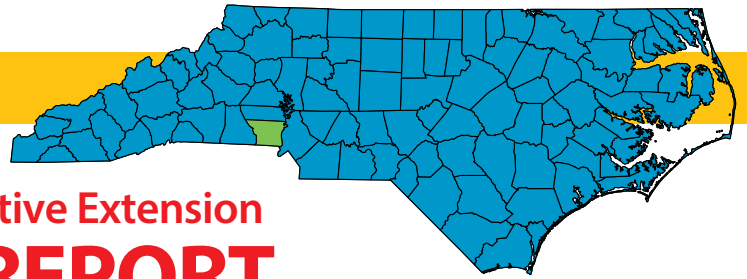




NC Cooperative Extension 2021 REPORT

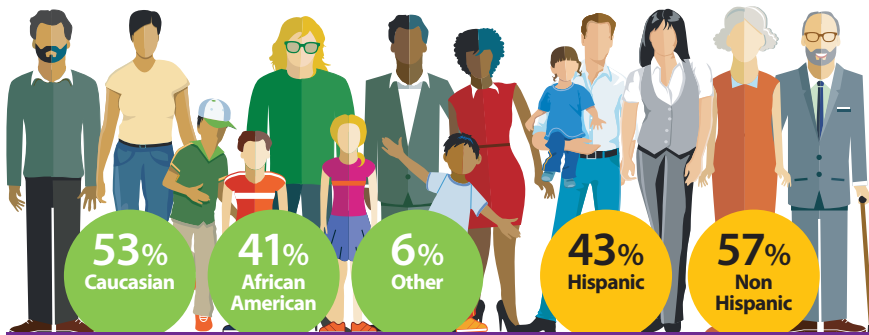


North Carolina

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 Gaston County Report

EFNEP used multiple strategies to get needed nutrition and food safety information to low-income audiences throughout the pandemic. In Gaston County, 148 individuals were reached through direct programming.

Gaston County EFNEP programs obtained
\$21,086 in funding and support from local efforts.

EFNEP SUCCESS



EFNEP Goes Virtual

In June of 2020, shortly after COVID-19 halted the possibility of face-to-face programming, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) partnered with the Gaston College Upward Bound program. The program provides fundamental support to high school students so that they may graduate from high school, enroll in college, and ultimately obtain a college degree. The Gaston College Upward Bound program project director reached out to the EFNEP educator to deliver nutrition education to their rising senior students. By partnering with EFNEP, the students learned basic cooking skills to easily and inexpensively prepare meals for themselves and have a better understanding of nutrition to make healthy choices in the future.

EFNEP taught six lessons, which included hands-on cooking demonstrations, food safety demonstrations, and kitchen safety. The EFNEP educator taught using an online virtual learning platform. In order to keep students engaged, she gave each student packages containing the workbooks, ingredients, and other lesson materials. This allowed students to participate in the lessons from the comfort of their homes.

This was the first remote nutrition education program the students had participated in, and it was a huge success! **The students loved having the opportunity to cook a new meal every day in their own kitchen saying: "I can't wait to share this with my mom. She's going to be so impressed."** After the program was completed, the project director reached out to the EFNEP educator, and said she could not wait to participate in the program again next year.



EFNEP Uses of Technology to Expand Reach to New Audiences

With traditional programming restricted due to COVID-19, the Gaston County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) faced one of its biggest challenges. EFNEP programming was historically done through face-to-face interactive classes which included games and cooking and food safety demonstrations. To accommodate these changes, the EFNEP educator worked quickly to transition to virtual programming to keep the participants and partners engaged.

The EFNEP educator began recruiting participants for the online program through social media and emailing past and current partners. Participants who enrolled in EFNEP online were able to take the lessons on their own while meeting with the EFNEP educator in between lessons. After completing the program, participants received various skill builders that allowed them to practice skills they learned. Thanks to a donation from a community partner, participants also received a \$10 grocery store gift card to purchase ingredients to make one of the lesson recipes at home.

Although face-to-face programming was not an option during the pandemic, technology made it possible to continue to uphold EFNEP's mission — to help limited-resource audiences in acquiring the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and changed behaviors necessary for nutritionally sound diets, and to contribute to their personal development and the improvement of the total family diet and nutritional well-being.

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