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**NEWS RELEASE
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**The Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior updates Nutrition Educator
Competencies for Promoting Healthy Individuals, Communities, and Food
Systems**

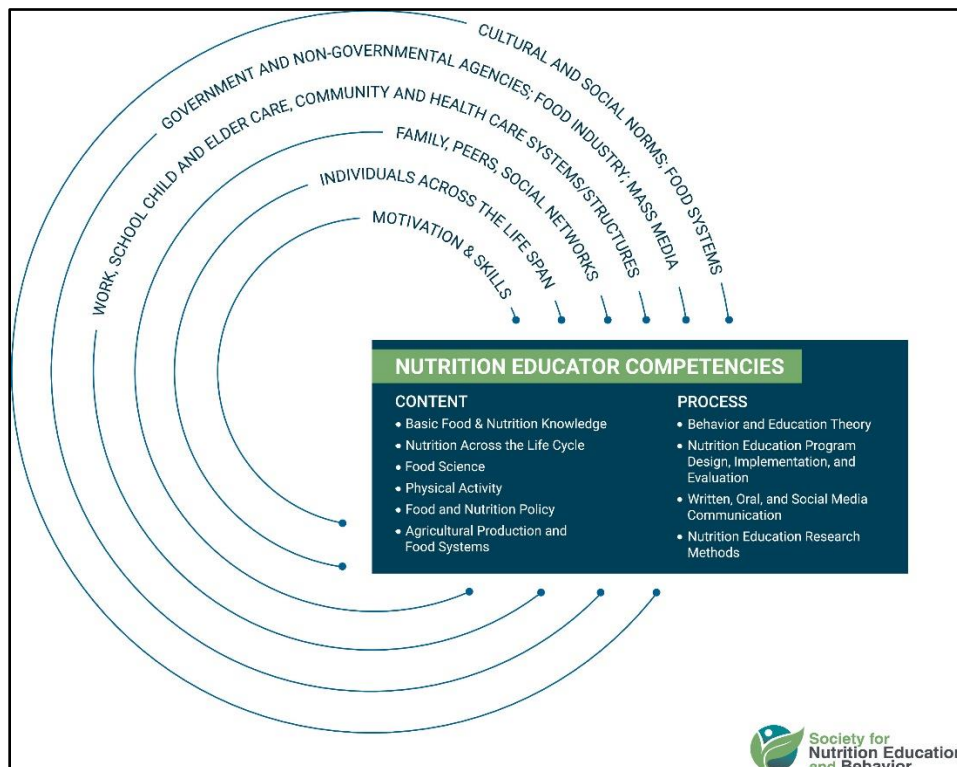
To improve the health of individuals, communities, and food systems, it is essential that nutrition educators meet each of ten competency categories

Philadelphia, January 25, 2023 – In continuing efforts by the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior (SNEB) to improve the health of individuals, communities, and food systems globally, the Society has updated the competencies that are essential for nutrition educators to be effective. The rationale and evidence-base for these competencies are presented in a [position paper](#) in the [Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior](#), published by Elsevier, and includes the "what," "why," and "how to" for nutrition education professionals to ensure they are equipped to facilitate change.

"The White House Conference on Hunger, Health and Nutrition in September, as well as the keen interest in food as medicine, make adding competent nutrition educators to the workforce a public health priority," says SNEB President Barbara Lohse, PhD, RD, CND. "SNEB utilized the expertise and experience of members, as well as evidence-based research, to develop competencies that will help employers, educators, and the public know that they are receiving nutrition information in a way that resonates with people and brings about lasting change for improved health."

SNEB's first set of competencies, published in 1987 for the academic preparation of nutrition education specialists, was based on the results from surveys of 929 state and local nutrition education coordinators and 65 academic institutions that trained nutrition educators. In the decades that followed, the important role of nutrition education in health promotion and disease prevention became even clearer as rates of diet-related chronic diseases increased.

"Advances in social and behavioral communication and nutrition education research, along with the ever-expanding scope of practice, prompted SNEB to continually update these competencies," says Sarah Ash, PhD, Department of Food, Bioprocessing and Nutrition Sciences, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC. "Incorporating these updated SNEB nutrition educator competencies into the training of nutrition educators, both new and in continuing education, will give them the knowledge and skills necessary to be relevant and effective in today's dynamic and complex food and nutrition environment."



Caption: Position of the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior published in the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* updates Nutrition Educator Competencies for Promoting Healthy Individuals, Communities, and Food Systems (Credit: Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior).

The SNEB Nutrition Educator Competencies contain guidance on both the content and the processes to deliver nutrition education. It is crucial that nutrition educators have a thorough grounding in basic food and nutrition sciences and nutritional needs across the life cycle, as well as recognition of the complementary role of physical activity in promoting health. It is also crucial that nutrition educators understand the interactions among nutrients, foods, cultures, social determinants of health, and the food system—including agricultural practices—that form the basis of food guidance recommendations for the public and food policy.

In addition to a thorough grounding in food and nutrition-related content, nutrition educators need to understand that many factors are involved in motivating and facilitating behavior change and how nutrition education is designed, delivered, and evaluated. Given the rise in importance of communicating through various forms of technology-based media, nutrition educators are expected to be skilled in using these media for nutrition education as well, taking into account the cultural differences in how people communicate.

The updated set of 10 competency categories is freely available to download from the [SNEB website](https://www.sneb.org/).

Notes for editors

The article is "Position of the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior: Nutrition Educator Competencies for Promoting Healthy Individuals, Communities, and Food Systems: Rationale and Application," by Sarah Ash, PhD; Isobel Contento, PhD; Melissa D. Olfert, DrPH, RDN; and Pamela A. Koch, EdD, RDN (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2022.07.010>). It appears in the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, volume 55, issue 1 (January 2023), published by [Elsevier](#).

The article is openly available at [https://www.jneb.org/article/S1499-4046\(22\)00480-8/fulltext](https://www.jneb.org/article/S1499-4046(22)00480-8/fulltext).

Full text of the article is also available to credentialed journalists upon request; contact Eileen Leahy at 732 238 3628 or jnebmedia@elsevier.com to obtain a copy. To schedule an interview with the author(s), please contact Rachel Daeger, CAE, Executive Director of the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior, at +1 317 328 4627 or rdaeger@sneb.org.

About the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior (JNEB)

The *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* (JNEB), the official journal of the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior (SNEB), is a refereed, scientific periodical that serves as a resource for all professionals with an interest in nutrition education and dietary/physical activity behaviors. The purpose of JNEB is to document and disseminate original research, emerging issues, and practices relevant to nutrition education and behavior worldwide and to promote healthy, sustainable food choices. It supports the society's efforts to disseminate innovative nutrition education strategies, and communicate information on food, nutrition, and health issues to students, professionals, policy makers, targeted audiences, and the public.

The *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* features articles that provide new insights and useful findings related to nutrition education research, practice, and policy. The content areas of JNEB reflect the diverse interests of health, nutrition, education, Cooperative Extension, and other professionals working in areas related to nutrition education and behavior. As the Society's official journal, JNEB also includes occasional policy statements, issue perspectives, and member communications. www.jneb.org

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