

# 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 **2,610** Simpson County residents lived in poverty, and **996** of them were children. This is a **12.0%** increase in total poverty and **20.0%** 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, **2,403** Simpson County residents received SNAP benefits, a **33.8%** 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, **4,615** Simpson County residents were considered obese, representing **35.4% (42.5%-29.0%)** 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, Simpson County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons **10,936** times.

## OUR RESULTS

### IN SIMPSON COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2016, **100%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **76%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **48%** began to plan meals in advance more often and **78%** used the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make food choices more often. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **78%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## OUR SUCCESS

### Students request produce at home after summer nutrition program

Children in summer feeding programs were introduced to new fruits and vegetables with a nutrition program offered by Simpson County Cooperative Extension. Through weekly lessons, students were exposed to different produce through tastings. Teachers at the school reported that parents came in to ask what the children had eaten the day before because the children wanted the parents to serve it at home. Spinach and yellow squash were frequent requests.

Throughout the program, children learned that many fruits and vegetables are delicious without added sugar. Parents agreed to prepare roasted sweet potatoes at home after a positive tasting experience.

Some 75% of students said they liked roasted sweet potatoes.

During the lessons, importance was placed on washing produce before consumption. Many children initially said that they would eat a piece of fruit “if it looked clean” and didn’t think about how it might contain germs that were invisible. By the end of the summer, they were all making sure to wash both the produce and their own hands before eating snacks and meals. Simpson County youth and parents learned the importance of adding fresh produce to their diets regularly as a part of a healthy diet and that germs can be present on foods even if they can’t be seen.



#### 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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