



# Nutrition Education Program

## 2017 Annual Report: Fulton County

### Our Focus

The 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.



University of Kentucky  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment  
Cooperative Extension Service

### Our Challenge

#### Poverty

In Kentucky, household median income is \$46,659, which is much lower than the U.S. median of \$57,617.<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%	14.4%
<b>Child Poverty</b>	25%	19.8%
<b>Food Insecurity</b>	17.3%	13%
<b>Very Low Food Secure</b>	7.4%	5.2%

In 2014, an estimated 1,812 Fulton County residents lived in poverty, and 583 of them were children. This is a -5.7% decrease in total poverty and -9.9% 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, 1,608 Fulton County residents received SNAP benefits, a 13.3% 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, 1,580 Fulton County residents were considered obese, representing 32.0% (25.8%-39.2%) 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 2017, 7,608 Fulton County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

## Our Results

### IN FULTON COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2017, 83% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 33% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 50% began to plan meals in advance more often and 33% used the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make food choices more often. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 82% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## Our Success

### Stepping out of the comfort zone and trying new foods

According to Statisticalatlas.com, 25.9% of households in Fulton County received SNAP benefits in 2013. Of those receiving SNAP benefits, 49.5% of those households included children. Such statistics indicate that children would benefit from learning about making healthy food choices and being exposed to a variety of foods, including many that are accessible but that their families might not be buying. The FCS agent and 4-H agent worked together to implement the Try It Fridays program, an event where students sample healthy foods in the snack serving lines at school as they get fresh fruits in the afternoon. On each Try It Friday, students and staff sampled a food and voted on a ballot whether they liked or disliked it. So far they have sampled guava, butternut squash, muenster cheese, hummus, rambutan, raspberries and Gouda cheese. These foods are not typically part of their diets but are found in local stores. All students in kindergarten through 5th grade at Carr Elementary participated. They enjoyed voting on whether they liked the food sample and seeing the results from the previous week’s vote. Overall, 71% of the students and staff liked the new foods. It was fun to see them step out of their comfort zone and try the samples. Many teachers and staff had not tried items that were brought. They often ended up liking foods that they thought they wouldn’t enjoy.



University of Kentucky  
Nutrition Education Program  
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**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 2017; 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 December 2017; 6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), County Data Indicators, Obesity Prevalence

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