



## 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 their 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 where they live.

## Our Challenge

### Poverty

According to US Census estimates for 2016, the median household income in Kentucky is **\$46,610**, almost 20% lower than the U.S. median household income of **\$57,617**.<sup>1</sup> Kentucky also has higher percentages of poverty and food insecurity among its population compared to census estimate for the United States overall.

	Kentucky	U.S.
<b>Total Poverty</b>	17.2%	12.3%
<b>Child Poverty</b>	24.4%	19.5%
<b>Food Insecurity</b>	14.7%	11.8%

In 2016, an estimated **2,223** Green County residents lived in poverty, and **660** of those were children under 18. This represents a **6.2%** decrease in total poverty and **5.8%** decrease in child poverty since 2008.<sup>1</sup>

### Obesity

Today, about half of all Americans have one or more chronic diseases, often related to poor diet.<sup>2</sup> These include high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and stroke which are often associated with obesity.



In 2017, the percentage of obese adults in Kentucky was **34.3%**, ranking it in the top 10 states for highest obesity rates in the country. Kentucky was also ranked in the top 10 for high percentages of adults with diabetes (**12.9%**) and adults with hypertension (**39.4%**).<sup>3</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>2</sup>

In 2014, **38.1%** of Green County's adult population were considered obese.<sup>4</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 2018, **9,914** Green County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

## Our Results

### IN KENTUCKY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, **95%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **91%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **90%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **83%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **83%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## Our Success

### Empowering youth to make healthy food choices

In an effort to promote healthy eating to students, the Green County Family and Consumer Sciences Agent along with Green County Primary School and Green County Intermediate School principals and family resource center collaborated to bring a new and exciting opportunity to students. Each month, students are given the opportunity to try and learn more about new and unusual foods. The goal of this program is to encourage students to share with their parents what new foods they have tried and hopefully encourage parents to buy more healthy fruits and vegetables. The first taste testing opportunity allowed students to try Moon Drops which are a type of grape. Out of 550 students and 25 adults only 2 individuals knew what moon drops were. This was a wonderful and exciting experience for the kids. 475 students were willing to try the grape and 98% of those who tried the sample had positive feedback. Many students were coming back to ask for seconds. Additionally, the students were excited to know when the next taste testing opportunity would be. It is planned that samples will be available once monthly to any student who wishes to try.



University of Kentucky  
Nutrition Education Program  
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#### SOURCES:

1. U.S. Census Bureau Small Area and Income Poverty Estimates
2. 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
3. The State of Obesity Report 2018
4. 2018 County Health Rankings & Roadmap

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