P3 (continued)

to the gardens each year for hands-on gardening, cooking, and science/nutrition lessons.

Evaluation: Olivewood administers an annual pre and post program assessment to participating students to measure changes in attitudes, behavior, and knowledge of food. Results show that repeat exposures to garden-based nutrition education encourages “adventurous eating” and increased consumption of fruits and vegetables. Teachers and parents observed a positive influence on food choices observed at school and at home. Results indicate that children are eating more fruit and vegetables and are more adventurous eaters as a result of participating in the program.

Conclusions and Implications: Repeated participation in hands-on gardening and cooking experiences increases children’s consumption of healthier foods. Developing familiarity with fruits and vegetables encourages children to become “adventurous” eaters.

Funding: None

P4 Assessment of Parental Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviors Associated With Community Garden Experiences for Young Children

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Objective: To develop a survey instrument that assessed parental knowledge, attitudes and behaviors associated with community garden experiences for young children to enhance liking and intake of vegetables.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: According to national dietary intake data (NHANES 2007-2008), approximately 90% of children 4-8 years of age do not meet current recommendations for total daily vegetable intake. Community gardens have grown in popularity due to their potential positive impact on FV intake.

Design, Setting, and Participants: A survey instrument was developed using validated questions identified from the literature and findings from our previous focus groups with parents. Social Cognitive Theory provided the theoretical framework for question development. A convenience sample of parents from two early childhood centers (n=12) completed the pilot online survey on two separate occasions 10-14 days apart. The final survey was administered using tablets to parents (n=92) with children aged 3-5 recruited from the 2015 Minnesota State Fair.

Outcome Measures/Analysis: Descriptive statistics to assess knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of parents regarding gardening experiences for their young children.

Results: The majority of parents believed gardening would encourage their child to eat more vegetables (85%), try new types of vegetables (94%), be physically active (80%), and strengthen connections to family and cultural traditions (86%). Most children attended a pre-

school program (72%); however only 21% of these settings provided vegetable gardening opportunities.

Conclusions and Implications: Childcare settings provide a unique opportunity to positively impact the health of young children. Additional testing of the survey instrument is needed with a larger diverse sample to guide development of a community garden intervention targeting preschool-aged children and parents.

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P5 Local Food Access Among a Diverse Group of Immigrants and Refugees in North Carolina: A Qualitative Study

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Objective: Immigrant and refugee populations in the U.S. are at increased risk for chronic disease due to dietary changes associated with acculturation. They often have poor access to healthy foods, community organizations and resources. Using a community-based participatory research approach, we explore how to better integrate immigrant and refugee communities into local food systems and adapt Extension resources to meet communities’ needs. Objectives are to determine barriers and assets regarding local food access; establish partnerships with local food and nutrition resources; and implement participant-led projects.

Design, Setting, Participants, and Intervention: Community workshops were held with three groups in central North Carolina: Karen refugees from Burma, a diverse population of immigrants from a mosque, and Latino immigrants. Each group helped design and implement a community garden/farming project based on community assets and resources.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: Qualitative, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 19 participants and analyzed using thematic coding.

Results: Analysis reveals that immigrants/refugees shared food produced at the gardens/farms with their communities, thereby increasing community food access. Three lessons learned from this project: community workshops are key to understanding participants’ context and preferences; communities’ food-related cultural practices are vital assets; and building community connections with Extension and other non-profits can help migrants utilize and build upon existing food-related skills. Barriers to participation included time, communication breakdowns, and transportation.

Conclusion and Implications: To address dietary acculturation, programs must be adapted for diverse community populations with different experiences and backgrounds in gardening and food production. This research demonstrates that agricultural-based programs may

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