FNEE 1 Assessing SNAP-Ed Program Success Through Teacher Surveys

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Objective: To develop a survey to assess satisfaction and perception of implemented intervention success among teachers participating in SNAP-Ed programming.

Target Audience: Teachers in eligible schools participating in SNAP-Ed programming.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: Evaluation of SNAP-Ed programming is vital to ensuring the success of interventions. Teachers in eligible schools are instrumental in the delivery of SNAP-Ed programming in Arkansas, so a survey was developed to assess teacher satisfaction and how they perceived the success of programs.

Description: The University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service (UACES) delivered SNAP-Ed programming to 41,038 students in 239 schools across the state in FY17. Teachers assist with program delivery and evaluation of students and parents, so ensuring teachers are satisfied with the program is vital to maintaining their support. An original four-page survey, specific to one curriculum, was refined to a shorter survey in 2010 to assess teacher satisfaction. It was revised again in 2014 to expand it to a second curriculum, and once more in 2015 to make it appropriate for all UACES school-based nutrition education programs. The teacher survey provides an additional evaluation of student and parent behavior change, complementary to parent and student surveys completed with school-based programs.

Evaluation: UACES staff review survey responses annually to determine efficacy of questions measuring teacher satisfaction and perception of program success. Questions were modified annually based on survey responses and usefulness of data.

Conclusions and Implications: Teacher satisfaction is vital to maintaining their continued support of SNAP-Ed programming. Surveys show that overall, teachers are satisfied with the nutrition education programs. Teachers are able to provide observational data on in-school behavior change, such as children trying and eating more fruits and vegetables. County Agents use survey data to improve the local implementation of the program based on teacher feedback.

Funding: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program—Education.

FNEE 2 How to Form a Successful Collaboration From “Farm Gate” to “Consumer Plate” to Support Food Systems Education

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Objective: Form a collaboration for food systems programming that brings together Extension educators from “farm gate” to “consumer plate.”

Target Audience: Extension professionals working with consumers, youth, agriculture producers, food service, and food processors.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: Today’s consumer faces many decisions influencing food choices. However, 98% of Americans are several generations removed from direct farming, according to former United States Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack. As a result, they are less familiar with how our food systems work.

Description: In response to consumer concerns (i.e., food safety, GMOs, pesticides, etc.), we formed a statewide interdisciplinary team of Agriculture, Family/Consumer Science, Food Science, and 4-H professionals to work together to reach consumers from “farm gate” to “consumer plate.” The steps, which are continually evolving, included: dividing into teams [production agriculture, food processing, youth, and consumers/food service] who met together and separately, electronically and face-to-face; establishing a listserv and web-based location to share information; creating a logic model; conducting a statewide survey to determine program priorities; identifying areas to work together; and developing core questions all teams could use in clientele surveys.

Evaluation: Quantitative and qualitative data support this approach: the survey [n = 1,208] identified food safety as our state’s top priority and gave us a common emphasis; staff in different disciplines collaborated in developing programs, articles, and social media; and the core set of questions used with all clientele helped aggregate data. Consequently, we could report on our overall impact and say, “Over 42,000 youth and adults statewide made changes and/or reinforced knowledge of food safety practices from when food is produced until food reaches consumers’ plates.”

Conclusions and Implications: This statewide collaboration model could be replicated and implemented by others in Extension for greater outreach in food systems education.

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