



## 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 **8,254** Perry County residents lived in poverty, and **2,287** of those were children under 18. This represents a **5.1%** increase in total poverty and **3.2%** 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, **37.1%** of Perry 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, 7,751 Perry County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

## Our Results

### IN PERRY COUNTY

#### Lifestyle improvements

In 2018, **100%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **98%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **98%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **91%** made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with **97%** improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

## Our Success

### Limited-resource individuals improve eating habits

The Perry County Cooperative Extension Service's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) assistant partnered with the Kentucky River Community Care to bring the Healthy Choices for Every Body curriculum to a group of young women with children. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2018 State Indicator Report on Fruits and Vegetables indicates that "only 1 in 10 US adults eat the recommended amount of fruits or vegetables each day, with 7% of adults who live at or below the poverty level meet the vegetable daily recommendation." Thirteen of the women who met weekly for the series of classes finished the program which focused on food safety, food resource management skills and healthy eating. All participants were at or below the poverty level and only 25% reported having enough money for food. After the conclusion of the group, data reported 92% of participants showed improvement in diet quality.



University of Kentucky  
Nutrition Education Program  
Family and Consumer Sciences Extension



#### 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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