

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**.¹ Kentucky has high rates of poverty and food insecurity when compared to the United States as a whole.¹

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

In 2014, an estimated **2,795** Fleming County residents lived in poverty, and **1,045** of them were children. This is a **-0.8%** decrease in total poverty and **11.2%** increase in child poverty since 2007.²

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.¹

In 2015, **2,620** Fleming County residents received SNAP benefits, a **22.0%** increase since 2007.³

	Kentucky	U.S.
SNAP Participation	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.⁴ Kentucky has a high prevalence of hypertension, diabetes, and obesity, ranking in the top 10 when compared to other states.⁵ 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.⁴

In 2013, **3,695** Fleming County residents were considered obese, representing **34.5%** (**38.8%-30.5%**) of the county's population.⁶

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, **15,430** Fleming County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

OUR RESULTS

IN FLEMING COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2016, **98%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **90%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **75%** began to plan meals in advance more often and **67%** used the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make food choices more often. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **67%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

OUR SUCCESS

Students grow through work on school gardening project

According to data from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s State of Obesity report, 19.7% of Kentucky youth age 10 to 17 are obese. Research indicates that the consumption of fruits and vegetables can protect youth against health problems such as obesity. To help address this, fifth-grade students at Ward Elementary School started a garden project last year with the help and guidance of the Fleming County Cooperative Extension Service.

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program assistant and Fleming County Cooperative Extension agents taught gardening and nutrition lessons. The students learned about types of soil and the importance of testing soil to determine the weed control and fertilizer

needs for garden success. Students identified favorite vegetables and determined which would grow best in the garden. Students constructed a raised bed garden using painted cinder blocks. After the blocks were in place, they learned to use newspapers for weed prevention and the benefit of composting to build the soil. Vegetables planted included tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, onions, zucchini, and strawberries. The students watered and weeded the garden while school was in session. Over the summer, school staff took over gardening, then harvested and froze the vegetables. When school started again, the students tried zucchini bread made from their garden. Fresh tomatoes from the garden were used in salads at lunch time.



Thirty students worked on this project. Eight reported they had never worked in a garden before, 10 reported that they tried a tomato for the first time, and all 30 said they tried zucchini for the first time. The school has asked to continue the garden during the next school year.

SOURCES:

1. 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, accessed September 2016
6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), County Data Indicators, Obesity Prevalence

This material was funded by USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.



KYNEP.ca.uky.edu



Facebook.com/KYNEP