

## 2018 NC Cooperative Extension Ashe County Report

### North Carolina's Challenges

- In North Carolina, **1 in 5** children live in poverty.
- North Carolina's adult obesity rate is currently **32%**.
- **15.2%** of 2- to 4-year-olds from low-income families are obese. This makes us the **16th** 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 Ashe County

In 2018: **12** families enrolled in EFNEP  
**761** participated in 4-H EFNEP  
**83%** 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 2018, 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 Ashe County

 **100%** of EFNEP participants improved dietary intake.

 **100%** now practice daily physical activity.

 **72%** practice better food resource management.

 **90%** have improved their food safety habits.

### Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2018, **57** adults and youth donated time to EFNEP, making a difference in their own communities and contributing to EFNEP's ongoing success.



# 2018 NC Cooperative Extension Ashe County Report

Ashe County  
EFNEP programs obtained

# \$13,144

in funding and support  
from local efforts.

## EFNEP SUCCESS



### Children Respond Positively to Trying New Foods

The USDA Dietary Guidelines recommends eating a wide variety of foods to provide the different nutrients vital for health and maintenance of your body. However, encouraging kids to try different foods can be challenging.

Through collaborative efforts of the NC Cooperative Extension, Ashe County Center's 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), and Ashe County Schools, students were given a healthy snack as a part of each EFNEP lesson. Each week the snack centered on a food represented in the food group they were studying. 144 first and second graders were asked to try a snack consisting of a food they were familiar with prepared a different way, or a new food served in combination with a food they knew.

By show of hands, 90% of students reported liking the snacks. Recipes were sent home so students could prepare the healthy snack at home. 40% reported their family changed the recipe slightly with good results. 10% of students were reluctant to try new foods but with encouragement from their peers most were more willing to try new snacks after the second week.

The class discussed alternate ways to use the main ingredient to reinforce that they could change recipes to better suit their taste. Teaching students options for preparing healthy recipes encourages them to incorporate a variety of foods that add beneficial nutrients to their diets.



### Youth Learn to Make Healthy Mealtime Decisions with EFNEP

According to the CDC, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, findings indicate that learning to cook can promote positive changes in children's food-related preferences, attitudes, and behaviors. Children are more likely to try new foods when they are engaged in cooking their own meals. Children love to be in charge of their own decisions when it comes to food choices.

Through collaborative efforts of the NC Cooperative Extension, Ashe County Center's 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), and Ashe County Schools, cooking classes were offered in sixth grade classrooms. A student from each sixth grade classroom volunteered during EFNEP programming to prepare tacos at home using a dry seasoning mix that was prepared in class. The tacos were made with a recipe given to them by the EFNEP Educator. This exercise of using a measuring spoon and following a simple recipe was used to build students' confidence. Students learned that the recipe used less sodium than a prepackaged spice mix.

After the challenge was issued, students were asked if the dish they prepared was enjoyable and if they felt confident enough to prepare other recipes. Students reported enjoying shopping and preparing the meal and made plans to cook again. Students were excited to report that their families supported them cooking dinner and were surprised how little salt was needed to add to a recipe to make it taste good.

Engaging youth to be a part of mealtime decisions gives them confidence to continue making healthy choices over time while learning skills they will use for a lifetime. Families who prepare and eat more meals at home tend to eat less sodium, more fruits, vegetables and dairy while saving money on food costs.

Distributed in furtherance of the acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

