

Nutrition Education Programs Are Vital to the Farm Bill

Highlights

- The Academy calls on Congress to reauthorize and fully fund the SNAP Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Grant Program, or SNAP-Ed, and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, or EFNEP.
- Effective nutrition education strategies in combination and coordination with nutrition assistance programs ensure that federal investment in these programs is optimized.



USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

The Role of Nutrition Education to Improve Diet Quality and Reduce Food Insecurity

Nutrition education programs can empower people to make behavior changes that result in healthier lifestyles and improved quality of life, decrease chronic disease and their associated costs, and improve food security status.

Through the farm bill, Congress has the opportunity to reauthorize two effective nutrition education programs: SNAP-Ed and EFNEP. SNAP-Ed and EFNEP are innovative and engaging nutrition education programs designed to work effectively in low-income communities. These programs encourage healthy eating and help people build skills to manage their limited financial resources to avoid food insecurity. SNAP-Ed and EFNEP teach food selection and preparation skills that continue to benefit people after their participation in the programs has ended.¹

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program serves as our nation's nutrition safety net. SNAP is critical to addressing basic nutritional needs for families, and when coupled with nutrition education, can help encourage healthy eating.²

SNAP-ED FAST FACTS

SNAP-Ed completed 562,894,054 contacts in 2015.³

Federal investment: About \$421 million annually.

USDA's Food, Nutrition and Consumer Service manages SNAP-Ed grants awarded to the state agency that administers SNAP. That state agency contracts with organizations like land-grant universities, state health departments and nonprofits to deliver the nutrition education programming through a variety of local approaches that engage community partners.

Find your state's SNAP-Ed Program: <https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/state-contacts>

EFNEP FAST FACTS

In 2016, EFNEP worked directly with 118,976 adults, and 365,369 children.

Federal investment: \$67.9 million annually.

USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture manages EFNEP and provides funding to 75 land-grant universities, which in turn send EFNEP peer educators into communities to provide hands-on, evidence-based learning opportunities.

Find your state's EFNEP program: <https://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/EFNEP%20Coordinator%20Directory%20-%2009Feb2017B.pdf>

Food Insecurity in the U.S.

Food insecurity affects millions of people, including children, seniors, veterans, active duty military members, families and people with disabilities. In 2016, 12.3 percent of American households had limited access to adequate food because of a lack of money or other resources.⁴

Populations that are food-insecure face challenges, including inadequate transportation, a lack of access to a variety of nutritious foods or difficulty affording nutritious food when resources are constrained.⁵ While the number of people experiencing food insecurity has declined in recent years, the number has not yet fallen below 2007 pre-recession levels.⁴

Most American diets fall short of recommendations for good health and contribute to excess rates of preventable chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease or cancer. About three-fourths of the population has an eating pattern that is low in vegetables, fruits, dairy and healthy oils.⁶ People's risk for chronic diseases increases markedly as severity of food insecurity increases.⁷

About Us

Representing more than 100,000 practitioners, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. The Academy is committed to:

- Improving the health of Americans by assuring access to a healthy, safe, affordable and adequate food supply
- Ensuring that high-quality nutrition education and services are integral components of nutrition assistance programs.

1 Koszewski et al. The Impact of SNAP-ED and EFNEP on Program Graduates 6 Months After Graduation. *Journal of Extension*. <https://www.joe.org/joe/2011october/rb6.php>. 2011.

2 Holben et al. Position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Food Insecurity in the United States. *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*. 2017.

3 USDA. 2016 Impacts: The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program. <https://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/EFNEP%20Impact%20Data%20Report%202016%20FINAL.pdf>. 2017.

4 Coleman-Jensen et al. Household Food Security in the United States in 2016. USDA. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details?pubid=84972>. 2017.

5 Gordon et al. Approaches for Promoting Healthy Food Purchases by SNAP Participants. USDA. 2014.

6 USDA and HHS. Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015–2020. Chapter 2 Shifts Needed to Align with Healthy Eating Patterns. <https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/chapter-2/current-eating-patterns-in-the-united-states/#current-eating-patterns-in-the-united-states>.

7 Gregory et al. Food Insecurity, Chronic Disease, and Health Among Working-Age Adults. USDA. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/84467/err-235.pdf?v=42942>. 2017.