

# KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT: PENDLETON 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**.<sup>1</sup> 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.
<b>Total Poverty</b> <sup>1</sup>	16.0%	12.3%
<b>Child Poverty</b> <sup>1</sup>	20.9%	16.8%
<b>Food Insecurity</b> <sup>2</sup> <i>(Actual ratings during COVID-19 may be higher)</i>	14.7%	11.7%

In 2018, an estimated **15.5%** of Pendleton County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **22.7%** were children younger than 18.<sup>1</sup>

#### Obesity

Today, about half of all Americans have one or more chronic diseases, often related to poor diet and physical inactivity.<sup>3</sup> 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%**).<sup>4</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>3</sup>

In 2020, **33%** of Pendleton County's adult population was considered obese, and **27%** was considered physically inactive.<sup>5</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 2020, 4,031 contacts were made with Pendleton 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

### Garden starter kit drive-thru supports COVID victory gardeners in challenging times

COVID-19 put pressure on our food infrastructure system after flocks of citizens raided store shelves. Consumers began to question food supply and had an interest in developing their own sustainable food production, thus an insurgence of interest in gardening and homesteading for sustainability emerged. The Pendleton County Agriculture and Natural Resource (ANR) Agent, in response, developed the Garden Starter Drive-Thru program and coordinating Facebook Live Growing your Garden from the Ground Up 2020 Victory Garden Educational Series. With so many potential first-time gardeners, it was important to provide more than just random seed. Hence, specific kits were developed for gardeners of every level to help boost their confidence and success. COVID-19 response required social distancing distribution. A drive-thru was the perfect solution to allow some engagement. We prepared the kits ahead of time and a designated time and date (three-hour distribution

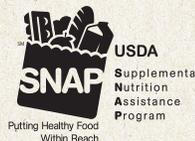
window) was marketed via Facebook Event and Facebook Live Gardening Class one and a half days before the event. More than 126 cars participated in the drive-thru with more than 200 participants! Participants were of all ages from 2 to older than 90. Participants did not leave their cars, and the kits were placed in their trunks. Social media was the only marketing we used for the event, specifically Facebook. It was a huge success not only in the county, but also across the state and even the nation. Nine states asked for information to run their own garden-starter drive-thru in less than a week. The two weekly videos have been viewed 1,100 times. The program reach, including both direct and indirect contacts, was more than 5,000 in just two weeks, bringing in many first-time Extension users. The ANR agent will continue to develop educational videos, post daily to the Facebook group, and be a resource to the 2020 Victory Gardeners throughout the season.

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This material was partially funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program — SNAP.



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