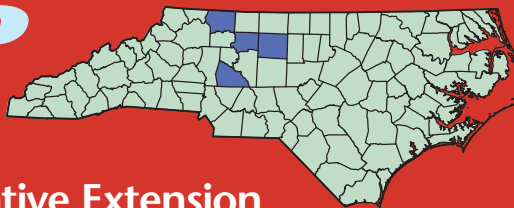




EFNEP



Serving
Forsyth,
Guildford,
Rowan and
Surry
counties

2007 NC Cooperative Extension Northwest 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.

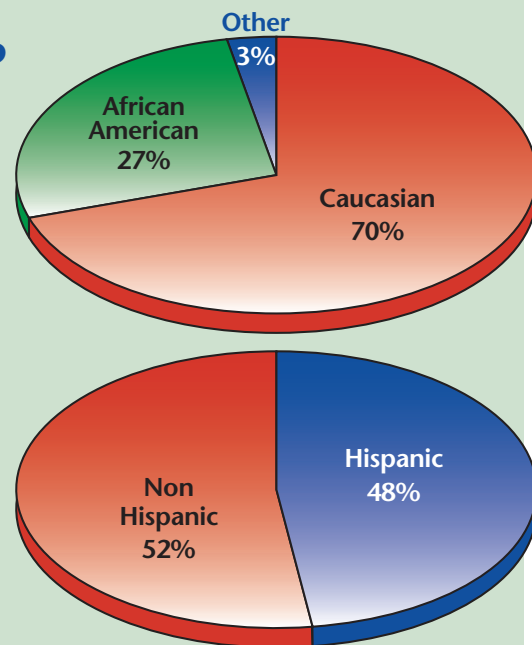
Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2007, 138 adults and youth donated 8,944 hours on behalf of EFNEP. At a rate of \$18.77 per hour this is equivalent to \$167,879. Volunteers make a difference in their own communities, and contribute to EFNEP’s ongoing success.

North Carolina EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences

In 2007,

- 813 families enrolled in EFNEP
- 68% of EFNEP participants were also WIC participants
- 91% of EFNEP participants enrolled in one or more food assistance programs.



In 2007, the Northwest District EFNEP programs obtained over \$132,000 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:

- 82% improved in one or more food safety practices
- 76% used food labels more often to make food choices
- 96% improved in one or more food resource management practices
- 43% of participants increased the amount of physical activity
- 99% of participants improved their diet
 - 67% increased fruit consumption
 - 62% increased vegetable consumption
 - 62% 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, 79% of families more often ate together. EFNEP makes a difference in families!

EFNEP Makes a Real Difference for Limited Resource Pregnant Teens

EFNEP encourages pregnant teens to make healthy food choices, seek professional prenatal care, and achieve their educational goals. Pregnant teenagers that take part in our hands-on program use the knowledge they gain to make positive choices in their diet, which results in reduced risk of low-birth-weight infants. Society at large benefits from reduced infant mortality, lowered health care cost and the increased economic stability of families. As a result of participation in EFNEP:

- 82% of pregnant teens improved food safety practices
- 75% used food labels to make food choices
- 98% improved their diet
 - 74% increased fruit consumption
 - 65% increased vegetable consumption
 - 51% increased consumption of calcium-rich foods

Limited-resource families need a high level of food resource management skills in order to provide healthy and cost effective meals for their households. Lacking these skills can lead to food insecurity for the family, as well as poor health. The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) in Forsyth County teaches families to utilize good food resource management practices as a way to improve their family's nutrition. After teaching the different lessons on shopping, the nutrition program assistant did a review to determine each participant's level of understanding. Upon doing this review, the nutrition program assistant realized the participants had made some positive changes in the food resource management practices. They were preparing grocery lists, making a food budget and using techniques shared during the class for saving money while shopping. The participants shared their families were eating a healthier diet as well. The group was so enthusiastic about their accomplishments, they started a contest to see who could save the most money on their grocery bill by the end of the program and continually encouraged each other to use what they had learned.

Lack of accessibility to healthy choices for meals and snacks away from home and the lack of planning contribute to many families not consuming enough fruits and vegetables during the day. It is important to plan snacks and lunch in advance, and then take them along. One participant in a local agency that partnered with EFNEP, admitted to eating a lot of unhealthy foods during the day while on the run. She never took snacks with her and when she got hungry, would stop and buy a honey bun. After teaching this participant about making smart choices for eating away from home, she realized how easy it would be to take a nutritious snack/lunch with her. She now brings a small cooler packed with healthy snacks including apples, baby carrots, rice cakes, and water. She says this is saving her money and calories. She also feels happy to know that she and her children are eating more fruits and vegetables too.

