

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Kleberg County

EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

Supporting Texas Families with Greatest Need Since 1969

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) helps young families and youth with limited resources—those most at risk to suffer from hunger, food insecurity and the inability to connect with available support systems. EFNEP offers practical lessons in basic nutrition, food preparation, food budget management and food safety in settings convenient for the participants. EFNEP also includes a walking program for adult participants. Program graduates reflect significant, lasting improvement in eating behaviors and healthy food habits.

Texas has a need for EFNEP—2011 data show that 20% of Texas families with children under the age of 18 were living below poverty, compared to 16% of U.S. families.

EFNEP Reaches Diverse Audiences in Kleberg County

In Kleberg County, an ethnically diverse EFNEP agent reaches adult groups whose principal language may be English or Spanish.

In 2014,

- 91 families enrolled in EFNEP.
- 174 youth contacts were made through the EFNEP youth program.
- 75% of families were at or below 100% of federal poverty level.
- 87% of EFNEP adult participants were Hispanic/Latino.
- 5% of EFNEP adult participants were Not Hispanic/Latino, White.

EFNEP Makes a Real Difference

Using “hands-on” experiences, EFNEP adult participants complete at least a six-lesson series on stretching food dollars, improving eating habits, and practicing food safety principles. As a result of participation in EFNEP the following food and nutrition behaviors were achieved:

- **79%** with positive change in any food group at exit. Specifically, EFNEP participants consumed 0.7 more cups of fruits and vegetables and 0.3 cups of dairy at completion, compared to entry.
- **63%** improved in one or more food resource management practices such as planning meals in advance.
- **70%** improved in one or more nutrition practices such as using the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make food choices.
- **56%** improved in one or more food safety practices such as thawing foods safely.

Cost-Benefit of EFNEP

Studies have shown that for every \$1 spent of EFNEP, \$10 were estimated to be saved in health care costs and \$2 saved in food costs by participants. For Kleberg County, this is \$154,460 in estimated health care cost savings and almost \$30,892 in food costs.

EFNEP, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, provides food and nutrition education for limited-resource families with young children through the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, with funding from USDA. In 2014, EFNEP programs assisted Texans in Bexar, Cameron, Dallas, El Paso, Harris, Hidalgo, Kleberg, Nueces, Tarrant, Travis, and Willacy Counties.

EFNEP nutrition assistants help low-income families and youth acquire the knowledge, skills, 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. Kleberg County EFNEP nutrition education assistants teach in homes, schools, churches and community agencies.

