

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 **2,486** LaRue County residents lived in poverty, and **854** of them were children. This is a **22.6%** increase in total poverty and **26.9%** 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, **2,029** LaRue County residents received SNAP benefits, a **46.1%** 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, **3,558** LaRue County residents were considered obese, representing **33.6% (40.3%-27.2%)** 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, 4,286 LaRue County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

OUR RESULTS

IN LARUE COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2016, 92% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 76% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 63% began to plan meals in advance more often and 76% used the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make food choices more often. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 76% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

OUR SUCCESS

Healthy lifestyle choices: An introduction to the Mediterranean diet

According to data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, adult diabetes rates in Kentucky have increased from 6.5% in 2000 to 10.6% in 2013. As the population ages, these rates are likely to increase. Studies show that following a Mediterranean diet, which includes healthy oils, whole grains, and plenty of fruits and vegetables, may reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer’s disease, heart disease, and the risk of developing type 2 diabetes as we age.

To provide information on these potential health benefits, the LaRue County Extension Family and Consumer Sciences agent offered classes on the Mediterranean diet to 107 Homemaker leaders in the Lincoln Trail and Pennyryle Extension areas. Using a train-the-trainer method, these leaders in turn shared the information with over 1,391 other Homemaker members, friends, or family members. After taking the class, 61% of participants reported planning to incorporate more Mediterranean foods in their eating plans, 61% plan to use the recipe resources from the class, 82% reported willingness to try new foods, 74% plan to incorporate portion control in their food choices and 60% plan to increase their daily physical activity. This topic was also presented to 20 others in the county, including families participating in a local Memory Café Alzheimer’s support group.



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

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