



# Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program Willacy County

## SUPPORTING TEXAS FAMILIES WITH GREATEST NEED SINCE 1969

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) helps young families and youth with limited resources - those most at risk to suffer from hunger, food insecurity, and the inability to connect with available support systems. EFNEP offers practical lessons in basic nutrition, food preparation, food budget management, and food safety in settings convenient for the participants. Program graduates reflect significant, lasting improvement in eating behaviors and healthy food habits. Texas has a need for EFNEP - 2022 data shows that nearly 20 percent of Texas children under the age of 18 live in families that have income below the poverty level, compared to 14 percent of U.S. children.

## EFNEP REACHES ADULT AND YOUTH AUDIENCES

In Texas, EFNEP nutrition educators reach youth and adult groups whose principal language may be English or Spanish.

In 2024:

- 372 youth contacts were made through the EFNEP youth program:
  - 95% improved ability to choose healthy food;
  - 56% improved safe food handling practices; and
  - 71% improved physical activity behaviors.



## EFNEP MAKES A REAL DIFFERENCE

### Adult Program

Using “hands-on” experiences, EFNEP adult participants complete a series on stretching food dollars, improving eating habits, and practicing food safety principles. As a result of participation in EFNEP, participants will learn to prepare more meals and snacks at home, be more active, control portion size, and have more energy.

### Youth Program

The EFNEP – Youth program is directed toward low-income school-age youth. These students participate in a series of fun and educational lessons on good nutrition and food safety as part of summer programs and classroom and after-school activities. Through fun and engaging activities, youth learn to build a healthy plate, set limits on sugar, fats, and sodium, be active, food safety, and to practice healthy behaviors.



## COST-BENEFIT OF EFNEP

Studies have shown that for every \$1 spent on EFNEP, \$10 were estimated to be saved in health care costs and \$2 saved in food costs by participants. For Texas, this is \$45 million in estimated health care cost savings and almost \$9 million in food costs.

## VOLUNTEERS STRENGTHEN EFNEP

In 2024, 7 volunteers donated 83 hours of work to EFNEP in Texas. At the Texas rate of \$31.94/hr, this volunteerism has a minimum dollar value of \$2,651. Volunteers make a difference in their own communities and contribute to EFNEP’s continued success.

For more information visit [efnep.tamu.edu](http://efnep.tamu.edu).



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