

2013 NC Cooperative Extension Brunswick County



Single Dad Saves Big on Food Costs

A Brunswick County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) participant worked in construction and had little time to prepare breakfast in the mornings. As a single Dad he struggled with his responsibilities as a parent and the long commute to his job site each morning. He did not see how it would be possible to eat breakfast at home. Each morning on the way to work, he would stop by the drive-through at the local fast food restaurant and spend about \$5 for a meal. He easily spent almost \$30 a week eating out. Thus, he didn't have a lot of extra money to spend on leisure activities with his family.

While enrolled in EFNEP, the participant learned to use grocery store ads to plan a weekly menu including breakfast. He realized that making a grocery list when shopping will help him stay within his budget. In addition, the participant learned to prepare inexpensive yet quick and easy recipes from the EFNEP cookbook. During one of the food demonstrations, he was able to prepare and taste a breakfast smoothie recipe. He was surprised that the smoothie was easy to prepare, healthy, low in cost and filling. Applying the new skills he learned, this Dad began planning and making more meals at home.

Following the series of lessons, the participant shared that by simply planning, preparing and eating breakfast at home rather than purchasing a fast food breakfast, he not only feels healthier, but he is now able to stay within his budget. The money he has saved allowed him to take his son out for his birthday. This is a very special event because it was something he has not been able to do before. The participant has shared that his life has changed for the better because of the skills he learned from EFNEP.

Label Reading Helps Young Father Make Healthy Choices

A Brunswick County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) participant only ate foods that were high in calories, fat, and sodium. His diet consisted mainly of processed and pre-made foods. Nutrition was never a factor when he shopped for groceries since he lacked the knowledge to make healthy food choices.

While in EFNEP, the participant learned about the food groups using USDA's *MyPlate* as a guide and how reading nutrition labels can help make healthy choices. He learned that processed foods are higher in sodium, calories and fat. He was surprised to learn that it was cheaper to cook his meals rather than buy it pre-made or frozen. The food demonstrations allowed him to see how quick it was to prepare nutritious foods.

As a result of EFNEP, the participant has started to think about nutrition as he makes his food choices. He now looks at the nutrition label while shopping for groceries. He used to buy only white bread but after learning the importance of fiber and whole grains, he now buys 100% whole wheat bread. He also switched from whole milk to low-fat milk since it reduces his daily total fat intake. He uses the EFNEP cookbook to prepare meals at home instead of buying it pre-made. Since the participant has made these changes, he has felt healthier and happier. He enjoys comparing nutrition labels while shopping and always looks for foods that are high in fiber and nutrients while low in fat and sodium. This participant has made big changes to improve his health and, as the family member responsible for the food choices served in his home, he has made healthier choices for his entire family.

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