Gates, Hertford, Martin, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans and Washington counties

2007 NC Cooperative Extension Northeast District Report

EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), serves limited-resource families with young children, school-age youth, and pregnant teens through a series of lessons offered by paraprofessionals and volunteers, many of whom are indigenous to the population. Using "hands-on" experiences, participants are taught to: make wise choices with their food dollars, improve eating habits, and practice food safety principles.

EFNEP is offered through North Carolina Cooperative Extension as a part of university outreach at NC State University and NC A&T State University. In 2007, North Carolina EFNEP served 43 counties.

EFNEP's mission is to assist families and youth with limited resources in making simple changes in eating behaviors and daily physical activity so that, over time, healthy choices become healthy habits.

Supporting North Carolina's Families with Greatest Needs Since 1969

EFNEP helps families and youth with limited resources—those most at risk to suffer from hunger, food insecurity and the inability to connect with available support systems. EFNEP offers practical nutrition information, food preparation, food resource management and food safety education in settings convenient for the participants. EFNEP graduates reflect significant, lasting improvement in eating behaviors and healthy food habits.

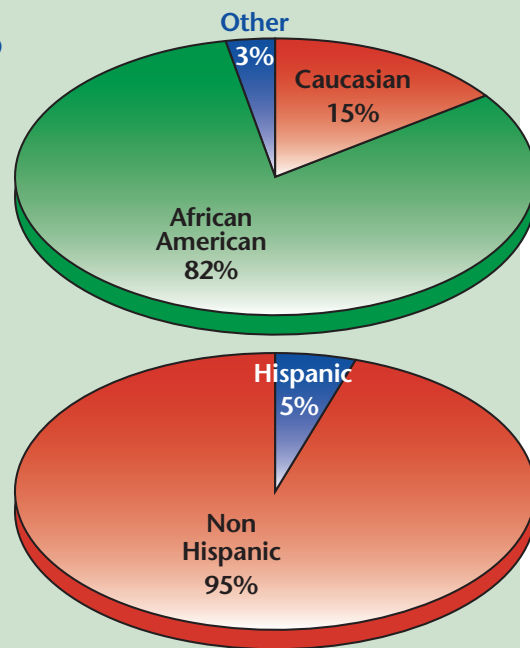
Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2007, 233 adults and youth donated 2,288 hours on behalf of EFNEP. At a rate of \$18.77 per hour this is equivalent to \$42,946. Volunteers make a difference in their own communities, and contribute to EFNEP's ongoing success.

North Carolina EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences

In 2007,

- 486 families enrolled in EFNEP
- 1,601 participated in 4-H EFNEP
- 48% of EFNEP participants were also WIC participants
- 92% of EFNEP participants enrolled in one or more food assistance programs.



In 2007, the Northeast District EFNEP programs obtained over \$19,000 in funding and support from local efforts.

EFNEP Makes a Real Difference for Limited Resource Adults

Participants completing the series of lessons improved nutrition, food behavior and food safety practices. As a result of participation in EFNEP:

- 78% improved in one or more food safety practices
- 74% used food labels more often to make food choices
- 94% improved in one or more food resource management practices
- 43% of participants increased the amount of physical activity
- 98% of participants improved their diet
 - 67% increased fruit consumption
 - 61% increased vegetable consumption
 - 63% increased consumption of calcium-rich foods

Recent research shows the positive effects of families eating together. In North Carolina, we track meals eaten together as an indicator of participant families' well being. In 2007 clients were asked "How often do you eat meals or snacks with one or more family members?" After EFNEP participation, 49% of families more often ate together. EFNEP makes a difference in families!

EFNEP Makes a Real Difference for Limited Resource Youth

Through a series of classes, 4-H EFNEP participants learn basic nutrition, the importance of daily physical activity, how to make healthy food choices, and food safety in preparation and storage. Evaluation data shows the following:

- 56% of the youth reported eating a variety of foods
- 70% increased their knowledge of human nutrition
- 70% increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods
- 56% improved practices in food preparation and safety

Today's children, as young as age six, weigh more and have more body fat than children 20 years ago. Sweetened beverages have taken the place of milk and make up a large portion of the calories consumed by many young people. The 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) in Pasquotank County cooperated with a local school to offer a series of lessons to over 75 second graders. After participating in the program, 98% of the students improved their knowledge of nutrition and are now drinking more water and fewer sweetened beverages.

In addition to teaching the principles of the Dietary Guidelines and MyPyramid, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) teaches participants label reading for healthier choices and portion control of the foods they eat. These skills help families make healthier food choices, serve a variety of foods at family meals, and save money. Portion control also helps participants achieve weight loss goals. Two participants in Martin County EFNEP made healthier food choices by reading food labels and controlling portion sizes. They also began incorporating more daily physical activity. As a result they were able to reach their goal for weight loss, losing 18 pounds each by graduation from the program.

Due to delayed prenatal care and inadequate diets, pregnant teens are at a greater risk for delivering low birth weight babies than are adults. Their diets often lack the recommended amounts for whole grains, dairy, fruits, and vegetables while the consumption of fast foods and soft drinks are high. They also lack the skills needed to prepare their own food. One program participant in Martin County is now trying the recipes she received in the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and prepares her own meals and snacks. She has replaced the high fat, high sugar, low nutrient foods she was eating with healthier choices she prepares herself. As a result, this pregnant teen is using what she has learned to improve her own health and the health of her baby.

