



EFNEP



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

2008 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 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.

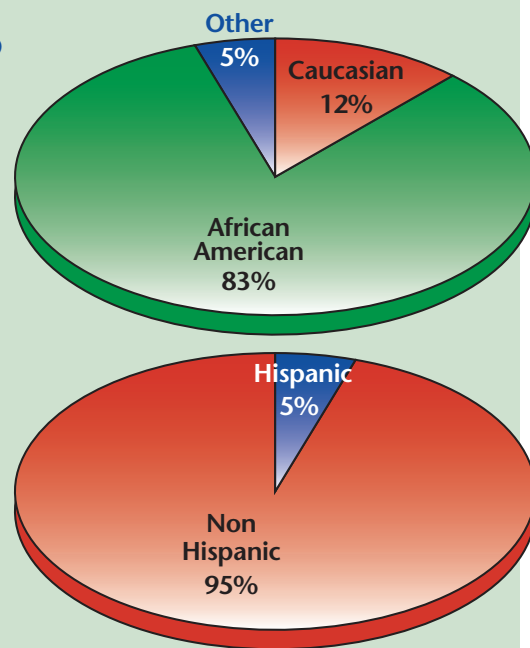
Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2008, 377 adults and youth donated 4,784 hours on behalf of EFNEP. At a rate of \$19.51 per hour this is equivalent to \$122,040. Volunteers make a difference in their own communities, and contribute to EFNEP’s ongoing success.

North Carolina EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences

In 2008,

- 609 families enrolled in EFNEP
- 2,026 participated in 4-H EFNEP
- 55% of EFNEP participants were also WIC participants
- 93% of EFNEP participants enrolled in one or more food assistance programs.



The Northeast District EFNEP programs obtained over \$57,016 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
- 93% improved in one or more nutrition practices
- 68% used food labels more often to make food choices
- 91% improved in one or more food resource management practices
- 42% of participants increased the amount of physical activity
- 98% of participants improved their diet
 - 66% increased fruit consumption
 - 56% 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, 56% 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:

- 62% of the youth reported eating a variety of foods
- 69% increased their knowledge of human nutrition
- 77% increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods
- 25% improved practices in food preparation and safety

Adult overweight and obesity cost the state of North Carolina 2.14 billion dollars each year in direct medical costs. One Edgecombe County family with four children, ages 1 to 7, made significant changes in their lifestyle as a result of participating in the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).

After a visit to his family physician, the father of this family learned that he was suffering from high cholesterol, high blood pressure and obesity. Upon hearing this news, he was determined to make changes to improve his overall health. He realized that his entire family had developed bad habits and needed to eat healthier and exercise more. During the series of classes they learned planning and shopping skills. Following the classes, they began choosing healthier foods and using a shopping list and coupons to save money. With the savings on food costs, they have been able to purchase a treadmill for the family to use. They also began to control their food portion size and reduce the amount of sugar in their diet. The parents have lost a combined 24 pounds as a result of the changes they made. They shared that EFNEP has been an essential tool in helping them "Eat Smart and Move More".

Research shows that consuming foods high in fat is a leading cause of obesity in children. North Carolina continues to see an increase in the number of children who are over weight or at risk of becoming overweight. Many children do not consume enough fruits and vegetables. The 4-H Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program (4-H EFNEP) of NC Cooperative Extension, Pasquotank County Center collaborated with the kindergarten and fourth grade classes of Central Elementary School to provide the Professor Popcorn curriculum. The program provided basic nutrition education, hands-on learning activities, food preparation and physical activity for a series of six weeks. Youth in the program prepared and tried various types of raw fruits and vegetables including carrots, broccoli, and cucumbers. Many of the children had never eaten these vegetables raw or tried the small packs of raw vegetables offered during lunch. Following the series and the hands-on food preparation activities that accompanied the lessons, teachers reported that the children were trying these foods in the lunchroom and not throwing them away. They were even bringing them from home as snacks rather than other high fat foods and cookies. 4-H EFNEP has helped the children in this school enjoy eating fresh fruits and vegetables and move toward consuming healthier foods.

