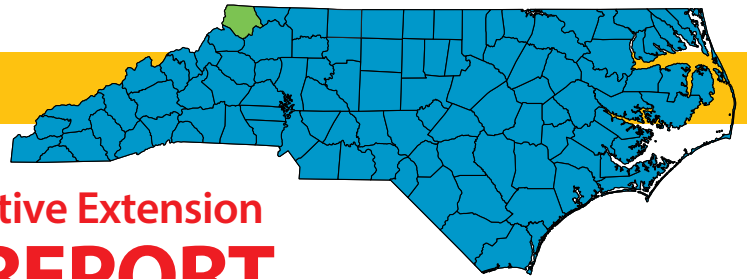




# NC Cooperative Extension 2021 REPORT

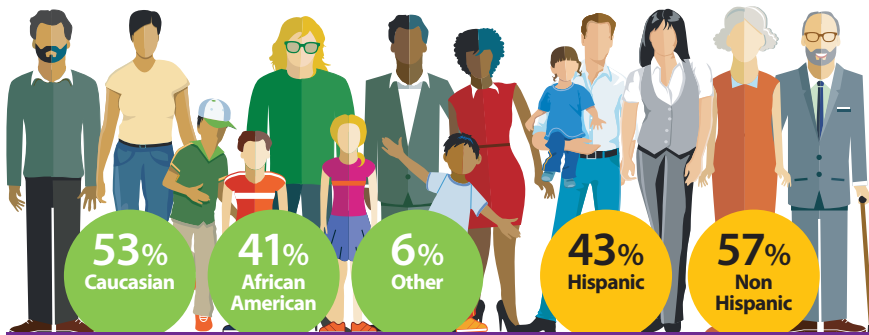


## North Carolina

### 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



North Carolina EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences

#### In 2021:

**1,233** families enrolled in EFNEP.

**9,032** youth participated in 4-H EFNEP.

**84%** of EFNEP participants were enrolled in one or more food assistance programs.

North Carolina EFNEP programs obtained over **\$808,383** in funding and support from local efforts.

#### 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 2021, EFNEP served 42 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

- 97%** of EFNEP participants improved dietary intake.
- 85%** now practice daily physical activity.
- 96%** practice better food resource management.
- 91%** have improved their food safety habits.

#### Volunteers Strengthen EFNEP

In 2021, **900** adults and youth donated time to EFNEP, making a difference in their own communities and contributing to EFNEP's ongoing success.



# 2021 NC Cooperative Extension Ashe County Report

EFNEP used multiple strategies to get needed nutrition and food safety information to low-income audiences throughout the pandemic. In Ashe County, 503 individuals were reached through direct programming.

Ashe County EFNEP programs obtained  
**\$21,046** in funding and support from local efforts.

## EFNEP SUCCESS



### Food Demonstrations Offer Inspiration to Try New Foods

Many children express reluctance to try new foods. This behavior can lead to critical nutrient deficiencies that could hinder proper development and growth. Evidence shows that early experiences and exposure to a variety of foods help promote healthy eating behaviors throughout the lifespan.

In response to this issue, Ashe County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) partnered with the local school system. Throughout the year, 522 students in second through sixth grade enrolled in EFNEP's nutrition education classes. Through these classes, the EFNEP educator learned that many students were struggling to fit a variety of vegetables into their diets. Since these classes were virtual, in-person taste tests were not an option. Instead, the EFNEP educator conducted cooking demonstrations to expose the students to healthy, simple recipes that contained a variety of different fruits and vegetables. The EFNEP educator also conducted video cooking demonstrations to expose the students to healthy, simple recipes that contained a variety of different fruits and vegetables.

Each week before class, students were asked what foods they prepared at home. By the end of the series, students were so excited to report what they had cooked with their families that there was not enough time for everyone to share. Many shared stories of making recipes they had seen in class such as veggie skewers, smoothies, broccoli salad, and taco dip with veggie-rich salsa. **EFNEP helped students discover exciting ways to incorporate a variety of new vegetables into their diet and increase the amount of nutrients they were consuming.**



### Swapping Sugar-Sweetened Drinks for Healthier Options

Many children adopt unhealthy behaviors at an early age such as consuming excessive amounts of added sugars. Consuming too much sugar can have negative health outcomes such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and some forms of cancer. The current Dietary Guidelines state that "just about everyone, no matter their health status, can benefit from shifting food and beverage choices to better support healthy dietary patterns."

While programming in Ashe County Schools, North Carolina Cooperative Extension Services and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) emphasized the importance of limiting added sugars to no more than 10% of their daily caloric needs. 89 students were challenged to replace sugar-sweetened beverages with low-fat milk or water at mealtime. This simple goal encouraged nutrient-dense options and reduced the consumption of sugary beverages that have little to no nutrients. EFNEP taught students how to compare nutrients in beverages and other foods by reading the nutrient facts label. They compared the labels on milk, water, juice, and sports drinks. **As a result, about 85% of students reported that they drank low-fat milk or water with dinner and thought they could continue this healthy behavior.** Following a healthy diet throughout a lifetime has a profound impact on a person's health. Creating new habits that will keep youth mindful of making healthy choices will help to prevent chronic diseases later in life.

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