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# Nutrition Education Programming in America

NIFA is committed to improving health and reducing hunger and poverty in America through nutrition education programming. Low-income families develop healthy habits in eating, physical activity, food handling, and food storage through peer educator-led training using credible, research-based nutrition information. NIFA and its predecessor agencies have provided nearly 50 years of federal leadership in nutrition education programming through the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). We need to ensure that such programming is commensurate with demographic, social, and technological change.

## EFNEP by the numbers

**33M**

The total number of participants reached since inception

**\$67.9M**

The funding level in 2016

**1,600+**

The number of peer educators trained annually

## EFNEP Success



More than 95% of graduates improve diets and consume an additional cup of fruits and vegetables daily



\$9.52 benefit to society for every dollar invested in EFNEP\*



Nearly 2 in 5 graduates increase their physical activity by at least 30 minutes daily

By training and supervising peer educators, EFNEP increases the employability of individuals and self-reliance of families and communities.

## The 6 Keys to Success

### Characteristics of Successful Nutrition Education Programming

- 1 Interactive, hands-on learning adapted to the context of each participant's life
- 2 Evidence-based approaches to extend knowledge and improve diets and food-related behaviors
- 3 Complementing peer educator-led training with online technologies to accommodate changes in how individuals learn and access information
- 4 Strategic local partnerships that integrate programming into the community
- 5 State autonomy to target programming in areas of greatest need
- 6 Ongoing training and supervision of peer educators who implement programming in their local communities

## Graduate Testimonial

"I was never taught how to cook, so I [would] just buy foods that are ready to eat or heat...[now my family cooks] healthy meals together, we eat together, we play together, we never run out of food, and we spend about half as much on our food as we did before participating in your program."

*EFNEP Graduate from Maine*

## Did You Know?



Alabama led the way in nutrition education programming via a grassroots, five year pilot program beginning in 1964. In 1969, this pilot expanded to become the national EFNEP program.

EFNEP is a program conducted within the Cooperative Extension System.

Congressional funding

Administration of federal funds by NIFA

Land-grant universities use federal plus state and local funds to manage extension programs

Extension professionals translate knowledge to meet the unique needs of communities across America

Extension professionals are integrated within more than 3,000 counties and county equivalents across all U.S. states, districts, and territories. These professionals translate science into opportunities to help improve people's lives.

\*FOOTNOTE: This statistic was obtained by averaging the findings across the following series of studies, which collectively show the benefit to be \$9.52 (range \$8.34 to \$10.64).

SOURCES: Dollahite, J., Kenkel, D., & Thompson, C.S. (2008). An economic evaluation of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 40(3), 134-143. | Joy, , Pradhan, V., & Goldman, G.E. (2006). Cost-benefit analysis conducted for nutrition education in California. *California Agriculture* 60(4):185-191. | Lambur, M., Rajgopal, R., & Lewis, E. (1999) Applying cost-benefit analysis to nutrition education programs: Focus on the Virginia Expanded Food and Nutrition Education programs: *Virginia Cooperative Extension*. Blacksburg, VA.: Virginia Tech.