



KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2020 ANNUAL REPORT: BRECKINRIDGE COUNTY

OUR FOCUS

The Kentucky Nutrition Education Program, as part of the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, encompasses two separate USDA programs: The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed). Both programs utilize agents and assistants to provide educational opportunities for limited-resource individuals and families to acquire knowledge, develop skills, and change behaviors for improved health and well-being.

OUR CHALLENGE

Poverty

According to U.S. Census estimates for 2019, the median household income in Kentucky is **\$52,256**, 20% lower than the U.S. median household income of **\$65,712**.¹ Kentucky also has higher percentages of poverty and food insecurity among its population compared to census estimates for the United States overall.

	Kentucky	U.S.
Total Poverty ¹	16.0%	12.3%
Child Poverty ¹	20.9%	16.8%
Food Insecurity ² <i>(Actual ratings during COVID-19 may be higher)</i>	14.7%	11.7%

In 2018, an estimated **18.8%** of Breckinridge County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **23.7%** were children younger than 18.¹

Obesity

Today, about half of all Americans have one or more chronic diseases, often related to poor diet and physical inactivity.³ These include high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and stroke.



In 2019, the percentage of obese adults in Kentucky was **36.5%**, ranking it in the top 10 states for highest obesity rates in the country. The percentage of physically inactive Kentuckians was **30.6%**, ranking it among the top five most physically inactive states in the nation. Kentucky was also ranked in the top 10 for high percentages of adults with diabetes (**13.3%**) and adults with hypertension (**40.9%**).⁴ 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.³

In 2020, **25%** of Breckinridge County's adult population was considered obese, and **25%** was considered physically inactive.⁵

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 2020, **6,868** contacts were made with Breckinridge County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN BRECKINRIDGE COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2020, **100%** of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and **100%** showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, **91%** showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and **96%** made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Gardens supply needed food during pandemic

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's 2018 State Indicator says only 12.2% of adults meet their daily fruit intake and only 9.3% meet the recommended daily intake of vegetables. Research shows an even lower number of adults meeting the recommended daily intake in communities where many live below the poverty line. In 2018, an estimated 18.8% of adults in Breckinridge County lived in poverty. Wanting to make a positive impact in lives of families in Breckinridge County, the Nutrition Education Program (NEP) Assistant partnered with Breckinridge County Cooperative Extension, Gift House, Irvington Baptist, Cloverport United Methodist, Restorations Church, and Breckinridge Detention Center.

Together, the partners built and maintained 13 raised bed gardens to increase accessibility to fresh produce throughout Breckinridge County. Workers harvested more than 4,500 ears of corn, 174 pounds of cucumbers, 38 pounds of tomatoes, 41 pounds of zucchini, 37 pounds of squash, and 25 pounds of peppers! The produce grown at the church facilities was all donated to food pantries or food

drives within their community, which experienced record high distributions during the pandemic. Produce was also harvested and stored to feed families at homeless shelters and rehabilitation facilities for battered women and those who struggle with substance use disorders. Produce was not the only product of these gardens. Residents also received gardening education and Plate it Up! and Healthy Choices recipe cards. Partnerships began between the Nutrition

Education Program and several of the participating facilities.

Many of these gardens are in low-income, limited-access, underserved minority areas. Through this community effort, hundreds of families were positively influenced by accessing and consuming more fruits and vegetables and learning how to grow a garden.



University of Kentucky
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SOURCES:

1. U.S. Census Bureau Small Area and Income Poverty Estimates
2. America's Health Rankings 2019
3. World Health Organization Media Centre
4. The State of Obesity Report 2019
5. 2019 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

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