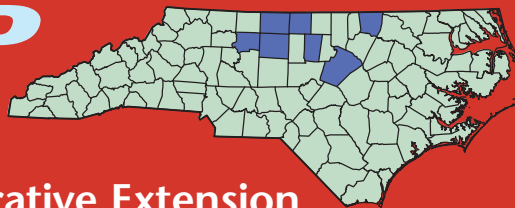




# EFNEP



Serving Caswell, Forsyth, Guilford, Orange, Rockingham, Wake and Warren counties

## 2008 NC Cooperative Extension North Central 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 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.

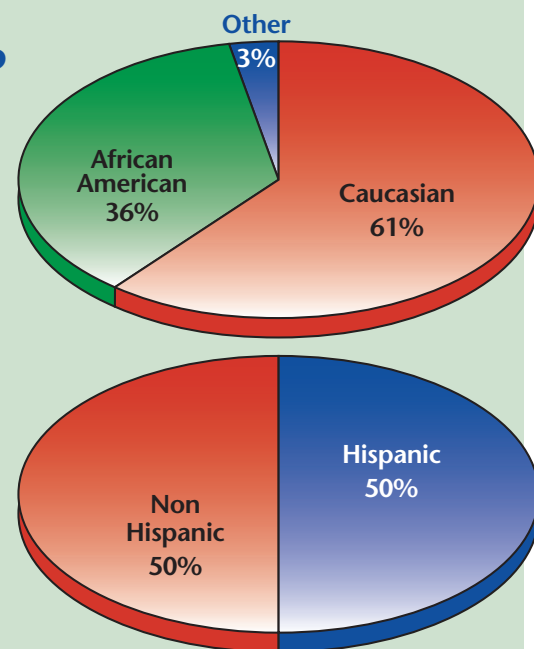
### *Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP*

In 2008, 455 adults and youth donated 13,936 hours on behalf of EFNEP. At a rate of \$19.51 per hour this is equivalent to \$271,891. Volunteers make a difference in their own communities, and contribute to EFNEP's ongoing success.

### *North Carolina EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences*

In 2008,

- 1,334 families enrolled in EFNEP
- 2,002 participated in 4-H EFNEP
- 79% of EFNEP participants were also WIC participants
- 79% of EFNEP participants enrolled in one or more food assistance programs.



*The North Central District EFNEP programs obtained over \$140,352 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:

- 84% improved in one or more food safety practices
- 95% improved in one or more nutrition practices
- 74% used food labels more often to make food choices
- 96% improved in one or more food resource management practices
- 58% of participants increased the amount of physical activity
- 99% of participants improved their diet
  - 71% increased fruit consumption
  - 53% increased vegetable consumption
  - 60% 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, 85% 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:

- 75% of the youth reported eating a variety of foods
- 82% increased their knowledge of human nutrition
- 88% increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods
- 49% improved practices in food preparation and safety

Teenagers are known to have poor eating habits. The consequence of poor nutrition is compounded when a teen becomes pregnant. During their first meeting, one group of pregnant teens enrolled in the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), shared that they often chose fast foods for their meals. During the series of classes, the teens learned how fast foods are higher in calories, sodium and fat and often lack important vitamins and minerals. They learned how to compare food choices when choosing fast food to make healthier choices for themselves and their unborn babies. Prior to EFNEP, most of the teens thought making good choices meant buying the value meal. They also learned the importance of choosing fast food less often. As a result, this group stated they were eating fast food less often and eating more meals at home. Two of the participants stated that when they did choose fast food, they were making better choices. They were choosing water, plain baked potatoes, salad or fruit, instead of fries or soda.

Research in food behavior related to childhood overweight and obesity finds that children who watch TV at mealtime eat far fewer fruits and vegetables than those who sit down to a quiet dinner. Compared to households with low television viewing habits, children in households with high viewing habits consumed more red meat, more salty snacks and twice, as much caffeine. The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) class, "Limit TV", teaches parents of young children to understand the link between television viewing and weight in children. A returning WIC participant stated, "I am so glad I was able to participate in the class on watching too much TV. I was having a hard time getting my daughter to eat fruits and vegetables. After the class, we no longer eat with the TV on. My daughter is now eating much better and we are playing and cooking together instead of watching TV. When my family comes over for dinner the TV is off and everyone likes the idea of having a conversation. We had no idea how much the TV was taking over our lives." EFNEP encourages families to eat more meals together without television. Families not only benefit by improving their consumption of healthier foods, they re-connect as a family.

A collaborative effort between the school nurse and the 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (4-H EFNEP) at a local charter school; helped students learn to take control of their choices to live a healthy lifestyle. Most of the youth were not consuming the daily-recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables. As a result, increasing fruit and vegetable consumption was the main focus of the series of classes. One of the foods prepared during a class was an egg omelet. Peppers, onions and other vegetables were added and the omelet was topped with salsa. Youth discussed that omelets could be eaten any time of day and that they could vary the recipe by using any combination of vegetables they liked to eat. At the next class, several youth said they prepared the recipe at home and had used other vegetables in it. They agreed that including more fruits and vegetables each day could be easy to do.

