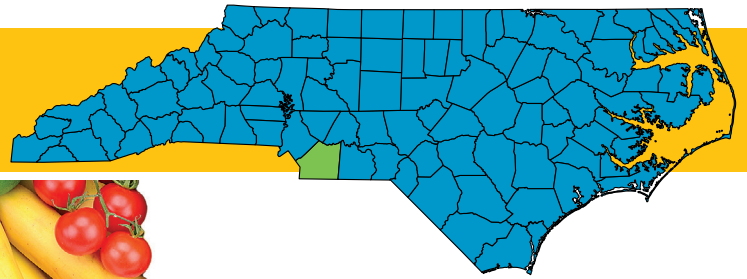




EFNEP
EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION
EDUCATION PROGRAM



2017 NC Cooperative Extension Union County Report

North Carolina's Challenges

- In North Carolina, **1 in 4** children live in poverty.
- North Carolina's adult obesity rate is currently **31.8%**.
- **15%** of 2- to 4-year-olds from low-income families are obese. This makes us the **17th** most obese state.
- North Carolina has the **15th** highest rate of diabetes and the **11th** highest rate of hypertension.

Supporting North Carolina's Families with Greatest Needs Since 1969

EFNEP helps address the challenges limited-resource families face when introducing healthy changes through nutrition education, cooking classes, physical activity strategies, and shopping on a limited budget. EFNEP provides:

- Peer-to-peer, hands-on education in the community
- Healthy, low-cost recipes
- Simple strategies to help families move more together



EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences in Union County

In 2017: **137** families enrolled in EFNEP

97% of EFNEP participants enrolled in one or more food assistance programs.

WHAT IS EFNEP?

EFNEP serves limited-resource families with young children, school-age youth, and pregnant teens through a series of lessons offered by paraprofessionals and volunteers, many of whom are indigenous to the population. In 2017, EFNEP served 45 counties in North Carolina. Participants learned how to:

- Make wise food choices
- Increase daily physical activity
- Manage food resources
- Practice food safety

EFNEP Makes a Real Difference in Union County



99% of EFNEP participants improved dietary intake.



85% now practice daily physical activity.



100% practice better food resource management.



93% have improved their food safety habits.

Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2017, **18** adults and youth donated time to EFNEP, making a difference in their own communities and contributing to EFNEP's ongoing success.



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**Union County
EFNEP programs obtained**

\$16,946

**in funding and support
from local efforts.**

EFNEP SUCCESS



Reducing Sodium for a Healthy Lifestyle

Reducing sodium presented a serious challenge for one EFNEP participant that worked late evenings and constantly snacked at work on salty chips and pretzels. As a result of her snacking and sedentary lifestyle of sleeping during the day and sitting at work, she had become overweight and had a blood pressure reading of 150/100. She did not know how to manage her work schedule to incorporate healthy meals and exercise. By practicing the new skills learned through EFNEP, her blood pressure was measuring normal at 120/80 by the end of the 2-month program. She found that walking up and down the stairs had become easier and that she had more energy to cook healthy meals for her and her son. She also discovered that she had saved \$152.00 by eliminating salty snacks, fast food, and soft drinks.



EFNEP Participant Learns that Calcium is Essential to Her Health

It is recommended for that most adults consume 3 cups of dairy per day. Dairy is identified as an important food group because it is such a good source of calcium. Most people are aware that calcium can be found in dairy products, however, many are not aware that it is also found in other foods that we eat. This lack of information contributed to one lactose intolerant EFNEP participant becoming calcium deficient.

After an analysis of blood, the participant feared that she was in the early stages of prediabetes. Her A1C was 6.4. One factor determined by the doctor, was that she was not getting an adequate amount of calcium in her diet. He explained that calcium not only is necessary for strong bones and teeth, it also helps the body maintain healthy blood vessels, regulate blood pressure, and prevent insulin resistance, which could lead to type 2 diabetes.

As a participant in EFNEP, she learned to read the nutrition fact labels on products to identify if calcium is listed as a nutrient and to read additional information on packages to see if a product has been “fortified” with calcium. The participant was also given a wealth of information about other foods that contain calcium such as white beans, canned salmon, sardines, dried figs, bok choy, blackstrap molasses, kale, black eyed peas, almonds, and more. She also learned to use the label to pair these foods with foods that contain vitamin D, as vitamin D is needed for the body to absorb calcium. For example, vitamin D is found in fish. Many foods and 100% fruit juices are also fortified with vitamin D. In our discussion of “Making Smart Drink Choices”, she learned that caffeine filled sugary soft drinks actually deplete the body of calcium and add calories to the diet. Additionally, she gained hands-on experience preparing foods that are good sources of calcium, such as Tuna Burgers and Chicken and Broccoli Quiche.

In addition to improving her calcium intake, the participant has begun to do weight bearing exercises to improve her bones and muscles. To date she is no longer experiencing the symptoms of type 2 diabetes and her A1C was under 5.7 at last check up.



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