



KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

2020 ANNUAL REPORT: MORGAN 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 **27.3%** of Morgan County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **32.2%** 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, **38%** of Morgan County's adult population was considered obese, and **33%** 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, 7,123 contacts were made with Morgan County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

OUR RESULTS

IN KENTUCKY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2020, 96% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 75% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 92% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 83% made changes to be more physically active.



OUR SUCCESS

Tasty choices: Seeing is believing

Morgan County residents have a record of consuming fewer fruits and vegetables, lacking ideas for healthier food preparation of fresh produce, having a more sedentary lifestyle, lacking skills in production of foods in smaller settings (raised beds, growing in back porch pots, and harvesting fresh vegetables). Morgan County Extension agents teamed up to share Cooking Through the Calendar with county residents. We offered the program in the evening to any interested resident. We promoted it via all agent program areas for all ages. The theory was to offer joint programming to include the whole family in learning hands-on ways of making healthier meals, trying new recipes, learning about how the fruits and vegetables featured each month are grown, and also a physical activity to help increase the activity level of family members. As a result of the collaborative effort, 15 to 20 families learned about the selection of produce, safe handling, storage and food safety, knife safety and knife skills, new recipe ideas for old favorites, and sampled many vegetables they were not as familiar with like avocado. The hands-on



preparation, learning how foods are grown, how they could be grown in smaller areas, and being physically active with family have been a success for all participants. Some recent comments include: "I can't believe I'm eating avocado and like it." Others have reported raising vegetables in buckets or large flower pots, and they are enjoying cucumbers, summer squash fresh from their porch garden. The program has had excellent results and participants are anxious to continue to learn new methods and recipes and incorporate more fresh produce in their meal planning.

University of Kentucky Nutrition Education Program Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

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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