

Selected Highlights from the History of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

Low-income nutrition education projects piloted in Alabama, Massachusetts, Missouri, Rhode Island, and Texas

1964

President Lyndon B. Johnson authorized and USDA provided \$10M for an expanded homemaker program for low-income families

1968

Congress appropriated and allocated \$30M for EFNEP, a national program delivered by 1862 land-grant institutions to improve health and well-being of low-income families

1969

1970

\$48M allocated; youth component added

Use of program volunteers endorsed

1971

1976

Program Policy Guidelines published (revised 1983)

First of EFNEP special projects: urban gardening projects in New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit, and Houston

1977

1980

\$51M allocated for EFNEP

U.S. Territories became eligible to deliver EFNEP

1982

1986

Computerized record and reporting system implemented

\$58.7M allocated for EFNEP

1989

1992

National Evaluation and Reporting System (ERS) implemented

Core competencies ensuring consistency and efficacy developed for program coordinators (paraprofessionals: 2008; supervisors: 2017)

2001

2004

GAO Report recognized EFNEP's data reporting and tracking as unique among national nutrition education programs

\$62.5M allocated; 1890 land-grant institutions became eligible to offer EFNEP

2006

2008

WebNEERS, a web-based nutrition education, evaluation, and reporting system replaced ERS

Major revision of National Program Policy Guidelines; minor updates published later, as needed

2011

2014

Social media policy introduced

Technology policy published; volunteer policy revised

2017

EFNEP: 50 Years of Nutrition Education Impacts

EFNEP reaches roughly 500,000 low-income adults and youth each year. At least 80% of families live at or below 100% of poverty, and nearly 70% are minority status. More than 90% of adults improve food intake.

A Strong Foundation

EFNEP has made a difference in the lives of rural and urban families in America since 1969, when Congress authorized \$30 million for this program. EFNEP represents a federal (USDA/NIFA) state (land-grant university) and local (county) partnership supporting the nutritional security of low-income families. Currently, 76 institutions provide the program nationwide through Cooperative Extension at 1862 and 1890 land-grant universities in all 50 states, U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia.



Peer educators deliver group and individual nutrition education tailored to the needs of families and the communities in which they live. EFNEP contributes to the personal development of program staff and participants as they gain skills and confidence, which can transfer to other aspects of their lives.

A Delivery Model that Stands the Test of Time

Relevant Topics and Evidence Based Information

Interactive sessions that support improved behaviors in food safety, food preparation, food resource management and nutrition topics are key to the program's success. Longitudinal studies show that new behaviors are maintained, and that new skills learned through EFNEP can last a lifetime – and across generations.



EFNEP results in lasting change. Annual data confirms that graduates improve their diets, improve their nutrition practices, stretch their food dollars farther, handle food more safely, and increase their physical activity levels. Education is adapted as group lessons in community settings and for individuals in their homes, as needed. Recent applications include the use of distance learning and social media technologies. The program remains relevant to how people live, learn, work, shop, and play.

Timeless and Timely



Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.