

## NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

### OUR FOCUS

The Kentucky Nutrition Education Program works in all 120 counties to improve the lives of limited-resource Kentuckians through education and changes in behavior and in community. Through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service has agents and nutrition assistants across the state who are dedicated to improving lives in their communities.



### OUR CHALLENGE

#### Poverty

In Kentucky, household median income is **\$45,215**, which is much lower than the U.S. median of **\$55,775**.<sup>1</sup> Kentucky has high rates of poverty and food insecurity when compared to the United States as a whole.<sup>1</sup>

	Kentucky	U.S.
<b>Total Poverty</b>	18.5%	14.7%
<b>Child Poverty</b>	25.9%	20.7%
<b>Food Insecurity</b>	17.6%	13.7%
<b>Very Low Food Secure</b>	7.3%	5.4%

In 2014, an estimated **14,868** Christian County residents lived in poverty, and **6,113** of them were children. This is a **5.4%** increase in total poverty and **-11.0%** decrease in child poverty since 2007.<sup>2</sup>

#### SNAP benefits

Participation in the SNAP program among those who are eligible for its benefits is higher in Kentucky than in the U.S. as a whole.<sup>1</sup>

In 2015, **10,017** Christian County residents received SNAP benefits, a **7.7%** increase since 2007.<sup>3</sup>

	Kentucky	U.S.
<b>SNAP Participation</b>	91%	83%



#### Obesity

Nearly half of all American adults experience one or more preventable, diet-related chronic conditions, such as high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and obesity.<sup>4</sup> Kentucky has a high prevalence of hypertension, diabetes, and obesity, ranking in the top 10 when compared to other states.<sup>5</sup> A large body of evidence shows that healthy eating habits and regular physical activity can help people achieve and maintain good health and reduce the risk of chronic disease throughout life.<sup>4</sup>

In 2013, **18,736** Christian County residents were considered obese, representing **36.5%** (**41.1%-32.1%**) of the county's population.<sup>6</sup>

## OUR SOLUTION

Provide hands-on, nutrition education to limited-resource audiences, focusing on:

- Buying and preparing healthy foods
- Developing new meal planning and cooking skills
- Adopting new healthy lifestyle behaviors
- Managing SNAP resources

In 2016, 6,396 Christian County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

## OUR RESULTS

### IN CHRISTIAN COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2016, 97% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 66% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 48% began to plan meals in advance more often and 55% used the "Nutrition Facts" on food labels to make food choices more often. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 55% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## OUR SUCCESS

### Farmers market buyer's guide is filled with tips, recipes

The obesity epidemic threatens the quality and years of life of Kentuckians. The obesity rate in Kentucky increased 90 percent over the last 15 years. Increased consumption of unhealthy food is one of the factors linked to obesity. Families need advice about healthful ways to prepare fruits and vegetables.

To meet this need, the staff at the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service in Christian County developed a farmers market buyer's guide to market Extension, provide healthy eating tips, and feature Kentucky Proud Plate It Up! recipes. Plate It Up! is a joint program between the Cooperative Extension Service, Human Environmental Sciences, and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. The program promotes locally grown

commodities and encourages consumers to buy local products. Increased consumption of produce is linked to better health and reduced obesity rates. Agents and assistants prepared Plate It Up! recipes weekly and distributed samples and healthy eating information at the Downtown Hopkinsville Farmers Market.

During the market season, over 1,000 buyer's guides were distributed to market patrons, the housing authority, the county fair, health fairs, civic groups, the women's shelter, and the senior citizens center. More than 950 people visited the farmers market Extension booth and tasted fresh produce prepared using the Kentucky Proud Plate It Up! recipes. Additionally, the farmers market Facebook page promotes the recipes and weekly tasting events to over 1,400 followers.



#### SOURCES:

1. [Frac.org/reports-and-resources/national-and-state-program-data-2](http://Frac.org/reports-and-resources/national-and-state-program-data-2), accessed December 2016
2. U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates
3. Kentucky Department for Public Health, Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Statewide Summaries, December 2007, 2013, 2015
4. 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
5. [Stateofobesity.org](http://Stateofobesity.org), accessed September 2016
6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), County Data Indicators, Obesity Prevalence

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