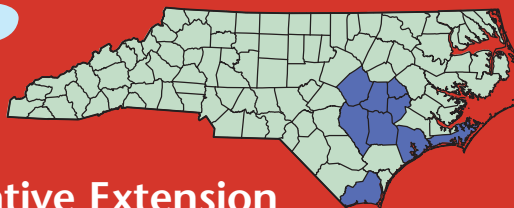




# EFNEP



Serving Brunswick, Carteret, Duplin, Greene, Johnston, Lenoir, Onslow, Sampson and Wayne counties

## 2008 NC Cooperative Extension Southeast 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.

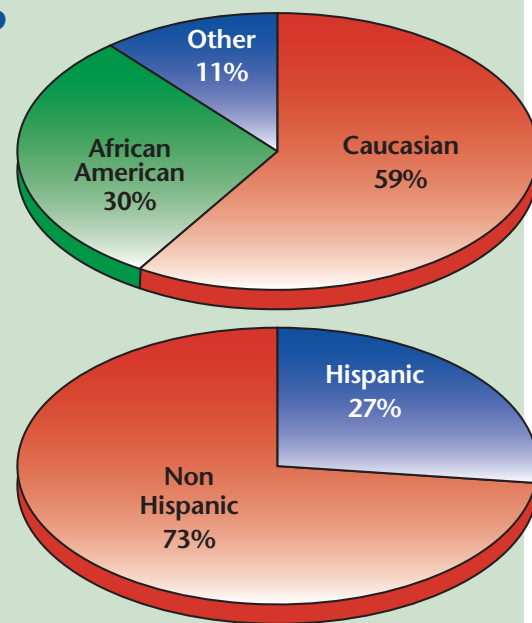
### Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2008, 513 adults and youth donated 7,488 hours on behalf of EFNEP. At a rate of \$19.51 per hour this is equivalent to \$146,091. Volunteers make a difference in their own communities, and contribute to EFNEP's ongoing success.

### North Carolina EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences

In 2008,

- 1,258 families enrolled in EFNEP
- 3,022 participated in 4-H EFNEP
- 66% of EFNEP participants were also WIC participants
- 90% of EFNEP participants enrolled in one or more food assistance programs.



The Southeast District EFNEP programs obtained over \$8,637 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:

- 74% improved in one or more food safety practices
- 93% improved in one or more nutrition practices
- 70% used food labels more often to make food choices
- 90% improved in one or more food resource management practices
- 36% of participants increased the amount of physical activity
- 98% of participants improved their diet
  - 59% increased fruit consumption
  - 56% increased vegetable consumption
  - 61% 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, 58% 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:

- 87% of the youth reported eating a variety of foods
- 89% increased their knowledge of human nutrition
- 90% increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods
- 71% improved practices in food preparation and safety

According to a study by Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, African American teens are twice as likely to deliver low birth-weight babies and 1.5 times more likely to have premature babies than are white teen mothers. The toll of caring for premature babies in North Carolina during 2003 was more than \$18 billion dollars, according to March of Dimes officials. Low birth-weight babies have twice as many doctor visits in the first year than healthy weight babies and the mothers miss two times as many days from work. Greene County ranks 55th in the state for pregnant teens of all races, despite its small population. North Carolina Cooperative Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) targeting first time pregnant and parenting teens, began classes at Greene County's Adolescent Parenting Program (APP) in the fall of 2007. Students learned valuable lessons on nutrition in pregnancy, the value of breastfeeding, introducing solids to infants and making healthy choices for themselves and their children from Shirley Howard, Extension EFNEP Program Assistant. Participants were surprised to learn how small a newborn's stomach is and the potential choking hazard for introducing solids before the baby is developmentally ready. Students reported choosing more healthy foods for themselves and their infants following the EFNEP classes.

Research studies show that eating 5 fruits and vegetables each day can reduce the risk of heart disease, diabetes, stroke and some forms of cancer, as well as, help maintain a healthy weight. In Onslow County, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) partners with Camp LeJeune and Onslow County Women, Infants and Children's program to offer nutrition education classes to young military families enrolled in WIC. Many of these families state that they can't afford to purchase the recommended quantity of fruits and vegetables. A good working relationship between NC Cooperative Extension, Onslow County Center and the Onslow County Farmers' Market made it possible for the EFNEP Extension Program Associate to secure an agreement to give local military families a discount. This not only gave the families the incentive to go to the farmer's market, but also helped them afford fresh fruits and vegetables for their families. As a result, many families report they are eating more fruits and vegetables. This has served a second benefit to county farmers as it increases their business traffic.

Wayne County 4-H offers several weeks of Summer Fun activities and often partners with the 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (4-H EFNEP) to include a nutrition education component as a part of the life skills learning experience for their young participants. This past year, some of the students participating in Summer Fun had also participated in 4-H EFNEP at their school. The young people who had previously participated in 4-H EFNEP shared with the other youth all they had learned during the school year. These students shared they had made changes to improve their health, including drinking more water and eating more fruits and vegetables, than before their participation in 4-H EFNEP. They encouraged the other youth to make positive changes as well.

