



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**.¹ 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.
Total Poverty	17.2%	12.3%
Child Poverty	24.4%	19.5%
Food Insecurity	14.7%	11.8%

In 2016, an estimated **8,014** Jessamine County residents lived in poverty, and **2,665** of those were children under 18. This represents a **47.6%** increase in total poverty and **28.5%** increase in child poverty since 2008.¹

Obesity

Today, about half of all Americans have one or more chronic diseases, often related to poor diet.² 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%**).³ 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.²

In 2014, **32%** of Jessamine County's adult population were considered obese.⁴

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, 5,932 Jessamine 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

Food preservation class teaches skills to preserve healthy, safe foods

Due to the growing popularity for local foods and backyard gardens, home food preservation programs have been in demand. The Jessamine County Extension Service presented a 3-day food preservation workshop that addressed water bath and pressure canning, freezing, and drying food. The Family and Consumer Sciences Agent for Jessamine County presented nutrition information and promoted upcoming programs. The Nutrition Education Program Assistant conducted demonstrations each day with Plate it Up Kentucky Proud recipes.

Nineteen participants were part of the workshop with 84% being new to Extension food preservation programs. Participants canned green beans in the pressure canner; dried apples, bananas, and mangoes in the dehydrator; canned salsa and kosher dill pickles in the boiling water canner; and prepared corn and blackberry freezer jam. Participants were pleased with their very own jars of green beans, dried foods, salsa, pickles, blackberry jam, and corn that they personally preserved. This gave participants pride and confidence and motivation to go home and preserve healthy safe foods for their families. One participant commented, "I was always scared of a pressure canner because when I was young I remember a pressure cooker exploding. Because of this class, I feel confident that I can use a pressure canner now!"



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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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