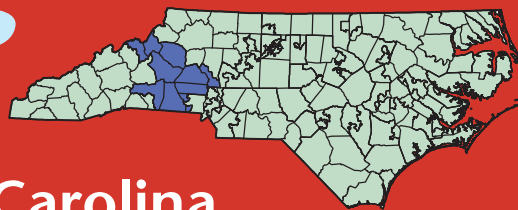




EFNEP



Serving
Avery,
Cleveland
and Gaston
counties

2008 North Carolina Congressional District 10 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 2008, North Carolina EFNEP served 45 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.

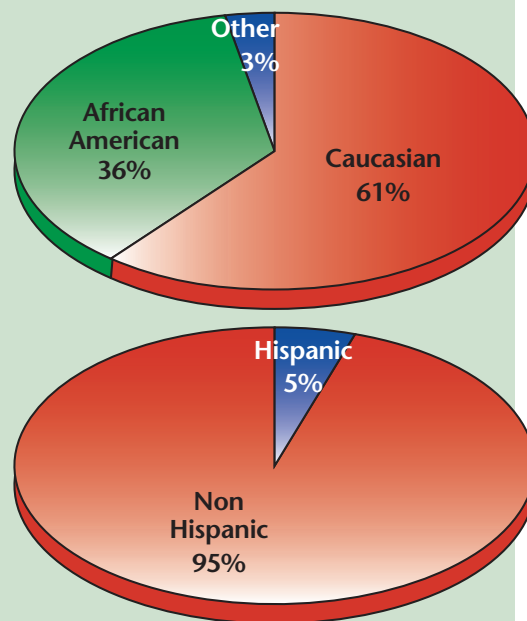
Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2008, 113 adults and youth donated 1872 hours on behalf of EFNEP. At a rate of \$19.51 per hour this is equivalent to \$36,523. Volunteers make a difference in their own communities, and contribute to EFNEP’s ongoing success.

North Carolina EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences

In 2008,

- 150 families enrolled in EFNEP
- 675 participated in 4-H EFNEP
- 30% of EFNEP participants were also WIC participants
- 93% of EFNEP participants enrolled in one or more food assistance programs.



The 10th Congressional District EFNEP program obtained over \$27,149 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:

- 81% improved in one or more food safety practices
- 96% improved in one or more nutrition practices
- 72% used food labels more often to make food choices
- 93% improved in one or more food resource management practices
- 38% of participants increased the amount of physical activity
- 97% of participants improved their diet
 - 65% increased fruit consumption
 - 60% increased vegetable consumption
 - 59% 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 2008 clients were asked "How often do you eat meals or snacks with one or more family members?" After EFNEP participation, 42% 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:

- 95% of the youth reported eating a variety of foods
- 99% increased their knowledge of human nutrition
- 99% increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods
- 91% improved practices in food preparation and safety

Unhealthy lifestyles have produced a significant impact on our local community. Four of the top five leading causes of death in Cleveland County (heart disease, cancer, cerebrovascular disease, and diabetes mellitus) are all influenced by lifestyle choices. These four diseases resulted in 60% of deaths in Cleveland County during 2001 – 2005.

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) provides nutrition education to limited resource families. In partnership with the Abuse Prevention Agency, EFNEP delivered a series of classes to residents. One resident wanted to know how she could better control her blood glucose. A food recall taken during the first meeting revealed that this resident was consuming large amounts of food and that she was particularly consuming large amounts of "empty-calorie" foods. She reported that she was not currently including any physical activity as a part of her daily routine.

After attending a series EFNEP classes, this participant stated that her blood glucose had gone down from the 350's to the 150's. She also stated that what she learned in EFNEP (how to read food labels: portion control; increasing fruits and vegetables in her diet; and increasing daily physical activity to 30-40 minutes per day) made the difference.

A comparison of this participant's entry and exit food recalls and food behavior surveys showed she has made numerous healthy improvements in her choices and the choices for her family.

The National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion has stated that our American society has become 'obesogenic'. This 'obesogenic society is characterized by environments that promote several risk factors including increased food intake and the consumption of non-healthy foods. Hoping to decrease these two risk factors and their effects on obesity in Avery County, the 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (4-H EFNEP) partnered with the Youth Opportunities Program to teach a group of 10 youth how to make healthier food choices. Pre/post evaluation results showed that by the end of their six-lesson series, 90% of the youth had increased their knowledge of human nutrition, 100% had increased their ability to select low-cost nutritious foods, and 80% were eating a greater variety of foods. These outcomes suggest that the 10 youth participating in this 4-H EFNEP series have helped to change the 'obesogenic' environment in Avery County!

