Food & Nutrition Extension Education Division Poster Abstracts

FNEE1 Urban Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education (USNAP-Ed) Community Garden Project

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Objective: As part of our Policy, System and Environmental (PSE) efforts, the aim of the Urban Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education (USNAP-Ed) Community Gardening Project through the Urban Unit of Alabama Cooperative Extension System at Alabama A&M University, was to improve access and availability of fresh produce and to build self-efficacy of citizens within limited resource communities to take control of their health and make positive changes.

Target Audience: Limited resource communities.

Theory, Prior Research, and Rationale: According to the 2015 Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) data, 27.6% of Alabamians reported eating vegetables less than one time a day. Community gardens are associated with increased vegetable consumption.

Description: USNAP-Ed Community Project Garden sites were identified through participation in USNAP-Ed nutrition classes. USNAP-Ed staff provided nutrition lessons and coordinated garden efforts between the program and the sites. Alabama Cooperative Extension System Horticulture staff provided instruction and assistance establishing gardens, explaining gardening concepts, and monitoring garden development. Crops planted included, cucumbers, collards, tomatoes, onions, green beans, zucchini, squash, corn, carrots, lettuce, peppers, and radish. Harvested produce was used within participant homes, or donated to low income residents in the surrounding area.

Evaluation: Six garden sites were established in Madison, Morgan, and Lawrence Counties, with a total of 26 raised bed gardens constructed. A total of 889 pounds of produce was harvested and utilized within the homes of local limited resource families. Sustainability plans were implemented at five sites to continue the use of the garden.

Conclusion: The USNAP-Ed Community Garden Project was well received by the communities and improved access to fresh produce. The project will continue in the next grant year.

Funding: None

FNEE2 Food Availability and Behavior of Limited Income Youth Living in Virginia Prior to Participation in Youth EFNEP

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Objective: The goal of this study was to explore food access and consumption patterns of limited income youth, prior to participating in youth EFNEP.

Study Design: A 55-item written survey, tested for validity and reliability, was administered to all limited income youth (7 to 14 years old) recruited to participate in youth EFNEP over a one-year time frame (n=1,864). The survey consisted of questions on socio-demographic information, food availability at home, and nutrition-related behavior. Food availability and behavior questions were based upon different food groups and foods to emphasize or limit from the US Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Participants were asked to report how frequently they had different food groups available at home per week and how frequently they consumed different food items per day. Descriptive statistics were used to compute frequency of responses by different socio-demographic factors and chi-square analysis to detect differences in proportions in response rate.

Results: Participants reported high availability of milk (75.2%), fruit (69.7%), and vegetables (63.5%) over a 7-day period; meat and beans (41.4%) and dessert (48.3%) were less common. Less than half of participants reported not meeting dietary behavior thresholds for the following food groups: whole grains (19.7%); vegetables (18.2%); and low-fat milk (31.5%). Differences were noted for availability and consumption based on different socio-demographic factors.

Conclusions: This study provides insight into food availability and consumption patterns among limited-income audiences across Virginia. The results highlight the importance of strategic interventions, such as EFNEP, to improve the availability of nutritious foods among limited-income youth.

Funding: None

FNEE3 The Usefulness of the Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education (SNAP-Ed) in Arizona

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Objective: To determine the usefulness of the WellSAT 2.0 to provide guidance in revising Local Wellness Policies (LWP) in SNAP-Ed schools.

Study Design: Schools participating in the National School Lunch Program are required to have a LWP. The SNAP-Ed in Arizona used the WellSAT 2.0 to assess 42 LWPs from schools serviced by the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension in seven counties: Apache (3), Cochise (9), Greenlee (1), La Paz (1), Maricopa (11), Pima (5), Pinal (6), and Santa Cruz (3).

Outcome Measures and Analysis: The WellSAT 2.0 contained 78 policy items relating to nutrition, physical activity, and environment that were categorized into six

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