

# HELPING LOW-INCOME DELAWAREANS EAT BETTER FOR LESS



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE  
COOPERATIVE  
EXTENSION

## ISSUE

Many Delawareans suffer from food insecurity and hunger ... and the cheapest food is often the unhealthiest. Data shows the need for educating individuals about healthy eating and using food resources wisely.



**128,361**

DE individuals relied on Supplemental Food and Nutrition Program (SNAP) benefits for limited-income families in November 2018.



**63,005**

DE households relied on Supplemental Food and Nutrition Program (SNAP) benefits for limited-income families in November 2018.



**16,737**

Individuals relied on the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infant and Children (WIC).



**170,942**

Youth received backpack meals during the 2017-2018 school year.

## RESPONSE

The University of Delaware's Cooperative Extension Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) provides a minimum of 10 hours of interactive, hands-on education to help improve a family's self-efficacy in choosing healthier options.



**10 HOURS OF  
INTERACTIVE  
FOOD\$MART  
PROGRAMMING**



Make healthier food choices



Handle food safely

Use resources wisely and shopping with a budget



Participate in physical activity daily



## IMPACTS



**143**

2019 Food\$mart participants reported ...



**63%**

improved their food resource management



**65%**

improved their food safety practices



**34%**

increased fruit intake



**22%**

increased vegetable intake



**49%**

improved their physical activity behaviors

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## ISSUE

Many Delawareans suffer from food insecurity and hunger and the cheapest food is often the unhealthiest. The number of individuals and households receiving SNAP benefits in Delaware during November 2018 was 128,361 and 63,005, respectively. In Delaware, 16,737 individuals rely on the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infant and Children (WIC). The Food Bank of Delaware also reported that 170,942 youth received backpack meals during the 2017-2018 school year, the largest number of backpacks distributed to date. This data shows the need for educating individuals about healthy eating and using food resources wisely.

## RESPONSE

The University of Delaware's Cooperative Extension Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) provides a minimum of 10 hours of interactive, hands-on education. The program focuses on developing participants' skills to make healthy food choices based on their budget, to use their resources wisely, to handle food safely, and to participate in physical activity each day. The program helps to improve a family's self-efficacy in choosing and preparing healthier food options.

## IMPACT

In 2019, a total of 143 individuals participated in FoodSmart, an EFNEP series of lessons. Sixty-three percent of participants improved one or more food resource management skills. This includes planning meals in advance more often (36%), comparing prices when shopping more often (23%), using a grocery list (32%), and cooking dinner at home more often (28%). Sixty-five percent showed improvement in one or more food safety practices.

Based on data from pre and post-program surveys completed by individuals upon entering and exiting the program, positive changes were seen in the number of participants increasing fruit (34%) and vegetable (22%) intake with 34% eating dark green vegetables more often each week. In addition, 49% of participants showed improvement in one or more physical activity behaviors. This includes 23% exercising for at least 30 minutes more days a week and 32% making small changes to be active more often. EFNEP is funded through the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture.