

In This Issue

- Farm Views..... 2
- Urban Agriculture 3
- Horticulture..... 4
- Home & Family Living... 5
- Food & Fitness 6
- Environmental Focus .. 7
- 4-H & Youth 8–9
- Community Focus 10
- Miscellaneous 11–12

COUNTY FAIR 4-H RESULTS AND PHOTOS



County Fair summary and photos on back page. Complete results and more photos online at lancaster.unl.edu/4h/fair

Nutrition Program Helps Students Learn Healthy Eating Habits

Karen Wobig
UNL Extension Educator

Research shows what people learn at an early age has a profound effect on habits during their adult years. If children learn how to choose healthy foods when they are young, they will most likely continue to choose healthy foods as adults—and in turn, feed their children healthy foods. Families with limited resources often struggle not only to have enough food to eat, but to figure out how to buy the healthiest foods with their limited spending dollars.

School Enrichment Nutrition Kits

To help youth in these families learn to make healthy food choices, University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Extension in Lancaster County partnered with Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) to develop a nutrition school enrichment program. In 2000, UNL Extension Nutrition Education Program (NEP) staff developed nutrition kits for first, fourth and fifth grades. The nutrition kits contain supplemental, hands-on materials for classroom teachers to use along with their existing curriculum.



The Nutrition Education Program school enrichment kits contain all the materials needed for hands-on educational experiences, such as food models, science experiments, interactive games, activity sheets, books, videos and more!

NEP staff deliver the kits to classrooms and lead students in a hand-washing activity. The kits remain in the classrooms for up to three weeks, during which time teachers use the materials as they teach their nutrition unit. When NEP staff return to pick up the kits, they assist students in making a healthy snack.

In 2005, kits were developed for kindergarten, second and third grades. Currently, 15 LPS elementary schools qualify to participate in the NEP school enrichment program (based on income eligibility). LPS teachers report teaching nutrition an average of 10.5 hours per classroom, which is nearly double the hours taught at the inception of this program. **The following chart reflects the increase in participation and teacher time invested teaching nutrition education.**

School Year	Classrooms	Students	Teaching Hours
2000–01	94	1,642	531
2001–02	105	2,283	1,054
2002–03	104	1,900	1,145
2003–04	106	1,956	1,255
2004–05	144	2,678	1,789
2005–06	168	3,009	1,765
2006–07	214	3,808	2,246

Along with in-school programs, NEP delivers programs to Head Start and after-school sites. NEP staff are currently developing kits for qualifying Middle Schools (grades 6–8). The Lancaster County NEP’s School Enrichment program has been replicated in Douglas/Sarpy (Omaha), Hall/Adams (Grand Island



Extension Assistant Stacie Powers presents an overview of MyPyramid to Clinton fifth graders as she drops off a school enrichment nutrition kit for the classroom to use for three weeks.



Extension Associate Mary Abbott teaches Hartley second graders that pudding made with milk helps build strong bones.

and Hastings) and Scotts Bluff counties. NEP school enrichment is a part of UNL Extension’s 4-H Youth Development Program which emphasizes learning by doing.

Impact on Students

Feedback indicates the program is making a positive impact on the youth participants and their families. Youth consistently tell NEP staff they are making foods with their families and sharing healthy eating information with them.

NEP staff often ask students, “Have any of you made different food choices because of what you have learned?” In one second-grade classroom, more than half of the students indicated they were making healthier snack choices after arriving home from school. One responded, “I used to eat junk food like potato chips when I got home, now I eat apples and oranges.” Another stated, “I would eat candy and pop as soon as I got home, now I eat grapes and crackers.”

In a third-grade classroom, nearly two-thirds of students explained at least one way they keep food safe at home, such as: cooking food to a proper temperature, cooling food in the refrigerator after using it, washing fruits and vegetables, keeping raw meat juices from cross-contaminating vegetables and washing hands before preparing food.

A pregnant teacher told NEP staff her students began evaluating HER diet. The whole class watched what she ate and decided if the meal or snack was a healthy choice for her baby. She said, “I am eating much healthier now that the students want to know everything I am eating and always ask, ‘Is it healthy for the baby?’”

One of the focus areas in the nutrition kits is consumption of healthy beverages. Fifth-graders do an experiment to understand *see NUTRITION SCHOOL ENRICHMENT on page 6*

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 537
Lincoln, Nebraska

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Lancaster County 4-H Council
University of Nebraska–Lincoln
Extension in Lancaster County
444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A
Lincoln, Nebraska 68528-1507