



Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

EFNEP - Southern Region Summary

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education program (EFNEP) is a unique program that currently operates in 781 counties (with 369 of those counties located throughout the Southern states¹) throughout the 50 states and in the territories of American Samoa, Guam, Micronesia, Northern Marianas, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. It is designed to assist low-income audiences in acquiring the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and changed behavior necessary for nutritionally sound diets, and to contribute to their personal development and the improvement of the total family diet and nutritional well-being.

EFNEP targets two primary audiences: low-income youth and low-income families with young children. In Fiscal Year 1999, in the Southern region alone, EFNEP reached 196,596 youth and 88,969 adults; approximately 316,525 family members were indirectly reached through the adult participant.

A Regional View

In the Southern region in FY99, 61% of the participants completed the program, 14% terminated, and 25% are continuing into the next program year. Of the 14% who terminated the program, the majority of them (20%) had to terminate due to a move.

¹States located in the Southern Region consist of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virgin Islands, Virginia

Of the graduates who completed the program, 12% completed 1 through 6 lessons in three months or less; 4% completed the same number of lessons between 4 and 6 months. Twenty-six percent of the graduates completed anywhere from seven to twelve lessons in three months or less; 10% completed the same number of lessons between 4 and 6 months. Figure 1 depicts the number of lessons completed for graduates. The average number of lessons completed was 10.7.

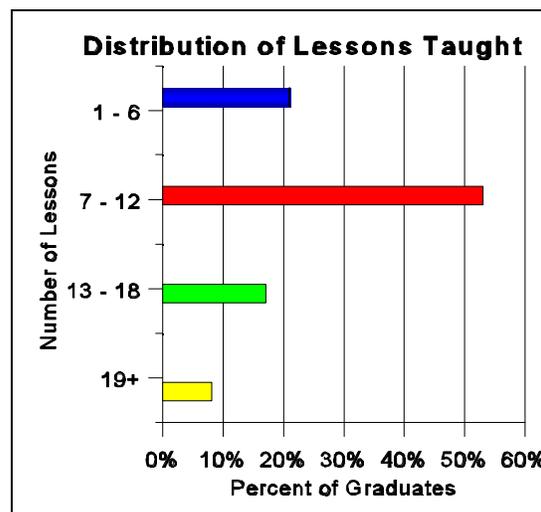


Figure 1

Program Impact

The percent of graduates eating a specific number of servings of each food group improved. Data from the EFNEP Evaluation Reporting System showed that the percent of graduates who ate 0 servings of foods from the breads and cereals group went from 4.5% to 2.2%. The percent who ate 6 to

11 servings improved from 30.2% to 45.1%. At entry, 58.6% were not eating any foods from the Fruit group, however, by the completion of the program, this figure decreased to 31.6%. Only 21.5% were eating 2 or more servings from the Fruit group at entry into the program. This figure increased to 44.7% by the end of the program. The percent of graduates not eating any foods from the calcium dairy group decreased from 48.5% to 28.0%. The percent eating 3 or more servings by the end of the program improved from 8.9% to 19.2%. The percent of graduates eating 2 or more servings of foods from the Meats and Alternatives group improved from 48.1% to 61.1%. Figure 2 shows how servings of food from the Vegetable group improved as a result of EFNEP. Notice that even though the percent of graduates eating 1 serving decreased, the percent of graduates eating 2 or more servings increased. The percent of graduates with positive change in any food group at exit is 92.8%.

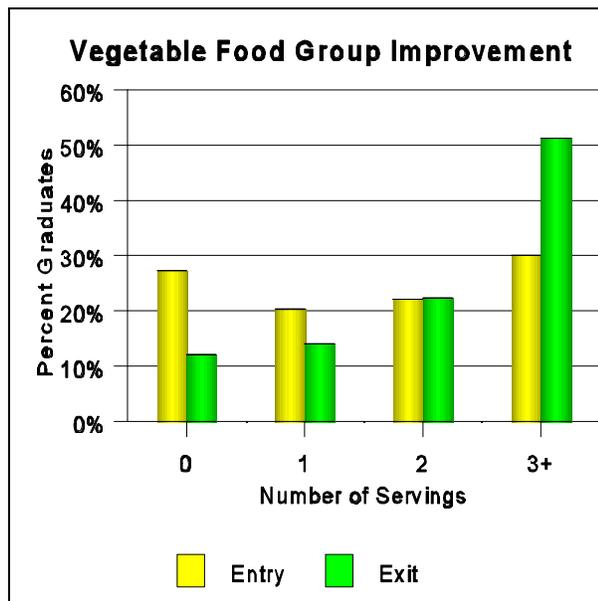


Figure 2

The results of 10 key food-related practices that were measured showed that as a result of EFNEP:

- ▶ 61% more often planned meals in advance; 66% more often used the Nutrition Facts on food labels to make food choices;
- ▶ 62% more often followed the recommended practice of not thawing foods at room temperature; 60% more often used a list for grocery shopping;
- ▶ 87% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices (i.e. plans meals, compares prices, does not run out of food or uses grocery lists);
- ▶ 90% showed improvement in one or more nutrition practices (i.e plans meals, makes healthy food choices, prepares foods without adding salt, reads nutrition labels or has children eat breakfast);
- ▶ 69% showed improvement in one or more of the food safety practices (i.e thawing and storing foods properly).

Results from 4 key youth impact indicators showed that:

- ▶ 73% of 76,698 youth from 3,023 groups now eat a variety of foods;
- ▶ 74% of 78,534 youth from 3,123 groups increased knowledge of the essentials of human nutrition;
- ▶ 65% of 74,682 youth from 2,937 groups increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods; and
- ▶ 67% of 75,900 youth from 3,004 groups improved practices in food preparation and safety.

To learn more about EFNEP click on www.reeusda.gov/4h/efnep/home.htm, or contact the federal office at 202-720-6079.