



# KENTUCKY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT: WOODFORD 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 **9.4%** of Woodford County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **13.2%** 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, **32%** of Woodford County's adult population was considered obese, and **23%** 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, 16,417 contacts were made with Woodford 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

### Family garden and cooking kit giveaways

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates the fragility of our food system. Although plenty of food is produced, there is a bottleneck in distribution. As a result, Kentuckians are coming together not only to support local agriculture, but they also have an increased interest in growing their own food in home or community gardens. As a response to this interest, the Woodford County Horticulture Agent and the Family and Consumer Sciences Agent partnered to distribute Family Garden Kits, Container Garden Kits, and seed packets to families and community residents. The kits provided the first-time gardener with an easy way to experience the joy of homegrown produce. The container garden kits were equipped with soil, seeds, and transplants plus growing instructions. They also included gardening calendars, nutrition calendars, a variety of cooking utensils and supplies, a farmers' market shopping guide, recipe cards, and basic cooking information. We distributed these kits to low-income residents who live in apartments and don't have the space for a traditional garden. We distributed more than 150 kits to community residents. This included more



than 500 seed packets that will produce fresh vegetables for families in a time of need. Not only can these kits help families stretch their food dollars and eat healthier, but they can serve as a positive family-inclusive activity by engaging family members of all ages in creating a garden and cooking together. From a mental health aspect, growing a vegetable garden and cooking a homemade meal can be a way for families to gain a sense of security in these uncertain times.

**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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