

MOUNTAIN PLAINS REGIONAL REPORT



2003

Food Stamp Nutrition Education

SPONSORING AGENCIES:

United States Department of Agriculture
Cooperative Extension Services
Public Health Departments
State and Local Food Stamp Programs
State Universities:

Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri,
Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota,
South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming

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introduction

GOAL OF THE USDA FOOD STAMP NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

To provide educational programs that increase, within a limited budget, the likelihood of food stamp recipients making healthy food choices consistent with the most recent dietary advice as reflected in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Food Guide Pyramid.

IMPLEMENTATION

State agencies charged with administering the Food Stamp Program for the USDA (e.g., Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services or Department of Health and Human Services) contract with the participating Cooperative Extension Services (CES) and state Public Health Departments to develop and deliver nutrition education programs. In turn, they partner with a wide range of state and local agencies to identify target audiences for nutrition education and to foster collaborative efforts in implementing nutrition programming.

FY 2003 FEDERAL FUNDING FOR THE MOUNTAIN PLAINS STATES

Federal funds requested:
(FSNE+Networks)

\$16,156,336

Match provided:

\$18,044,552

PARTICIPANT STATES*

Colorado*
Iowa*
Kansas*

Missouri**
Montana
Nebraska

North Dakota
South Dakota*
Utah

Wyoming

*These states also have Nutrition Networks.

**University of Missouri at Columbia and Lincoln University.

community partners

The strength of the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program largely lies in its community partnerships with organizations and agencies. They offer a wide range of resources such as referral of eligible participants, team teaching, meeting space, child care, transportation, food demonstration supplies, interpreters, equipment and cash donations for supplementary resources.

Partners include the following:

Adult and Childcare Providers	Hunger Coalitions
After-school Programs	Indian Health Services and Clinics
Alternative High Schools	Learning Centers (ESL)
Area Agencies on Aging	Local Housing Authorities
Boys and Girls Clubs	Local Hispanic Centers
Commodity Food Distribution Organizations	Mental Health Agencies
Community Action Agencies	Parents as Teachers
Community Colleges	Parks and Recreation Departments
Correctional Facilities (early release)	Public Health Departments
County Extension Offices	Public Libraries
Departments of Education	Public Schools
Departments of Human Services	Religious Organizations
Even Start	Salvation Army
Food Banks and Pantries	Senior Centers
Grocery Stores	SHARE
Head Start	Social Services Agencies
Homeless Shelters	WIC
Hospitals	YMCA/YWCA

programming efforts

PROGRAMMING EFFORTS

Direct Client Contact (one-on-one; groups)	2,150,307
Indirect Client Contact (mailings, displays, PSAs)	5,114,450

COUNTIES SERVED

Urban*	57
Rural	536

*(Populations greater than 50,000)

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 452,721

	Female	Male	Total
Youth (3-12)	126,731	126,357	253,088
Teen (13-18)	13,988	9,325	23,313
Adults (19-59)	96,476	33,488	139,178
Older Adults (60 and above)	20,786	16,356	37,142

ETHNICITY/RACE OF PARTICIPANTS:

Caucasian	714,998
African American	213,627
Hispanic	42,815
American Indian	25,980
Asian/Pacific Islander	3,519

NUMBER OF CLIENTS REACHED BY VARIOUS METHODS**:

Direct Contacts

One-on-one education	40,890
Group education	1,827,652

Indirect Contacts

Newsletter	1,573,349
PSA	1,305,255
Newspaper	217,240
Displays	202,766
Calendar	11,702
Interactive CD-ROMs	11,702
Kiosk	7,584
Web-based program	3,349
Other	114,359

** These figures represent how many times people participated in FSNE and how many pieces of FSNE information were shared with program participants. They do not reflect the number of people who participated in the program.

program topics

Topics include the following:

Breakfast
Breakfast on-the-Go
Calcium
Children's Gardening and Nutrition Activities
Cooking with Children
Cooking with Herbs and Spices
Dietary Guidelines
Eating Out
Eat Smart/Play Hard
Electronic Benefits Displays
Fiber
Fitness Guide Pyramid
Food Guide Pyramid
Food Resource Management
Food Safety
Healthy Snacking
Infant and Toddler Nutrition
Kids in the Kitchen
Meal Time/Family Time
Meals for One or Two
Media Literacy (for youth curricula pertaining to food, nutrition and healthy body image)
Nutrition Facts Labels
Physical Activity
Pregnancy and Post-natal Nutrition
Preparation and Storage of Fruits and Vegetables
Recipe Modification
Smart Shopping
Spanish Recipes
Use of Commodity Foods
Water
Working with Basic Ingredients

NEW CURRICULA OR MATERIALS DEVELOPED

Examples:

ABCs for Good Health Toolkit
Book in a Bag (additional lessons)
Eat Smart. Play Hard in South Dakota
Family Fun with New Foods
Food for All (video)
Food Safety Protocol
Healthy Choices for a Healthy Body
Kids a Cookin' (additional videos)
Kids in the Kitchen (additional lessons)
Nebraska Youth Toolkit
Nutrition Expeditions
Pick a Better Snack
Ready-Quick Mix Recipe Book
Soup or Sauce Recipe Book
Spanish EBT Record Book

outcome measurements

OUTCOME MEASUREMENTS

To assess our impact, a regional reporting form and evaluation indicators have been developed. The indicators are based on the White Papers which were written by committees appointed by Food and Nutrition Services to identify needs that should be addressed by the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program. The five topics are: diet quality, food resource management, food safety, food security, and systems and environmental change. Under each of the broad categories, the Mountain Plains Region evaluation committee developed indicators to assess the program impact.

DIETARY QUALITY

Number of participants who have indicated that they either have moved closer or plan to move closer to:

- 23,264 eating the recommended number of servings from the Food Guide Pyramid;
- 6,233 increasing their level of physical activity;
- 28,055 following the recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and
- 22,812 increasing fruit and vegetable consumption.

The Department of Human Services asked an FNP program assistant to help a pregnant client who was mentally challenged. She and her husband were heavy consumers of cigarettes, coffee and junk food. The PA enrolled the couple in the Have a Healthy Baby program. They worked very hard at changing their unhealthy behaviors, cutting back on smoking and coffee and added milk, fruits and vegetables to their diet. After they completed the nutrition lessons they requested help with shopping skills and using their food stamps wisely. The end result was a very healthy seven-pound baby boy! **(IA)**

Two months into the FSNE program, the executive director of a Boys and Girls Club reported a 100 percent improvement in the daily snack provided by the club! "Before this nutrition program, our snacks consisted of sweets, doughnuts, candy and baked goods," the director stated. "Now the snacks consist of fruits and vegetables, milk products, casseroles and whole grain products. This is a direct result of the nutrition education you provided to our staff, and the nutrition education our program assistant now provides to our youth." **(CO)**

A student's mother was in the grocery store looking for "something called a mango." Her son came home excited about tasting mangos in the FSNE class and wanted her to buy one. She couldn't get him to eat fruits, so she was trying to find one. The taste-testing works! **(MO)**

FOOD BUDGETING AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Number of participants who indicated they have made or plan to make a positive or behavioral change in at least one of the following:

- 10,398 using a spending plan more often,
- 10,628 utilizing a menu plan,
- 14,483 shopping from a list more often and
- 13,336 comparison-shopping more often.

One young mom said she was able to save money by the time she graduated from FNP. Using menu planning and shopping lists she not only cut her grocery bill in half but she also increased the nutritional value of the foods the family was eating. **(UT)**

indicators of program impact

An FNP client reported that he has been following menu-planning sheets we created in a class, and it has made a difference in what remains in his wallet at the grocery store. Although he is still learning to finesse the details—such as buying in season—he was pleased to share that he had been able to cut \$31-\$36 off his monthly grocery bill. This savings enabled him to purchase a set of mixing bowls, pots and pans. He is currently saving for a microwave. **(ND)**

An FNP nutrition educator reported that a young father in her class was knowledgeable about food safety and nutrition, and did the grocery shopping for his family of five. Originally he was closed-minded in seeing the value of a menu plan. The nutrition educator persuaded him to try it just one week. Not only did he cut his food bill by 23 percent, he reported that he must have saved a quarter tank of gas and gained four hours because of his planning. His children are now planning with him. It was a learning experience for the whole family! **(WY)**

FOOD SAFETY

Number of participants who indicated that they have made or plan to make a positive behavioral change in one or more of the following:

- 11,787 less often let food sit out more than 2 hours,
- 21,298 wash their hands more often before touching food,
- 9,434 keep raw meat separate from other foods more often and
- 3,388 cook meat and eggs thoroughly more often.

Several clients participated in a community potluck after they had participated in an FNP class. The FNP nutrition educator reported being thrilled to see that perishable foods were wrapped and put in the refrigerator after everyone was served instead of allowing them to sit out for hours. **(MT)**

Children in an FNP class were surprised that eating food that did not look bad could make them very sick. Although most of them knew basic food safety, several of them reported that their mothers always put meat in the sink to thaw so it was ready to use when they got home from work. **(NE)**

In a previous FNP class, one participant thought that if she wore gloves that she didn't have to wash her hands. The nutrition assistant discussed this food safety principle in every class. At the last two classes, the participant washed her hands without being told, even though she wore gloves too. That might seem insignificant, but for her that was a real behavior change. **(KS)**

FOOD SECURITY

Number of participants who indicated the following:

- 1,293 decreased the frequency of seeking emergency food assistance (e.g., food pantry, soup kitchen, etc).
- 2,106 increased the use of available non-emergency food assistance programs (e.g., WIC, food stamps, school breakfast, etc).

Number of participants who indicated they had enough to eat:

10,429 always 1,975 most of the time 377 sometimes 87 never

(continued)

barriers

A participant at a local homeless shelter told an FNP nutrition educator, "You are just what I needed today." The young woman was six months pregnant, confined to a wheelchair and was trying to learn to cook for herself. The nutrition educator really was making a difference for the client and her baby nutritionally and socially. **(MT)**

The local Department of Workforce Food Stamp Program referred a couple with two little girls to the Family Nutrition Program. The husband was out of work, and the wife was inexperienced in cooking. The husband did the cooking if they ate at home. The nutrition educator enrolled the couple in classes. After two classes the husband had a stroke and was hospitalized for an extended period of time. During this time the wife continued with the nutrition classes, which always included a cooking experience. The husband is permanently disabled, but the wife has continued to learn to cook the family meals. Because the wife stayed with the FNP lessons, the family is able to eat nutritiously with very limited means. **(UT)**

SYSTEM AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

342 number of new collaborating partnerships

1,374 number of new collaborations with existing partners

The county food pantry now has a policy that any person who receives assistance for six straight months will be referred to the Family Nutrition Program to learn about nutrition, meal planning, food shopping and food safety. **(ND)**

As the series of basic cooking classes has increased in frequency, several agencies that work with disabled adults have started providing food through grants written to further provide nutrition education to special-needs adults. **(SD)**

Barriers

Optimal programming is diminished because of the prevalence of one or more of the following:

- Basic needs to be met first (getting enough to eat is higher priority than nutrition)
- Confidentiality issues with referral partners
- Cultural barriers
- Establishing credibility with new and existing agencies
- Funding/staffing/budget cuts
- Lack of program awareness
- Lack of childcare and transportation
- Lack of client knowledge of the connection between diet and disease
- Lack of client motivation
- Lack of time/work schedules
- Lack of teacher time/competition for classroom time
- Language barriers
- Learning disabilities
- Literacy skills
- Personnel changes at collaborating agencies
- Poor communication skills
- Pride and self-esteem issues
- Recruitment difficulties
- Transition of clients and/or no telephone
- Work schedule conflicts



Summary

Having completed the 10th year of the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Project, we see many of our limited-resource families making significant behavioral changes such as:

- increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables,
- balancing the food they eat with physical activity,
- utilizing more non-emergency food assistance programs and
- managing their food resources by using a menu and comparison shopping.

Innovative programming and materials are being tailored to the needs of our clientele. Program evaluation is helping us assess their progress toward behavioral change. Finally, collaborations and partnerships play an indispensable role in reaching the food-stamp eligible audience.

state reports



COLORADO HIGHLIGHTS

The Colorado Nutrition Education Plan comprises four components:

- The **Colorado Nutrition Network** is a statewide collaborative alliance with the mission to link together public and private organizations to promote and coordinate nutrition education for low-income Coloradoans. The network has two major initiatives: the "Nutrition Links" program and the Food Friends Making New Foods Fun for Kids™ program.
- **Adult FSNE** provides classes, demonstrations and educational activities on nutrition, food choices, food buying, food safety and food resource management in 20 counties through Colorado State University Cooperative Extension.
- **Youth FSNE** programs are offered statewide in classrooms and after-school settings. The Integrated Nutrition Program targets fruit/vegetable intake and physical activity promotion; the Seeds for Health Program and the Growth Project include gardening and seed planting; the Health Kids' Challenge targets healthy lifestyle choices; and the Denver Museum of Nature and Science offers nutrition lab classes.
- La Cocina Saludable interactive multimedia program is the major initiative of the **Alternative Strategies** component. La Cocina Saludable, Spanish for "The Healthy Kitchen," has six bilingual learning modules: Make It Healthy, Make It Safe, Make A Change, Make It Fun, Make A Plan, and Make A Great Start. This touch-screen computer program is placed in such sites as food assistance offices, WIC clinics, health clinics and other locations that are visited frequently by limited-resource families.

Target Audience

Colorado's NEP provides nutrition education for low-income individuals and families of all ages from preschoolers to seniors. Programs use various strategies and delivery modes.

Objectives

The overall objective is to help low-income and food stamp-eligible populations in Colorado acquire awareness, knowledge, skills, attitudes, practices and behaviors related to nutrition, food and physical activity that lead to healthier lifestyles.

More specifically, participants will:

- make food choices that follow the Dietary Guidelines and the Food Guide Pyramid,
- increase nutrition and physical activity knowledge,
- increase fruit and vegetable consumption,
- reduce fat consumption,
- improve food safety practices and
- improve food resource management.

Partnerships/Collaborations

Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Department of Human Services, Colorado Head Start Association, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Second Harvest Food Banks, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, Children's Hospital Foundation, AMC Cancer Research Center, American Cancer Society, Denver Urban Gardens, CSU Cooperative Extension, WIC, CACFP, food stamp program, public school districts, Colorado Share Program, low-income housing authorities, Salvation Army, Goodwill, local libraries, YWCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, juveniled Diversion programs and many more at the local level.

Evaluation of Impact

Each program is evaluated to show outcomes and impact. Methods to capture the results of each unique program are varied. Following are some of the highlights:

- For the Food Friends™ program, 88 percent of the children tried all four novel foods presented during the evaluation period, and 2,700 sets of parent materials were distributed.
- For adult FSNE graduates 88 percent reported a positive change in their eating habits, 77 percent showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices (planning meals, comparing prices, not running out of food, shopping with a list), 88 percent showed improvement in one or more nutrition practice (reading nutrition labels, eating breakfast, making healthy food choices, planning meals), 64 percent showed improvement in one or more food safety practices (thawing and storing foods properly), and graduates reported an average savings of \$75.64 on the monthly food bill.
- Within the Integrated Nutrition Program (INP), treatment children consistently (same effect seen in other years) consume more fruits and vegetables, typically 0.25 to 0.4 servings more than control children. The food preference and favorite food data strongly suggest that children in INP have greater exposure to and acceptance of fruits and vegetables.

More than 8,000 modules of interactive multimedia were accessed in 12 counties and 32 sites, with 30.6 percent being conducted in Spanish. In addition, the percent of accesses longer than four minutes increased from last year by more than 5 percent, from 9.1 percent to 14.2 percent of accesses.

Success Stories

In Pueblo County we collaborated with the Grocery Warehouse to provide limited-resource shoppers with a store tour. We pre-shopped for a list of 20 items and compared the national brand with the store brand before the tour began. During the tour, we went through each of the departments and shared ideas on how to read labels, look for nutrient content, cost-compare by reading the shelf labels and unit prices, and compare brands. Then we filled two carts with the store brand versus the nationally advertised brand and checked out both carts on the store's training mode. The shoppers were surprised to find that savings totaled close to 40 percent when buying the store brand rather than the nationally advertised brand. We concluded the tour with taste-testing of healthy foods in the grocery store break room. Participants completed the FSNE lessons on Eat Well for Less. One commented, "I learned how to shop for food smarter, be more discriminating and compare prices!"



IOWA HIGHLIGHTS

IOWA NUTRITION NETWORK, IOWA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Target Audience and Core Objectives

- **Network development:** Convey consistent, research-based, nutrition messages to food stamp-eligible individuals and families in Iowa. Strengthen the abilities of community nutrition coalitions to increase healthful, nutrition practices among targeted, low-income audiences. Create a network of public and private partners that support nutrition education.
- **Social marketing campaign:** Promote the consumption of fruits and vegetables as snacks among children and their caregivers. Among these low-income audiences, improve awareness of the campaign message and attitudes toward fruit and vegetable consumption.
- **Seniors:** Improve nutrition knowledge and healthful nutrition practices among low-income seniors served by community coalitions and area agencies on aging.
- **Food security:** Improve communication and cooperation among state and local agencies that fund or administer programs connected to food security, hunger, nutrition, and food safety.

Partnerships and Collaborations:

The network collaborates with local nutrition coalitions to conduct nutrition education programs at the community level. The network supports the coalitions with funding, training, and nutrition education materials. In 2003, 25 coalitions achieved over 400,000 direct nutrition education contacts and 5,000,000 indirect contacts in 33 of 99 counties. The network supports a state-level coalition of 40 partners that meet on a quarterly basis.

Evaluation of Impact

Outcome evaluation of the Pick a better snack™ campaign was performed in two pilot-test cities. Surveys (n=600) were conducted in food stamp offices to determine if the campaign was effective in reaching the targeted audience. Results indicate that half of those surveyed (51%) had heard of Pick a better snack™ or saw the accompanying messages. Campaign messages were most frequently reported as being seen or heard from the following: billboards (48%); TV (36%); WIC offices (34%); grocery stores (29%), and schools (28%). Of the survey respondents who heard or saw the campaign 73 percent knew the campaign purpose, 25 percent stated they were starting to eat more fruits and vegetables, and 36 percent were thinking about it because of the campaign.

Surveys were used in elementary schools to examine the effect of classroom campaign promotions (n=1455). Surveys measured campaign recognition, as well as students' attitudes about eating fruits and vegetables for snacks. Logo recognition was

statistically significant across grades ($p < .01$). The number of children who selected smiles, to represent "liking" particular six fruits and six vegetables for snacks increased significantly, pre to post-campaign implementation ($p < .01$).

FAMILY NUTRITION PROGRAM, IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

Target Audience

The primary audiences in Iowa for Food Stamp Nutrition Education are low-income adults with young children, pregnant teens and low-income youth. Seven urban counties and 25 rural counties were involved in the program during FY2003. A total of 1,055 adults and pregnant teens were enrolled in a program that provided seven to ten lessons, based on need and situation. In addition, 4,277 youth received group nutrition education through youth FNP, and 8,925 youth received nutrition education from adults trained in the Food, Fiber and Environment Science project.

Objectives

The behavioral and educational objectives in Iowa are to:

- increase the ability of individuals and families with limited resources to use their food dollars and food stamps wisely to purchase and prepare safe, nourishing foods that will lead to increased nutritional status of family members,
- increase knowledge of nutrition and the addition of healthy food choices in elementary-age youth and
- increase understanding of how local food systems and community environments influence the ability of households with limited incomes to feed themselves.

Partnerships and Collaborations

Partnerships and collaborations include local churches, school districts and area education agencies; community action groups; local empowerment boards; county public health, local hospitals, and infant/maternal health clinics; family resource centers; food pantries; Head Start; Stork's Nest; Iowa Workforce Development/Promise Jobs; WIC; Youth and Shelter Services; and YWCA.

Evaluation of Impact

When adult participants entered the program, only 18.8 percent reported a food pattern of 3-1-1-1-1. This percentage increased to 43.1 percent by the time participants graduated from the program.

Of the 681 low-income adults and pregnant teens who graduated from the program:

- 86 percent showed improvement in one or more nutrition practices,
- 76 percent showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and
- 62 percent showed improvement in one or more food safety practices.

Of the small number of youth tested with pre- and post-test items:

- 33 percent increased their knowledge of the essentials of human nutrition,
- 24.3 percent improved practices in food preparation and safety and
- 13 percent increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods.

Success Story: Working Together to Improve Food Security in Iowa

The Family Nutrition Program and the Nutrition Network worked cooperatively to examine community food insecurity in Iowa. The Community Food Assessment project compared how vulnerable populations in rural and urban counties obtain food for themselves and their families. Greater awareness about hunger and food insecurity in Iowa was promoted with the development of a video and Web site. Communities will be able to access poverty data, assessment tools, reports, discussion guides, and policy briefs that can be used to create a local food-security profile. www.extension.iastate.edu/hunger



KANSAS HIGHLIGHTS

Target audience

The Family Nutrition Program in Kansas targets all age groups. School-age youth make up the majority of the contacts, followed by parents with young children and older adults. FNP also serves a growing number of Latinos across the state.

Objectives

Ongoing participant behavioral objectives for FNP are the following:

- learn to choose and prepare nutritious meals and snacks,
- balance food eaten with physical activity,
- use safe food handling, preparation and storage practices,
- manage food resources and use thrifty shopping practices, and
- move toward achieving food security.

Partnerships and Collaborations

The Kansas Family Nutrition Program has collaborative partnerships* with:

- schools, libraries and learning centers;
- WIC and health departments;
- senior centers and congregate meal sites;
- Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services; and
- Head Start, Early Head Start and childcare centers.

*List is not all-inclusive

Evaluation of impact after participating in FNP (sample)

Outcomes for adults and teens indicate:

Dietary Quality

- 49 percent intend to consume more fruits and vegetables per day.
- 47 percent intend to consume more servings of grains per day.
- 40 percent intend to consume meals that include a variety of foods from the Food Guide Pyramid more often.

Food Resource Management

- 52 percent intend to plan meals ahead of time more often.
- 43 percent intend to shop from a list more often.

Food Safety

- 49 percent intend to wash hands more often before eating.
- 31 percent intend to keep raw meat separate from other foods more often.

Outcomes for children grades 3-6 (Professor Popcorn curriculum)

Correct responses on pre-test and post-test were:

- I almost always wash my hands before I touch or eat food (pre-test 56 percent; post-test 66 percent).
- I almost always eat different kinds of vegetables every day (pre-test 49 percent; post-test 31 percent).

Outcomes for children grades K-2

Correct responses on pre-test and post-test were:

The correct number of food groups in a cheeseburger (pre-test 55 percent; post-test 78 percent).

The length of time you should wash your hands (pre-test 70 percent; post-test 99 percent).

Success Stories

Dietary Quality

A teacher visited with a Latino mother whose son was in her class. They have only been in the United States for a year. The mother didn't know about the Food Guide Pyramid. Her son, after participating in a FNP class, explained it to her. She said now she tries to buy food from each food group of the pyramid so her family will eat better and be healthier.

Food Security

Through the Junior Master Gardener classes, FNP touches the lives of shut-in low-income seniors. In one community, FNP worked together with other groups to make a youth garden. Surplus produce was delivered to low-income older adults who are unable to leave their homes.

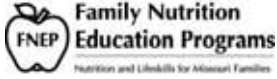
The Kansas Nutrition Network (KNN) continues to improve our effectiveness in developing and supporting partnerships with organizations that provide nutrition and/or physical activity education, and with improving access to nutrition resources. KNN revised its mission statement, developed a new logo, started a Web site, www.kansasnutritionnetwork.org, and initiated monthly e-mail newsletters. Past issues of the newsletter are posted on the Web site.

KNN worked in partnership with Kansas Association of Community Action Programs (KACAP) and Social and Rehabilitation Services on a project to increase collaboration between programs and organizations involved in food assistance program outreach.

Food stamp promotional campaigns were conducted in two communities with a grant from the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund. Approximately 213 additional households above the expected statewide average increase in food stamp participation participated in food stamps in the two target communities during the period March 2002 through August 2003. Using average household food stamp benefits, these additional households received approximately \$411,516 per year in food stamp benefits, making a significant impact on their food security and nutritional well being.

In Nutrition: Good for You! additional training sessions were offered to childcare providers who care for low-income children. The evaluation of one of the lessons in this curriculum was published in the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior (J Nutr Educ Behav. 2002:34:343-344).

KNN assisted in providing a speaker on childhood overweight at the Kansas Nutrition Council (KNC) annual meeting. Through a grant from the Sunflower Foundation, KNN conducted a successful pilot test of a childhood overweight prevention project. Berry Berry Good is an innovative nutrition and physical activity program for children in Head Start and child care programs. It encourages increased consumption of fruits and vegetables, and promotes use of small nylon scarves as a simple way for children to engage in physical activities in childcare programs and at home.



MISSOURI HIGHLIGHTS

Target Audience

Food stamp recipients of all ages including youth and the adults who support them.

Objectives

- Food security: to ensure that individuals and families have enough to eat, with less reliance on emergency food assistance,
- Food safety: to improve households' safe handling, preparation and storage of food,
- Food resource management: to enhance practices related to thrifty shopping for and preparation of nutritious foods,
- Dietary guidelines: to motivate consumers to adopt eating and lifestyle behaviors consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Food Guide Pyramid and
- System and environmental change: to change the system or environment so healthy food and lifestyle choices are more available to food stamp participants.

Partnerships and Collaborations

Partnerships and collaboration are key to successful programming across Missouri. Partnering agencies for educational and network activities include WIC clinics, local community agencies, prisons, housing authorities, health departments, Head Start, senior centers, Department of Education and schools, day care centers, grocery stores, libraries, Parents as Teachers, University Outreach and Extension, Department of Social Services - Food Stamp Division, Department of Mental Health, Department of Agriculture, Missouri Association for Community Action, food banks, Bootheel Heart Health Coalition and Bootheel Healthy Start.

Evaluation of impact

Method of impact evaluation varied in order to capture results of the unique programs within the Missouri Nutrition Network and University of Missouri Outreach and Extension Family Nutrition Program. Following are some highlights:

Adult Participants

When asked about their dietary changes after the Eat for Health campaign, Missouri Nutrition Network program participants revealed the following:

- 55 percent ate more fruits,
- 62 percent ate more vegetables and
- 53 percent ate more whole grain bread and pasta.

Missouri Nutrition Network supermarket festival participants reported the following:

- 67 percent said the nutrition information was helpful,
- 69 percent said they would buy different foods,
- 76 percent said they would prepare foods differently,
- 87 percent said that baking and grilling were healthy ways to prepare meat and
- 92 percent said that frying was not a healthy way to prepare meat.

Teens/Youth

In the University of Missouri Family Nutrition Program, a subset of 101 teens reported their changes since attending classes:

- 77 percent were keeping food safer,
- 76 percent were eating healthier meals and snacks and
- 74 percent were more physically active.

Teachers whose classes received the University of Missouri Family Nutrition Program reported these changes:

- 831 teachers reported an average of 62 percent* of students were more aware of nutrition,
- 564 teachers reported an average of 53 percent* of students made healthier nutrition choices;
- 349 teachers reported an average of 58 percent* of students were more willing to try new foods and
- 133 teachers reported an average of 71 percent* of students had improved hand washing.

*Estimated percents based on average of percents provided (not provided for all groups), with classrooms treated as equal in size.

Success Story

From a child at the store:

"Mrs. B! I made my physical activity goal!" This third-grader kept her daily plan all summer. Instead of TV each morning, she rode her bike to the park, played on the equipment and rode back home. She ate more fruits and vegetables and fewer fried snack foods. The student reported that she had lost weight, had more energy and was feeling great!



MONTANA HIGHLIGHTS

Target Audience

Food Stamp Nutrition Education in Montana serves limited-resource individuals of all ages who are receiving or are eligible to receive food stamps. Programming is delivered in 30 of the state's 56 counties, including four Indian reservations.

Objectives

- use the Food Guide Pyramid and Dietary Guidelines to make healthy food choices with particular focus on increasing consumption of fruit, vegetables and whole grains;
- use food-shopping strategies to cut costs and stretch food stamps and other food sources;
- use planning skills to make food and/or food stamps last for the month and
- use safe and sanitary food preparation and storage techniques.

Partnerships and Collaborations

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (EBT system information, TANF, workforce training); Montana State University Extension field offices; TEAM Nutrition (state action plan); Office of Public Instruction (summer feeding & after-school programs); Human Resource Development Councils; Montana Council on Aging (Commodity Senior Food Programs); Eat Right Montana Coalition; and the State Advisory Council on Food and Nutrition (WIC, Food Bank Network, etc.).

Evaluation of Impact

Method of impact evaluation varied to reflect multiple or individual lessons. A "Call To Action" during each class encourages participants to act on a behavior change they would be willing to try. Nutrition assistants increased their direct contacts by 29 percent over last year, reaching 26,998 participants. Newsletter distribution increased by 10 percent, with a distribution of 30,530.

Success Stories

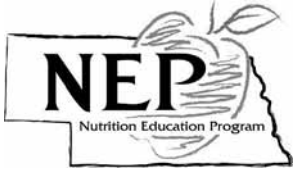
Diet Quality/Resource Management

"I feel I accomplished something with one of my seniors who, because of illness in the family, has now become the caregiver for his wife and disabled son. He said he is now making changes to their diet so it is more balanced, and he found out he likes to cook."

Resource Management

"I was at the grocery store shopping for my family when one of the couples from my class came up to me and showed me that they had written a grocery list. They were going to try to prepare some of the recipes we'd made in class."

"The grocery store tour last week was the first time I'd had participants who had never grocery shopped for themselves. I gave them a budget, they planned their menus and wrote out their lists, and we proceeded to shop. They were so proud of themselves for finding the 'deals,' and they even included some produce! Their planning paid off...they had money left at the checkout."



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NEBRASKA HIGHLIGHTS

Target Audience

Limited resource families, especially food stamp recipients, which include single parents, minority households, pregnant and parenting teens, at risk youth and older adults.

Objectives

- Food stamp recipients—especially single parents, older adults and minority households—will develop new skills and learn behaviors leading to improved nutritional well being and use of food resources.
- Pregnant and parenting teenagers receiving food stamps will increase knowledge of nutrition, improve their nutritional intakes and develop food resource management skills.
- Limited income children ages 2 to 18 years will increase nutrition knowledge and application of the knowledge.
- Nutrition education and training network (Community Nutrition Partnership Council) will provide educational in-service programs to support limited-resource families and to ensure non-duplication of services.

Partnerships and Collaborations

The Nebraska FSNE program has developed partnerships with local schools, community action agencies, WIC programs, local food pantries, the food bank, local Health and Human Services Systems Food Stamp Program, TANF case workers, job/life skill training programs, homeless shelters and programs, housing authority, senior programs, commodity food programs, Head Start and Early Head Start Programs, after-school programs and summer feeding programs.

Evaluation of Impact

Using a behavior checklist and conducting entry/exit 24-hour recalls on our graduates, the FSNE program continues to help families improve their nutrition, food safety and food resource management practices. Of the current 800 graduates of the program (entry versus exit data):

- 70 percent improved in at least one food resource management area
- 76 percent improved in one or more nutrition practices,
- 51 percent improved in one or more food safety practice and
- 87 percent improved in their nutrient intake according to their 24-hour recall.

Areas clients improved but still were below recommendations were:

- Number of fruit servings. Most clients (55 percent) on entry had close to zero daily servings. Even though there was improvement upon exiting, consumption (49 percent) was still below the minimum number of two servings per day.

- Calcium intake. The average daily intake from the milk and dairy group was less than two servings per day. At entry, 43 percent of graduates met 70 percent or more of the RDA; at exit 51, percent met 70 percent or more of the RDA.

Group Presentations Impact Data

Using regional indicators, participants in group presentations also demonstrated improvement.

- 667 participants moved closer to the recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines,
- 346 participants shopped from a list more often,
- 289 participants comparison shopped more often,
- 137 participants indicated they washed their hands more often before touching food and
- 224 participants indicated they less often let food sit out more than two hours.

Youth Programming

A total of 11,794 youth participated in FSNE programs, mostly in groups. Out of 1,851 youth, more than 71 percent demonstrated an increase in knowledge on why nutrition is important to good health, 48 percent of 689 youth indicated they improved their diets by eating a variety of foods, and 80 percent of the 2,876 youth improved practices in food preparation and safety.

Senior Programming

The older adult portion of the program has continued to be a program growth area.

Questions that were significant ($p < 0.05$) from pre- to post- were:

- I eat whole-grain foods.
- I eat three or more different vegetables a day.
- I choose foods that are low in sugar.
- I choose foods that are low in fat.
- I choose at least one serving of vitamin C-rich foods.
- I eat two or three servings of meat products every day.
- I eat at least two servings from the dairy group each day.

Success Stories

A nutrition educator stated that she had a number of clients (25 percent) participating in FNP who said they would look into the food stamp program because they needed extra assistance with food expenses.

One participant said she only sometimes had used a grocery list, but after the program she knows where her money goes (to all those extra little trips to the store), so she will be a better planner now.



NORTH DAKOTA HIGHLIGHTS

Target Audience

North Dakota's Family Nutrition Program (FNP) serves limited resource citizens of all ages including youth, families with children and seniors. FNP serves customers in all 53 of the state's counties and on Indian reservations. During the 2003 program year, 72,651 direct educational contacts and 622,321 indirect educational contacts were made with the target audience.

Objectives

The overall objective is to help food stamp recipients acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes and changed behavior needed to maximize resources to achieve nutritionally sound diets.

Specifically, participants will:

- make food safety changes by avoiding cross-contamination of food,
- make food purchasing changes by learning to read nutrition labels,
- increase consumption of fruits and vegetables and
- be assured access to enough food throughout the month.

Partnerships and Collaborations

The North Dakota Department of Human Services (NDDHS) is an especially strong partner, as evidenced by their electronic transmission of food-stamp household mailing labels to the NDSU Extension Service for the monthly printing of the FNP News. This newsletter goes directly to the home of each food-stamp recipient in the state and offers nutrition, food safety and food purchasing information to help reach the FNP overall objective.

Referrals and access to the intended target audience are other important avenues of partnership for the Family Nutrition Program. FNP reaches people by delivering education at locations the audience frequents. This continues to be a strong feature of FNP's success in North Dakota.

Evaluation of Impact

During the 2003 program year, goals were focused on one key concept of each FNP core area. Participants were surveyed after their involvement to determine impact of each program topic.

Survey results after FNP education indicate:

- 86.4 percent improved food safety practices by avoiding cross-contamination,
- 70.3 percent made food purchasing changes by focusing on reading nutrition labels,
- 78.4 percent increased consumption of fruits and vegetables, and
- 89.5 percent indicated assured access to enough food throughout the month.

Success Stories

Dietary Quality

"If you're healthy, you're wealthy!" A third-grader made this insightful statement during FNP programming at her school.

Comments from an FNP participant: "I am now eating breakfast every day and have noticed I'm not overeating at my other meals. I have cut down on fried foods, am buying more fruits and vegetables, and really enjoy the variety that is available – fresh, frozen, canned and dried."

Food Safety

A dad at North Dakota Social Services was impressed with the information to wash melons before cutting and eating them to avoid possible foodborne illness.

A comment from a customer who was very safety conscious, but had been over cooking to the point of making food less palatable: "I'm getting myself a food thermometer. I won't have to cook my hamburgers into hockey pucks any more."

Food Purchasing

"I have enjoyed the Money for Food program. It has helped my family and me to eat better and more nutritionally. We have started to menu plan and have learned how to make better choices when we go shopping with the aid of a shopping list. The shopping list has helped me to cut my grocery bill about \$40 a month."



SOUTH DAKOTA HIGHLIGHTS

Target Audience

FNP targets families and individuals with limited financial resources, especially seniors, families with young children and youth. In FY2003, FNP was available in 14 counties: Beadle, Brookings, Bon Homme, Codington, Davison, Grant, Gregory, Hanson, Kingsbury, Lake, Lyman, Moody, Sanborn and Yankton.

Nutrition Network activities were conducted with low-income families with children 18 or younger in areas across the state.

Objectives

FNP goals are to help people with limited financial resources gain basic skills in food safety, diet quality, food budgeting and food security practices so that they may achieve a healthier, more adequate diet.

South Dakota Nutrition Network's objectives are to disseminate consistent food and nutrition information to income-qualifying schools, families and communities, and to coordinate nutrition education to improve the nutritional status of South Dakotans with limited resources.

Partnerships and Collaborations

Public and private partners include state agencies, universities and commodity groups that address food and nutrition issues. Local partners include South Dakota Department of Social Services, WIC offices, Head Start and Healthy Start programs; low-income day care centers, income-qualifying schools, alternative high schools and after-school programs; adjustment training centers; senior meal sites, food pantries and other emergency food sites; low-income housing; and hospitals, clinics, tribal health and counseling centers. Local preferences guide program delivery.

Evaluation of Impact

Of the 108,741 contacts made through FNP in FY2003, 22 percent (24,286 contacts) were made through group classes and one-on-one instruction; 78 percent (84,455 contacts) were made through indirect means, such as visual displays, newsletters and fact sheets. Participants spanned the lifecycle: 24 percent were children, 4 percent were teenagers, 38 percent were adults and 34 percent were seniors. The majority of participants were female, Caucasian and not disabled. The number of participants who were disabled and living alone has doubled in the last year because of an increased number of cooking classes for disabled adults.

Program effectiveness was determined according to self-reported behavioral change by participants in written and verbal comments, and by direct observation. All FNP participants did not complete assessments, so changes represent a conservative estimate:

- 4,429 participants reported improved food safety practices (washing hands, preparing, cooking and chilling foods properly);
- 6,366 participants reported changing what they ate to improve the quality of their diets (following Food Guide Pyramid, Dietary Guidelines and physical activity recommendations);
- 2,713 participants reported improved budgeting practices (following spending and menu plans, shopping from a list and comparison shopping); and
- 2,628 participants reported increased food security (use of emergency food assistance when needed, having enough to eat).

Success Stories

Many WIC clients regularly attend an Extension office cooking class, which teaches how to use WIC foods for such things as soup and trail mix snacks, and discusses ways to cut food expenses. After attending one of the cooking classes, a client remarked that she could stretch her food dollar beyond the purchase of store-bought pancake mix by making and using "master mix."

"Our goal is to do one activity that the whole family can participate in each day." That comment was made by a mother who wanted her family to increase their physical activity level. As a result of learning about physical activity and healthy choices at a senior nutrition site, two men shared that they are now getting more exercise. One walks for fifteen minutes, and the other one rides his bike.



UTAH HIGHLIGHTS

Target Audience

FY2003 marks completion of the third year of the five-year Utah Nutrition Education Plan. Food Stamp Nutrition Education (FSNE) available in 24 of Utah's 29 counties targets families receiving or eligible to receive food stamps, or who otherwise qualify as low-income, for primarily one-on-one and small group education. Other nutrition education methods are also used.

In one rural county FSNE has partnered with the local food stamp office and Child Abuse Prevention Team (CAP) to hold monthly cooking schools that present a nutrition message to larger groups and demonstrate cooking skills. Another county cooperates with the DROPS (Distribution and Redistribution of Product Surplus) program to provide participants with a monthly fact sheet containing information and recipes for the food being distributed. Many counties work in partnership with elementary schools where most students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch to deliver nutrition and food safety messages in after-school activities and during regular classroom time.

Objectives

Food budgeting practices of Food Stamp Nutrition Education participants will improve as indicated by the following:

- planning meals in advance,
- comparing prices when shopping,
- using a list for grocery shopping and
- budgeting food dollars to last all month.

Nutrition practices of Food Stamp Nutrition Education participants will improve as indicated by:

- moving closer to the number of servings recommended by the Food Guide Pyramid,
- preparing foods without adding salt,
- reading labels to select food,
- reporting their children ate breakfast more often and
- moving closer to the recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines.

Food safety practices of Food Stamp Nutrition Education participants will improve as indicated by:

- Following the recommended practice of not allowing potentially hazardous foods to sit out for more than two hours,
- not thawing foods at room temperature and
- washing hands before touching food.

Partnerships

The Utah Department of Workforce Services that administers the food stamp program continues to be a major partner and supporter of FSNE. At the local level, county FSNE through Utah State University Extension, works in partnership with WIC, Head Start, schools, senior centers and other agencies and organizations that provide support and services to low-income families and individuals.

Evaluation of Impact

For FY2003, 30,169 direct contacts (both adult and youth) and 13,664 indirect contacts were made. For formal education, there were 709 families enrolled in individual and/or group education. Of that number, 61 percent (434) are white, 1 percent (5) are black, 18 percent (126) are Native American, 20 percent (140) are Latino, and 1 percent (4) are of Asian descent. Of the total number enrolled, 48 percent (341) completed the 8- to10-class series, 9 percent (62) terminated and 43 percent (306) have not yet completed the number of lessons required for graduation.

The following data is for 13 participating counties:

Diet Quality

Number of participants who...

- 139 (70 percent) moved closer to the recommended number of servings of the Food Guide Pyramid,
- 142 (49 percent) increased their level of physical activity and
- 67 (34 percent) moved closer to the recommendations of the Dietary Guides for Americans.

Food Budgeting and Resource Management

Number of participants who...

- 201 (75 percent) used a menu plan,
- 165 (61 percent) shopped from a list more often and
- 137 (51 percent) comparison-shopped more often.

Food Safety

Number of participants who...

- 88 (30 percent) indicated they less often let food set out more than 2 hours,
- 118 (41 percent) indicated they washed their hands more often before touching food and
- 112 (39 percent) indicated they kept raw meat separate from other foods more often.

Food Security

Number of participants who ...

- 135 (50 percent) decreased the frequency of seeking emergency food assistance (e.g., food pantry, soup kitchen, etc)

Number of participants who indicated they had enough to eat:

97	always	156	most of the time	14	sometimes	15	never
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In Salt Lake and Weber counties the major focus of FSNE is working with seniors. Two hundred seventy-seven (277) low-income seniors have completed at least six lessons and show significant improvement in dietary quality, food safety practices, food shopping and improved food security.

There were 1,623 youth participating in FSNE in the classroom statewide. Pre- and post-tests of 104 students in one sixth-grade classroom indicate an improvement in general nutrition knowledge.

Three counties—Wayne, Emery and Wasatch—have conducted FSNE activities specific to each particular county. FSNE in Wayne County cooperated with the Department of Workforce Services to advertise an FNP cooking school to teach low-income families nutrition, wise use of food dollars and basic cooking skills.

Emery County FSNE staff members cooperate with the DROPS (Distribution and Redistribution of Product Surplus) program to provide fact sheets with information about the food being distributed that day, along with recipes and basic food safety information.

Wasatch County FSNE staff members have pilot-tested the SOS/Soup or Sauce recipe book and Utah Ready Quick Mix recipe book for general acceptance, ease of use and general understanding.



Cent\$ible Nutrition Program

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WYOMING HIGHLIGHTS

Target Audience

Wyoming Food Stamp Nutrition Education, known as the Cent\$ible Nutrition Program, provides education to Wyoming residents who receive or are eligible to receive food stamps. Waivers have been written to include WIC clients, senior centers and Title I schools. Participants come from all 23 counties in the state and the Wind River Indian Reservation and are all ages from school-age youth to senior citizens.

Objectives

CNP provides educational opportunities for Wyoming families and individuals with limited resources that lead to food security. Classes enable participants to develop new skills and gain knowledge to:

- improve nutritional and physical well-being of the total family;
- increase knowledge of the essentials of human nutrition and physical activity;
- increase the ability to select and buy food that satisfies nutritional needs;
- improve skills in food production, preparation, storage, safety, sanitation and meal-time practices; and
- increase the ability to manage food budgets and related resources such as food stamps.

Partnerships and Collaborations

Partnerships with other agencies serving the limited-resource audience are important to program success. Partnerships include, the Department of Family Services (food stamp offices), WIC, public health, senior centers, Head Start, emergency food providers, Department of Education and Title I schools. We also work in partnership with these agencies on the Wind River Indian Reservation.

Evaluation of Impact

Educating the limited-resource audience is done in many ways. Our more traditional teaching methods include presentations at cooperating agencies where clients are considered one-time contacts, and enrollment of participants in the CNP program where they complete a series of lessons to graduate. One-time presentations may include a lesson with a display or demonstration. Nutrition educators presented 1,131 one-time presentations to more than 22,588 participants. A post-lesson evaluation for one-time contacts determines number of clients with intended behavior change. A random sample of the state shows 87 percent intended to make a positive behavior change.

Every year participants enrolled in Cost Cutter lessons show substantial change in behavior in all areas. One thousand seven hundred fifty-three participants made behavior changes in the following areas: food resource management practices, nutrition practices and food safety practices.

In addition:

- 85 percent of homemakers showed improvement in one or more practices,
- 93 percent of homemakers showed improvement in one or more nutrition practices,
- 93 percent of graduates showed a positive change in any food group at exit and
- 68 percent of homemakers showed improvement in one or more food safety practices.

Educational displays (1,119) and newsletters (150,000) were placed at locations the limited-resource audience frequents. In four counties, 526 people used kiosks with the La Cocina Saludable program for Spanish-speaking clients. An educational TV series is being aired on Wyoming Public Television, reaching about 60,000 viewers each year. The Marty Moose and WIN Kids curriculum in Title I schools reached 2,627 youth, and 8,417 youth received nutrition education from one-time lessons.

Impact indicators for our Grazin' Up the Pyramid with Marty Moose Curriculum show:

- 85 percent of students now eat a variety of foods;
- 66 percent of students increased knowledge of the essentials of human nutrition;
- 66 percent of students increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods;
- 71 percent of students improved practices in food preparation and food safety;
- 54 percent increased participation in physical activity;
- 63 percent drink the recommended amount of water on a regular basis and;
- 84 percent treat others with more respect.

Success Stories

"I can now cook a whole meal for less cost: The nutrition is better and there is less mess. Everyone walks away from the table full."

A recent CNP graduate said that on a recent trip to the grocery store she was able to purchase all her needed items and was only \$4 over her food-stamp allocation. She attributed this to having learned to plan her menus.

"Because of the Cent\$ible Nutrition classes, I am starting to benefit from what they offer at the food bank by learning ways to cook the foods."

A client saved \$43 in food stamp allocations after completing the program. With seven adults in the house, it was quite a difference! The food lasted until the end of the month, instead of running out. As an additional benefit, his grandmother's blood sugar became more regulated from eating balanced meals.

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The Food Stamp Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. To find out more, contact your local SRS office or call 1-800-221-5689.