



TELLING OUR STORY

 **SNAP-Ed**
New York

SAVE TIME. SAVE MONEY. EAT HEALTHY.

5 YEARS IN REVIEW

2019-2024



Cornell Cooperative Extension
SNAP-ED NY North Country Region

SNAP-ED NY AT A GLANCE

SNAP-Ed is federally funded and administered by SNAP State and local implementing agencies. Needs assessments are conducted to ensure that SNAP-Ed is delivered in a hands-on and tailored way for their communities using evidence-based, public health projects and interventions. SNAP-Ed is a FREE, confidential nutrition education program that helps families manage food resources during tough economic times. SNAP-Ed has a goal to improve the health and well-being of families with limited resources.



NORTH COUNTRY SNAP-ED PROGRAM

As one of the states implementing agencies, Cornell Cooperative of St. Lawrence County administers the North Country SNAP-Ed Program which provides research-based educational programs for all ages promoting healthy outcomes for under-served community members including low-income and/or SNAP eligible residents at greatest risk of food insecurity. The primary focus is providing education classes that promote food resource management skills, encourage healthy food and physical activity behaviors, weight management, increasing consumption of nutrient dense foods, and preparing low-cost, nutrient-dense recipes through food demonstrations. The SNAP-Ed program provides local families with free nutrition education and assistance to better manage food resources during challenging economic times. Extension's team of knowledgeable nutrition educators provides practical skills, activities, and resources for making healthy choices the easy choice for community members in the North Country. Instruction promotes food resource management tools, physical activity, increased consumption of nutrient dense foods, and skills needed to prepare low-cost, nutrient-dense recipes through food demonstrations.

PROGRAM IMPACTS



North Country Coverage

- 54,573 youth and adults contacts through direct educational programming
- 89,186 youth and adult contacts through indirect means such as newsletters, community events, educational handouts, social marketing messages, podcasts; including contacts through social marketing messages on billboards, bus wraps, store ads, etc.

St. Lawrence County Coverage

- 24,742 youth and adult contacts with direct educational programming
- Approx. 49,085 individuals through indirect educational activities

SNAP-Ed PSE Updates

Peer-Led Activities: (11 Total) St. Law- 6, Essex-1, Jefferson- 3, Lewis-1

Farm to Community Sites: (11 Total) SLC-4, Jefferson- 4, Lewis-2, Clinton- 1

Fruit and Vegetable Prescription:

- Referring Health Care Partners: (31 Total) St. Lawrence- 17, Jefferson- 8, Franklin- 3, Lewis-2, Clinton -1
- Local Producer Partners: St. Law- 3 Farmers Markets w/ 12 farms, Jefferson: 1 Farmers Market with 5 farms
- Approx. \$6,300 reimbursed to Farmers

DIRECT EDUCATION

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program -Nutrition Education (SNAP-Ed) through Cornell Cooperative Extension of St. Lawrence County is dedicated to providing quality community based education. Educators connect with community audiences by reducing barriers for access to classes, as well as incorporating participant focused materials and activities, and facilitation skills that foster growth and engagement. SNAP-Ed lessons follow an experiential learning approach where the participants are presented with the lesson content, then spend the majority of the workshops on activities that bring the information to life. Examples include measuring out the amount of sugar in their favorite beverages, comparing the amount of fat in common fast food meals, and building balanced meal plates with food models. Many participants have stated the shock of seeing just how much it really is! Food demonstrations where the participants help create the recipe is another great way to provide a hands-on activity that build skills.



ADULT PROGRAMMING



Educators partnered with the following agencies for adult programming: Employment groups with Department of Social Services, parenting and family support groups, housing facilities, community fruit and vegetable prescription workshops, partners in transitional living and recovery programs, neighborhood centers, catholic charities and food pantries, and a few open community workshops at libraries, community centers, and virtually. Some of these workshops were partnered with local NOEP coordinators who presented on SNAP eligibility, FAQs, and how to apply. Educators have been teaching from the approved OTDA curriculum of Cooking Matters, MyPlate for My Family, Eat Healthy Be Active, and Eat Smart Live Strong with lessons covering the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, saving time and money with meals, food resource management, and strategies for making healthy lifestyle changes, and featured live cooking demonstrations of affordable-healthy recipes. Some successes include: increased attendance at classes due to participant enjoyment and word of mouth to their friends to join; breakthrough in realization that frozen and canned produce items can be just as nutritious if they are mindful about limiting sodium and added sugar with these products.

YOUTH PROGRAM

Educators have been actively working with school groups during school hours and afterschool programming for general direct lessons as well as Harvest of the Month programming and Peer-Led PSE projects. The schools and agencies have been partnered with include:

8 different school districts across Clinton & Essex counties, The Oasis Program in Bouquet Valley's Mountain view campus, the YMCA'S five after school sites (Plattsburgh CSD, Beekmantown CSD, & Peru CSD).

13 different school districts across St. Lawrence and Franklin counties, PAL programming in Massena, North Wind Afterschool programming, Intensive Preventative Program (IPP) in Akwesasne reservation.

9 school districts in Jefferson and Lewis counties, and some community programming for youth at libraries.



GROCERY STORE/ FARMERS MARKET TOURS

Grocery store tours are taught using the Cooking Matters at the Store for Adults curricula to teach food shopping skills related to comparing unit prices, reading food labels, and selecting healthy, low-cost produce, meat and dairy. Participants learn and develop important skills related to buying healthy food on a budget and maximizing SNAP benefits.

Farmers Market tours are taught in a similar way with the focus on food shopping skills related to market items and building relationships with local producers, as well as buying healthy food on a budget and maximizing SNAP benefits, double up food bucks, bonus bucks, and other food access resources at local markets.

Food demonstrations are also a component of these opportunities to promote healthy and economical food planning, purchasing, preparation, and consumption. These are a "how to" presentation that involves instruction about ingredient selection, recipe preparation, nutrition, and health benefit of the recipe.



VIRTUAL EDUCATION: "EAT EASY" LEARNING PLATFORM

How-To's
Each How-To is broken into multiple steps. Spend as much or as little time as you like!

Find Greater Balance
Try a few easy tricks to find your healthy eating style and maintain it for a lifetime.
[Start Now](#)

Get More from Whole Grains
Boost the benefits of the foods you eat. Make half your grains whole grains.
[Start Now](#)

Coming soon
[Eat the Rainbow](#)

In 2023 statewide SNAP-Ed New York agencies started work on creating a self-paced virtual education platform called Eat Easy. The North Country SNAP-Ed Region contributed to the development of two modules to be called "How-To's:" Finding Greater Balance and Power up with Proteins. The site is intended to help individuals and families have access to nutrition education concepts that are taught in SNAP-Ed workshops even if they have barriers to attending community workshops.



DIGITAL MEDIA ACCESSIBILITY

During 2020 the North Country SNAP-Ed team dove head first into exploring adaptations of traditional in-person delivery of classes into engaging virtual education experiences. The progressive thinking of the team resulted in being the "first to market" in many virtual offerings approved by the state agency Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) for the SNAP-Ed program across New York State. The result was the creation of digital resources such as pre-recorded lesson videos, food demonstration videos, online recipe bank, Facebook Live lessons, and adapting lesson plans to be delivered via a virtual platform. These resources remain active and accessible today on a NY Statewide website.



SNAP-Ed NY
36 subscribers

HOME VIDEOS PLAYLISTS CHANNELS DISCUSSION ABOUT

Uploads PLAY ALL SORT BY

Video Title	Duration
SNAP-Ed NY - Apple Corn Chili	5:50
CATCH 3-5, Lesson 1: Go Activities & MyPlate	19:08
SNAP-Ed NY - One Pot Pasta Alfredo	12:00
SNAP-Ed NY - Barley Lentil Soup	10:10
SNAP-Ed NY - Fresh, Frozen, Canned	9:28
SNAP-Ed NY - BEET SALAD	10:14

INDIRECT EDUCATION



Indirect Education is a method of reaching the SNAP eligible audience when educators are not able to spend 30+ minutes with participants discussing health and nutrition concepts.

Indirect events are designed to raise awareness of the importance of health and nutrition in preventing obesity. Events are engaging, provide educational displays, and demonstrate nutrition and wellness behaviors.

Indirect materials are provided for community partners in the form of newsletters, recipes cards, educational handouts, nutrition education messaging, emails, podcast segments, etc.

IT'S A SNAP! SAVE TIME, SAVE MONEY PODCAST

In FFY 2023 North Country SNAP-Ed produced and distributed podcast segments with the collaboration with Media Force LLC. The team produced 6 episodes: Energy Balance, Solutions for Living Strong, Active in Winter, Eating on a Budget, Back to Basics, and Protein Routine.

The campaign ran for two months with geo-fencing to North Country Counties and to SNAP eligible residents. The result was 616 views.



SOCIAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN



"Life's Tight, Eat Right"

Positive health and nutrition social marketing messages can lead to positive community-wide behavior change. "Life's Tight, Eat Right" messaging is aimed to educate and encourage that healthy eating and shopping behaviors can be accomplished even during tough economic times. Nutrition social marketing material is designed to represent all populations and was distributed through various mediums listed below through out the 6 counties in the North Country Region.

- Audience Targeted Social Display Advertising and emails
- In-Store Audio
- Television and Radio PSAs
- Connected TV advertisements
- Banners: grocery store entrances, partner/ priority site locations
- Billboards in each county in the region
- Bus Wraps in St. Lawrence, Jefferson, and Clinton Counties

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES:

POLICY, SYSTEMS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE PROJECTS

Communities settings play a large role in promoting or inhibiting healthy behaviors. PSE initiatives are a set of comprehensive activities that support sustained behavior change. PSE initiatives promote and institute policies and activities that address barriers that make healthy food and physical activity choices harder for SNAP population to put into action.

"Policies take several forms such as laws, ordinances, regulations, and rules. They can be formal or informal. Systems interventions are changes that impact all areas of an organization, institution or community, not just policies. Environmental interventions involve changes to the economic, social, or physical environment. Policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change interventions have a great potential to improve a community's health by addressing socioeconomic factors and by making healthy choices more accessible, easier and the default choice through changing all three of the elements described above." (Adapted from Center TRT Glossary of Terms)



ADVOCATING FOR HEALTHY SCHOOLS THROUGH PEER-LED ACTIVITIES IN NUTRITION



Peer-Led Activity in Nutrition (PLAN), one of SNAP-Ed's Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) Initiatives, is intended to raise up peer leaders advocating for nutrition and physical activity in their school community. PLAN combines direct education with PSE interventions through student-led, project based learning that helps students develop wellness goals for themselves as well as for the larger school community, and teaches students how their choices impact their own health, community and environment, and that their voice can make a difference towards advocating for change.

Clifton-Fine students opted to revitalize the school nature trail which was underused and overgrown with vegetation. Their concept involved cleaning up the trail and providing physical activity prompts along the way, thus highlighting the trail as a valuable school asset to promote physical activity for students and families. The students held an event to unveil the trail and give the community a chance to experience it. The students also coordinated a "food and necessities" drive for their backpack program, a program that sends food home each week with youth who are in need. The youth presented their PLAN Project to the Board of Education, who approved it and established May 21, 2022 as the Food Drive and Walk the Trail Day.

Hermon-Dekalb students implemented a year-long initiative through morning announcements that promoted health with nutrition messages and trivia, as well as allotting a 30 second physical activity session. For a culminating activity, the students participated in a school & community "Spring Fling" event during the school budget vote by providing a food demonstration for everyone who came to vote. They discussed the food groups represented, their health benefits, and how to make the food. That evening the students also led a physical activity in the gym for students and families. It is well known that most Americans do not get enough fruits and vegetables or physical activity. These youth decided it would be best to introduce their peers to healthy options.

FROM A FARM TO YOUR TABLE: A LOCAL FOODS ACCESS PROJECT

CCE of SLC's SNAP-Ed program partnered with GardenShare and various farms to bring a community food access project to the North Country Region. "From a Farm to Your Table" is a SNAP-Ed Farm to Community project with the goal to increase access to healthy, nutrient dense, local produce to community members that may be facing food insecurities.

This program supports local produce farmers by expanding their markets and building local food economies where unreliable access to fresh produce is common. Creating relationships between community members and local farmers is important to the local economy and food system. The connections between community member's families and local farmers can be a lasting relationship. Community members learn how to source nutrient dense foods, to prepare low cost meals for their families, and to stay healthy with fresh and local produce from farmers in our community.



ADVANCING COMMUNITY HEALTH THROUGH FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PRESCRIPTION PROGRAM



The Fruit and Vegetable Prescription (FVRx) Program is made possible through partnerships and coordination with healthcare providers at Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) serving low-income individuals and families, SNAP-Ed, and local produce distributors. FVRx vouchers are available in North Country Region through partnerships with Fidelis and Gus Shumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP). SNAP-Ed nutrition classes were coordinated in conjunction with Local Farmer's produce distributions at Farmer's Market, participating farm stands, and local grocers.

Healthcare providers write "prescriptions" for patients at-risk for chronic disease and food insecurity which will refer them to a six-week SNAP-Ed nutrition education workshop. Nutritionists lead workshops featuring interactive lessons designed to increase knowledge of healthy food choices, meal planning, physical activity goals, resource management and the use of EBT cards to buy produce at farmers markets or farm stands. Each workshop also has a food demonstration focused on food preparation and safety skills with seasonal produce. Participants receive healthy, low-cost recipes, and supplemental materials promoting MyPlate and USDA Dietary Guidelines. During classes participants also learn about food systems including the multitude of food assistance resources and produce providers in their local communities.

The goal of this initiative is to address food insecurity and hunger, nutritional needs, and obesity among the low-income population, including those who receive SNAP benefits, who are most at-risk for diet-related chronic disease, such as obesity. Nearly 25% of adults across the region report not having access to healthy foods, according to the North Country Health Compass. In 2019, 41.9% of adults reported having one or more chronic disease and 31.6 % of adults were obese in our region. These percentages are higher than that of the state and national average. This region suffers from chronically high poverty rates that consistently exceed the state rates. Due to these statistics, many families end up in need of food assistance and simultaneously struggle with medical conditions. The medical conditions are associated with overeating as a result of being overfed, yet undernourished on a diet of highly processed convenience foods, loaded with calories and stripped of nutrients.

CONNECTING TO COMMUNITY AUDIENCES



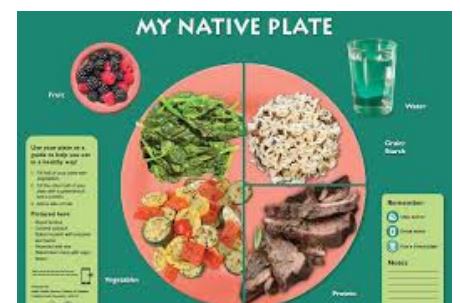
Workshops in the Community: Accessibility is an important factor when offering SNAP-Ed workshops in the community. In order to reduce possible transportation barriers SNAP-Ed educators organize workshops at community locations that are near where people are already present such as community centers, libraries, housing units, schools, DSS offices, etc. Further more, workshop locations are determined based on close proximity to public transit stops when possible.

Relevancy: Encouraging healthy eating and physical activity behavior change can be overwhelming. SNAP-Ed educators deliver nutrition information in a conversation based atmosphere where participants are encouraged to share their experiences and questions in a safe space. This allows for the opportunity to make relevant connections to how the information can be used after they leave the classes. Grocery Store & Farmers Market tours or an example of showing tips for saving money while shopping in practice. Other examples are providing information on food access resources, and food demonstration for creating low cost meals that taste great.

Hands-on Activities: SNAP-Ed lessons follow an experiential learning approach where the participants are presented with the lesson content, then spend the majority of the workshops on activities that bring the information to life. Examples include measuring out the amount of sugar in their favorite beverages, piling out the amount of fat in common fast food meals, and building balanced meal plates with food models. Many participants have stated the shock of seeing just how much it really is! Food demonstrations where the participants help create the recipe is another great way to provide a hands-on activity that build skills.

Empowerment: Working with and motivating participants can sometimes be a challenge. When SNAP-Ed educators go into schools to work on Peer-Led Activities in Nutrition, the focus is to raise up peer leaders advocating for nutrition and physical activity in their school community. This helps students develop leaderships and advocacy skills that they can carry with them through their young adult lives. The projects are completely decided by the students and determined by their own needs and wants for positive change or development they wish to see in their school environment.

Cultural: With awareness and respect for the Native American culture, SNAP-Ed Nutrition Educators have adapted and supplemented lesson information with the culturally accurate Native Plate rather than the commonly referenced American MyPlate. Nutrition Educators also incorporated a culturally relevant youth curricula entitled "Eagle Adventures" which encourages health and wellness behaviors through traditions of Native American storytelling.



REACHING YOUTH IN THE AKWESASNE MOHAWK TERRITORY

The North Country SNAP-Ed Program has established strong program partnerships within the Akwesasne Mohawk Territory, including working relationships with the Akwesasne Clubhouse, Akwesasne Boys and Girls Club, Salmon River Central School, Akwesasne Group Home, and Intensive Preventive Program/Foster Care Unit. Further conversations have been held with other tribal government programs to discuss future collaborations. Through these connections the SNAP-Ed Program has had the pleasure to attend some community wellness events at Generations Park.



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The Akwesasne Group Home and Intensive Preventive Program/Foster Care Unit are two of the strongest program partners, opening their doors to engage their youth in SNAP-Ed nutrition education. Their youth have been eager to participate, learn, and experiment with foods that they would not normally eat. The partners have shared that on multiple occasions, youth have requested ingredients to make the recipe taught during the SNAP-Ed food demonstration. An example includes spaghetti squash, which the youth have made repeatedly since experiencing it with their SNAP-Ed Nutrition Educator. The partners have also implemented small changes in their program environment to help make healthy choices easier, including a ready supply of conveniently packaged fresh produce for youth to grab on the go. The partners have genuinely reinforced the SNAP-Ed lessons and guidance with their youth, enabling healthier food choices and behavior changes.



EDUCATOR DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH

Regional SNAP-Ed Trainings:

Food Pantry Cooking Challenge

During our 2022 in-person regional staff training, educators were given 30 minutes to prepare an original meal after being provided with four different common food pantry items in protein, fruit, vegetable, and grain food groups. Educators expressed that they learned how some of these ingredients from food pantry are hard to work with, and left with a bit more understanding a respect for participants using food pantry items, as well as better understanding of the importance and idea behind SNAP-Ed recipes being 10 Ingredients or less, and under 30 minutes to prepare.



Savory Oatmeal with Spiced Fruit



Protein Pasta with Sauteed Peaches



Hashed "Browns"
w/ Toasted Oats & Dried Fruit

Gut Health

During our 2023 in-person regional staff training, Colton McCracken led the nutrition educators through a presentation about gut health and the importance and impact nutrition plays. This topic was a request by the educators to become more aware and knowledgeable about this topic that so many workshop participation are asking questions about.

Cultural Competencies

SNAP-Ed New York statewide work groups brought culture presentations around food traditions and recipes to the statewide educators meetings. These presentations educated staff about food cultures of Native Americans, African Americans, Latino Americans, etc.

SUCCESS STORIES



"I enjoy that the recipes are easy to make and so versatile. We sometimes struggle to incorporate vegetables in our meals and this soup is great for using different ingredients... Our kids also like to help when we cook and I think this would be great for getting them involved with what we eat as a family!"
- FVRx Participant



"[Are you] the lady that brought the pickled turnips last year. Those were awesome! We make them at home sometimes! I liked the turnips raw too!"

- Elementary Student



"I really like going to these classes. The instructors are great and it encourages me to make changes which is good because I'm a diabetic."

-DSS Participant



"The kids are always talking about whoa and go foods. As a matter of fact, my daughter, who is in this class, points out the go and whoa foods on our dinner table."

-2nd Grade Teacher



"Hello!! My name is [Y] and I'm a tenant at Curtis Apartments and at the nutrition class... Thank you for doing this program, it is a true blessing!! ... Delta's (F2C Farmer) produce picks are always very nice and she is great about giving info on items!! I just wanted you to know what a great job they are doing and how this program is a true blessing!!"

- F2C Participant

SUCCESS STORIES



"I wanted to share that I remember doing a cooking demonstration with us last year using Strawberries and Spinach to make a salad. I wanted to tell you I made it for my family, and we absolutely loved it! I also added blueberries to the recipe to experiment with different flavors. I have learned a lot from these classes, and it has helped me cook more at home with things I'd never thought I would try."

-Adult Participant



"You showed us this [myplate] in first grade!" "The Orange color is the Grain Group and the Purple one is for Protein, not just meat! Not all foods that come from cows are in the Dairy group because of their sugar, like chocolate milk and Ice Cream" "To be in the Grain group, you need all the parts of the grain seed!"

- Elementary Students



"I really liked the information covered in each of the workshops and I was surprised at how approachable the lessons were given how difficult these topics can be for some of us."

- FVRx Participant



"I make those kale chips at home all the time!"
 "I LOVE BRUSSELS SPROUTS!"
 "We love the food you bring!"

-HOM Students



"I have been to several workshops offered by Cornell Extension, and I love how I always learn new information... I especially love your (SNAP-Ed) recipes, I even made the Sweet Potato Apple Bake for our community potluck, and it turned out very delicious!"

- F2C Participant



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