

EFNEP Policy Guidelines

Philosophy

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) is an integral part of the Cooperative Extension Service's Family and Consumer Sciences and 4H Youth Programs. EFNEP teaches low-income audiences how to improve their dietary practices and become more effective managers of available food resources.

The adult phase of EFNEP provides a food and nutrition education program to enhance the quality of the families' nutrition

through enhanced knowledge of nutrition, food buying, and food safety. The 4H phase provides educational programs to youth from low-income areas primarily in urban areas.

Three distinguishing features of EFNEP are:

- Intensive education on an individual or small group basis
- Conducted by Extension paraprofessionals and volunteers trained and supervised by Extension professionals
- With low-income families and youth.

Objectives

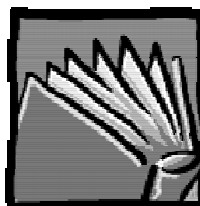
Adult The objectives of EFNEP are to help low-income families, especially those with young children, to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and changed behaviors necessary for nutritionally sound diets, and to contribute to their personal development and the improvement of total family diet and nutritional welfare. Participation in EFNEP should result in:

- Improved diets and nutritional welfare for the total family.
- Increased knowledge of the essentials of human nutrition.
- Increased ability to select and buy food that satisfies nutritional needs.
- Improved practices in food production, preparation, storage, safety, and sanitation.
- Increased ability to manage food budgets and food resources such as food stamps.

Youth The three overall objectives of 4H EFNEP are:

- Provide education in the principles of nutrition and diets and in the acquisition and use of appropriate foods.
- Contribute to the personal development of low-income youth through improved nutrition.
- Contribute to the improvement of diets and nutrition of the total family by means of educational programs for youth.

Subject Matter



Food and nutrition subject matter is the principal content for both the adult and youth audiences. Curriculum and instruction should reflect nutritional needs and cultural heritage of the audience. Content areas appropriate for training staff and teaching participants are:

- Nutrition knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to improve diets.
- Planning for daily food needs.
- Knowledge and practice in food selection and preparation.
- Knowledge of financial management relating to family food budgets, adaptation for uneven incomes, and local food resources.
- Use and care of equipment used for food preparation, storage, and utilization.
- Food safety, health, and sanitation practices.
- Food practices that reinforce personal development of family members.
- Home food production techniques, including gardening, fishing, and food preservation practices.
- Maternal and infant nutrition education which complements other programs and information received from health delivery systems.
- Nutrition and fitness.
- Referral to other resources and assistance programs.

Audience



EFNEP must include programming to reach both adult and youth audiences. The assurance that all eligible persons shall have equal access to the benefits of the program and facilities without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability is an important objective of the Extension Service. This objective will permeate the efforts of EFNEP.

Adult Low-income homemakers or individuals who are responsible for planning and preparing the family's food, with emphasis on households with young children.

Youth Low-income 4H youth, respective of State definition of 4H age.

Program Delivery



Methods for program delivery may include, but not be limited to, direct teaching by paraprofessionals or volunteers; mailings and telephone teaching to complement other teaching methods; mass media efforts to develop understanding, awareness, and involvement in the educational program; and development and training of volunteers to assist with direct teaching of adults and youth.

Referral of participants to other Extension programs and other community and food assistance programs (i.e., Food Stamps, WIC, etc) will be the responsibility of all professionals and paraprofessionals. EFNEP families will be encouraged to participate in food assistance programs for which they are eligible.

Legislation

The intent of Congress and the agreed upon policy by the USDA and Extension Administration have foundation in legislative acts pertaining to the initiation and operation of the program. Some of these include:

- Section 32. An Act to Amend the Agricultural Adjust Act, and For Other Purposes, August 1935, Chapter 641, 74th Congress. 49 Stat. 750 744.
- Smith-Lever Act-USC 341-348. Public Law 91-127.
- The Food and Agriculture Act 1977, Section 1425, of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act 1977 (7 USC 3175).
- The Agriculture and Food Act 1981— Nutrition Education Program. Sec 1423.

Allocation and Use of Funds

EFNEP funds are appropriated by Congress under Section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act, as amended. These funds are allocated to the States on the basis of an administrative formula. Once States receive this money, they are subject to the following constraints:

- 30% or less can be used for professionals and supports costs, including 4H professionals.
- 15% to 20% must be used for the employment of professionals and/or paraprofessionals, including support costs, to conduct the 4H EFNEP Program.
- 80% to 85% is to be used for the employment of professionals and/or paraprofessionals, including support costs, to work in the adult program.
- 60% or more must be used for paraprofessional personnel and their support costs.

Understanding Cooperative Extension

The Cooperative Extension Service is a partnership of local county government, the state land grant university which is the University of Florida, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, authorized by the Smith Lever Act. Each of these shares in planning and financing Extension programs.

The mission of Cooperative Extension is to help people identify and solve their own problems. This mission is carried out through the work of nine regional Research Centers and The University of Florida in working with County Extension Services to bring educational programs and research information to local citizens. Extension County Faculty work with community organizations, volunteer teachers and individuals to deliver educational programs to local clientele. The volunteer teacher is a vital part of this unique delivery system of science-based educational programs and research information to local citizens.

The primary purpose of the Cooperative Extension Service is to disseminate and encourage the application of research-generated knowledge and leadership skills to individuals, families, and communities. The Cooperative Extension System:

- is an integrated partnership with federal/state/county levels of government, research, and the private sector.
- is educational in program content and methodology, not regulatory or financial. Thus, Cooperative Extension is administratively attached directly to the 1962 and 1890 land-grant university system and is a major part of it, rather than being attached directly to state government.
- provides informal, noncredit education conducted primarily beyond the formal classroom for all ages.
- is practical, problem-centered and situation-based. Cooperative Extension education begins with helping people to identify and understand their needs and problems and to use new technology or information in solving them.
- features the objective presentation and analysis of factual information for decision-making by the people themselves. Cooperative Extension is typically research-based with a free flow of communication among research, Extension and resident-teaching functions of the state university system, and also with the resources of the United States Department of Agriculture and other Departments or agencies, public and private.
- functions as a nationwide educational network and resource through local offices which are semi-autonomous units accessible to and subject to influence by local citizens.
- involves cooperative but not necessarily equal sharing of financial support among federal, state, and county or local levels.
- requires cooperative but not necessarily equal sharing of program development among federal, state, and county or local levels.
- involves funding and administrative relationships which permit educational programs directed at broad national purposes, yet serving specific local needs with priorities determined locally.
- is a professional function staffed by college-trained personnel specifically qualified for their positions.

Adapted from *Understanding Cooperative Extension*. (February, 1986). Washington, D.C.: The Cooperative Extension System, United States Department of Agriculture Extension

Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health Focus Team

UF/IFAS has determined state-wide goals and focus areas for 2004-2007. EFNEP falls under Goal V.

GOAL V. To assist individuals and families to achieve economic well-being and life quality.

Focus Area: Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health

Rationale: Lifestyle choices, such as diet, physical activity, and food handling practices affect short- and long-term health risks. For example, when people change their behaviors toward a healthier lifestyle, and seek and receive care at the appropriate time, they can reduce their risk for the major chronic diseases such as heart disease and stroke. Also, persons with existing diseases, such as diabetes, can reduce risk for debilitating and expensive health complications through lifestyle changes. Use of recommended safe food handling practices in the home and by food handlers can reduce risk of food borne illnesses. Persons with limited resources can reduce their risk of food insecurity and hunger by learning to manage their resources effectively.

Extension nutrition, food safety, and health education programs give people the knowledge, motivation, and skills they need to adopt behavior changes that promote positive nutritional status and reduce health risks throughout the life cycle. Some of the key behaviors that can help promote positive nutritional status and reduce health risks among various target audiences include:

- increasing intake of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains;
- moderating intake of total fat, sodium, and added sugars;
- decreasing intake of saturated and trans fat;
- including food sources of key nutrients for their gender and life stage
- using safe food handling practices;
- managing food resources effectively;
- increasing physical activity; and
- participating in recommended health screenings.

Healthy lifestyle practices should begin in childhood, when lifestyle habits are formed, within the context of the family and community. By educating young people themselves, and helping their parents and caregivers model healthful lifestyle practices, Extension can encourage healthy eating and physical activity patterns that promote a healthy body weight and reduce short- and long-term health risks. Middle-aged adults, particularly those faced with risk factors such as hypertension, may be responsive to educational interventions designed to reduce health risks, and older adults can be encouraged to reduce their nutrition and health risks through adoption of healthier lifestyles at any age.

Changes in lifestyle behaviors that lead to reduced health risks can have dramatic impacts on skyrocketing health care costs. For example, it has been estimated that for every person who reduces his/her need for artery-clearing procedures or surgery by adopting heart healthy lifestyle changes, an estimated \$10,930 is saved. Persons with diabetes who improve blood glucose control help to decrease medical costs of diabetes, which doubled from \$44 billion in 1997 to \$92 billion in 2002. The cost of an individual case of food-borne illness resulting in death is estimated to be \$42,300. Extension programs that educate and motivate individuals to adopt healthy lifestyle behaviors can significantly impact health care costs in Florida while improving quality of life.