

Nutrition Programming Action Plan

Situation

Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health Extension programming targets environmental and lifestyle factors that improve health and reduce chronic disease to improve the quality of life for Kansans, addressing the grand challenge of health.

Poor dietary intake has been linked to many adverse health conditions – including obesity, diabetes, hypertension, stroke, heart disease, certain cancers, respiratory disorders, joint problems and osteoporosis – as well as to psychosocial problems. Research shows obesity to be a major cause of preventable disability and death in the U.S. Kansas now has the 22nd highest adult obesity rate in the nation, with an adult obesity rate at 31.2% in 2016. Minorities are disproportionately affected, with 43.1% of black Kansans ranking as obese, and 35.2% of Latinos (2016 data, State of Obesity: Better Policies for a Healthier America). Kansas ranks 40th out of 51 states in obesity among 2- to 4-year olds from low-income families (2014 data), at a rate of 12.8%. In 2016, Kansas 10-17 year-olds had a combined overweight & obesity rate of 30.9% (25 out of 51).

The selection of healthy foods depends, in part, on people having access to high-quality foods. Research has demonstrated that some people living in the U.S. lack access to affordable, nutritious foods in their neighborhoods. High-quality foods include nutrient-dense foods that are of acceptable or better freshness, within optimal “use by” date if processed, and obtained in socially acceptable ways. Access includes not only availability of high-quality foods, but also affordability and safety, and the knowledge and skills to procure and prepare high-quality foods. To support their ability to eat healthfully, many consumers – especially but not exclusively those with limited resources – need help acquiring skills regarding meal planning, basic food preparation, and food budgeting.

Lack of access may be related to overall disparities in health. Kansans with adequate resources possess the assets required to overcome those barriers to accessing high-quality foods that are encountered by Kansans with fewer key resources. In times of economic instability, those barriers are encountered by more persons, more often, for longer periods, and more deeply.

Outcomes

Short-Term (Knowledge)

Program participants will improve knowledge, skills and/or attitudes for:

- recommendations related to healthy eating
- strategies that improve access to high quality, healthful food
- creating a Culture of Health through policies, systems, and environmental changes for community stakeholders and others

Indicators

The increase in the number of program participants reporting awareness, knowledge, and/or understanding of:

- recommendations related to healthy eating
- strategies that improve access to high quality, healthful food
- a Culture of Health created through policy, system, and environmental changes for community stakeholders and others

Medium-Term (Behavior)

Program participants will:

- select a variety of healthy foods
- plan and prepare healthy meals and snacks
- implement plans focused on policy, system, and environmental changes for communities

Indicators

- More Kansans will consume a variety of healthy foods (measured through F/V consumption and program participation, including, but not limited to, Dining with Diabetes, SNAP-Ed and EFNEP)
- Increase in the number of community stakeholders improving the health of their communities via policy, system, and environmental approaches (including, but not limited to, Stock Healthy, Shop Healthy)

Long-Term (Change in Condition)

Program participants will:

- meet healthy eating recommendations
- access adequate, affordable foods
- maintain healthy communities via policy, system and environmental approaches

Indicators

- Kansans meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommendations
- Kansans will decrease the statewide incidence and prevalence of obesity and related diseases
- Policies, systems, and environments in Kansans communities support healthy lifestyle behaviors

Public Value

By supporting K-State Research and Extension nutrition, food safety, and health programs, Kansas residents adopt healthful lifestyle behaviors that reduce the risk of chronic and acute diseases, decrease mortality, decrease medical costs, improve work productivity, improve academic performance in school-age youth, and improve the overall quality of life.

Outputs

Provide evidence-based programming on nutrition, physical activity, food safety, and other health-related topics to support:

- Culture of Health
- Health equity
- Underserved audiences
- Employers (healthy workforce)
- Healthy military (homeland safety)

- Kansas food businesses that need to sell healthy food
- Farmers markets
- Small local food producers
- Food pantries/commodity distribution sites
- Consumers

Signature Programs:

- SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education)
SNAP-Ed is a national and federally funded nutrition education program that helps limited-resource audiences lead healthier lives. This program teaches about good nutrition, stretching the food dollar, and the importance of being physically active.
 - Eat Smart Live Strong for older adult audiences
 - Eating Smart Moving More for adults audiences
 - Show Me Nutrition for youth audiences
- EFNEP (Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program)
EFNEP is a national and federally funded hands-on nutrition education program that uses the Eat Smart and Move More curriculum to teach skills related to planning, shopping, cooking, healthy eating, and physical activity.
- Dining with Diabetes:
Dining with Diabetes is a national program that helps participants learn and focus on strategies that include diabetes self-care and healthful food choices to decrease the health risks associated with diabetes.
- Walk Kansas:
Walk Kansas is an 8-week physical activity program that encourages healthy eating.

Other Evidence-Informed Programs:

- Kansans Move into Health:
Kansans Move into Health is an 8-week program that teaches participants to take control over behaviors that affect health. Participants learn to identify healthy lifestyle behaviors, overcome barriers that could prevent them from being healthy, and set goals for maintaining a healthy lifestyle.
- Nutrition and Activity for Communities (N.A.C.):
N.A.C. is an adolescent-centered program that teaches adolescents how to incorporate healthy lifestyle behaviors related to nutrition and physical activity as well as teach and reinforce decision-making skills for health.
- Walk Kansas for Kids:
Walk Kansas Kids is a year-round 8-week curriculum designed for 1st-6th-grade youth that promotes active and healthy lifestyle behaviors in fun, yet age-appropriate, challenging way. The program is designed to improve the health of Kansas children by encouraging them to eat a variety of healthy foods and increase the amount of physical activity they participate in each week