

## 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 **4,200** Hart County residents lived in poverty, and **1,498** of them were children. This is a **-0.5%** decrease in total poverty and **4.3%** increase 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, **3,247** Hart County residents received SNAP benefits, a **25.2%** 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, **5,023** Hart County residents were considered obese, representing **37.1%** (**43.2%-31.3%**) 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, 4,037 Hart County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

## OUR RESULTS

### IN HART COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2016, 89% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 54% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 61% 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

### Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program provides vouchers

The United States Department of Agriculture developed the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program to provide vouchers to senior adults for the purchase of produce at local farmers markets. The program is a partnership of the USDA, Kentucky Department of Agriculture, the Hart County Farmers Market, and the Hart County Cooperative Extension Service.

The Hart County SNAP-Ed Nutrition Education assistant was responsible for distributing 310 voucher booklets, each worth \$28, to senior adults in Hart County. This resulted in over \$8,000 in sales for local farmers. The SNAP-Ed assistant also attended the farmers market to provide recipes, nutrition information, and samples of different vegetables

to encourage vegetable consumption. “The farmers market vouchers helped me tremendously; I would not have been able to shop at the market for fresh produce without the voucher program. I know how important vegetables are to my health, but they are expensive,” one senior remarked. Another shopper agreed and added, “I can't afford to spend money on fresh fruit and vegetables because I have only a limited amount for grocery shopping. Using the vouchers provided by Extension, I was able to eat fresh produce for two months.”

The vouchers also provided produce for home food preservation. “I used the whole \$28 at one time on green beans to can. I haven't canned beans since my family members were all at home.” A market vendor was



quoted as saying, “Knowing senior citizens had a total of over \$8,000 to spend at the farmers market this summer motivated me to keep setting up. They need fresh vegetables for their health, in fact I always add extra to their purchases. The voucher program helped the seniors and farmers, too.”

#### 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

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.

University of Kentucky

Nutrition Education Program

Family and Consumer Sciences Extension



[KYNEP.ca.uky.edu](http://KYNEP.ca.uky.edu)



[Facebook.com/KYNEP](https://Facebook.com/KYNEP)