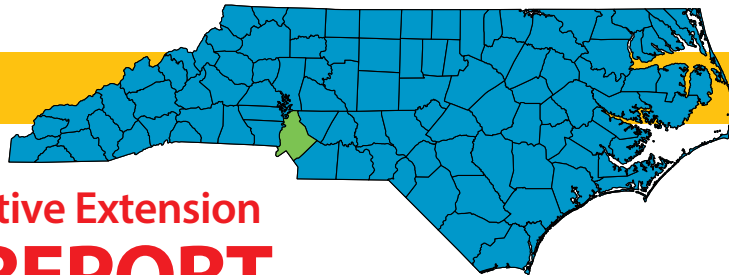




# NC Cooperative Extension 2021 REPORT

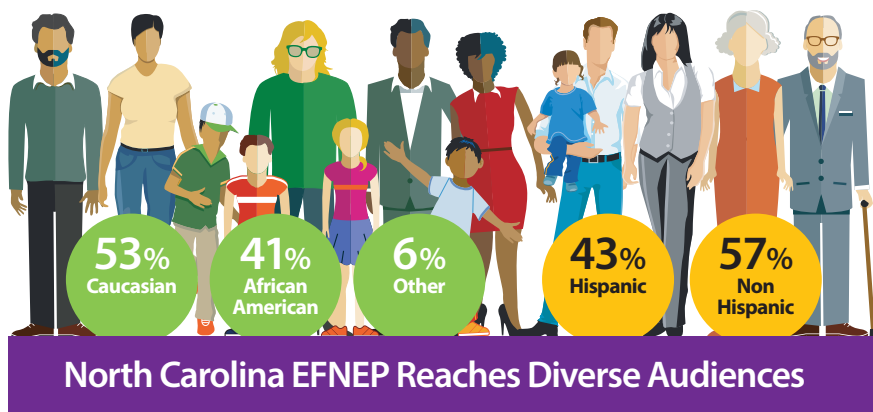


## North Carolina

### 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



#### 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:

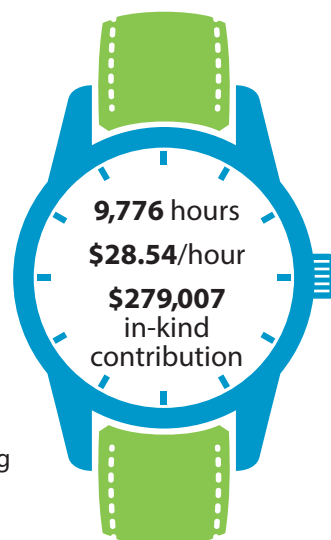
- Make wise food choices
- Increase daily physical activity
- Manage food resources
- Practice food safety

### 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 Mecklenburg County Report

EFNEP used multiple strategies to get needed nutrition and food safety information to low-income audiences throughout the pandemic. In Mecklenburg County, 108 individuals were reached through direct programming.

Mecklenburg County EFNEP programs obtained **\$1,280** in funding and support from local efforts.

## EFNEP SUCCESS



### EFNEP Classes Are Changing Lives During the Pandemic

The EFNEP educator in Mecklenburg County partnered with the Renaissance West Community Initiative (RWCI). RWCI was founded to break intergenerational cycles of poverty in west Charlotte. One of its focus areas is in health, wellness, and opportunity for all.

RWCI was thrilled when the EFNEP educator contacted them to offer EFNEP classes to adults in their community. They had noticed an uptick in the number of grandparents needing to step in and provide full time care for their grandchildren during the pandemic. These grandparents desired information on how to provide quality care for their grandchildren, as well as how to maintain their own health in order to be available to their grandchildren for years to come.

The EFNEP educator had to be creative in offering socially distanced education. She mailed EFNEP lessons to the participants and then called them to follow-up with one-on-one education and support. One of the participants in the EFNEP class, a grandmother, confided that she had been struggling and that finding low cost and easy to prepare recipes had been very difficult for her.

At the conclusion of the EFNEP series, the participant reported that during a time of social distancing, she enjoyed the regularly scheduled conversations with the EFNEP educator. She learned to read food labels to assist her in recognizing how much carbohydrate, protein, and fiber the food contained. She also appreciated the free cookbook, calendar, and kitchen utensils, which she found to be very helpful during a financially stressful time.

The grandmother stated, **"I really enjoyed the EFNEP class. I now have more recipes to try, as I change my diet**

**to a healthier lifestyle, in keeping with the health issues I have.** The recipe cards with nutrition information have been especially helpful. The knowledge and support of the program enhanced my chances of success in changing my eating habits. The classes were the highlight of my day during this COVID-19 pandemic!"



### Virtual EFNEP Class Reduces Physical Activity Burden for Busy Mom

At the beginning of an EFNEP series, participants complete a pre-survey form with questions related to their current diet quality, physical activity, food safety, and food resource management practices. The classes are designed to teach participants how to improve these health-related habits. At the end of the series, participants complete the survey again to assess the impact the class had on their behaviors.

During one of Mecklenburg County's virtual EFNEP classes, the educator noticed that many participants indicated on their pre-survey that they were not getting enough physical activity. This prompted her to plan each lesson so it included a physical activity focus.

One mother was especially grateful for practical ideas to be more active while caring for her three children. She reported, "I always thought that I had to exercise for 30 minutes straight for the activity to make a difference in my health. In [the educator's] class, she talked about the idea of exercising in 10- or 15-minute increments throughout the day. I now do physical activity at least 30 to 60 minutes a day without much thought. I have noticed that I feel better throughout the day, and I sleep better at night. I will definitely recommend this class to my family and friends!"

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