

Nutrition Education Programs and the Farm Bill

Problem:

Most American diets fall short of recommendations for good health and contribute to excess rates of preventable chronic diseases.

- About three-fourths of the population has an eating pattern that is low in vegetables, fruits, dairy and oils.
- Poor diet quality leads to costly chronic disease like, diabetes, heart disease, obesity and cancer.

Food-insecure populations have unique challenges when resources are constrained to feed their families in a healthy way.

- The USDA published a Household Food Security Report in 2015 showing 14.1 percent of individuals living in principal metropolitan areas and 15.4 percent of individuals in rural areas experience food insecurity.
- Issues such as transportation to/from the store, access to and variety available of nutrition foods and affordability of nutritious food impact the food security of individuals and families.

Consequences of food insecurity include higher incidences of chronic diseases like type two diabetes and hypertension, behavioral problems seen in children in school and at home, hunger and many others.

Solution:

Nutrition education paired with nutrition assistance programs is critical tool that can improve health and food security.

The Farm Bill reauthorizes two effective nutrition education programs:

- SNAP Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention grants (SNAP-Ed)
- Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)

These effective nutrition education programs coordinate and create synergies to:

- Maximize limited funding to meet the need for nutrition education programming
- Empower families to make healthy choices.

SNAP-Ed and EFNEP programming continue to be improved and meet the SNAP populations where they live, shop, worship and go to school.

Many programs are led by highly qualified staff like registered dietitian nutritionists who track outcomes and strive to improve the programs to be most effective.

Share Your Personal or State Story (share the impact on your community; each state has a SNAP-Ed and EFNEP program):

The Ask

Since the inception of nutrition assistance programs, Congress and the USDA have recognized the critical role of federal investment in nutrition education and promotion that help the most nutritionally vulnerable populations make healthy food choices.

“Please reauthorize and fully fund SNAP-Ed and EFNEP in the Farm Bill.”

Invite your member of Congress to see a RDN, DTR in action.

Thank them for their time.