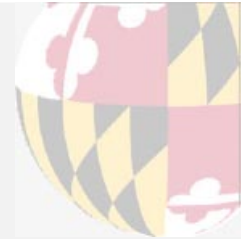


**“Maryland Dividends”**  
**Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station**  
**College of Agriculture & Natural Resources**  
*Premiums returned on investments in research, education and outreach.*

**Impact of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program  
on Fruit and Vegetable Consumption of Low-Income Families in Maryland**  
**USDA**



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**Research Team Leader:**

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**Region of Impact:**

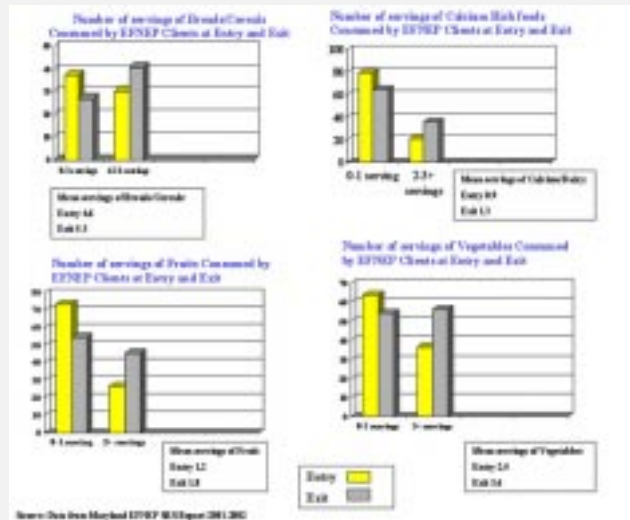
State

**Research Description:**

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program delivers nutrition education to low-income families in Maryland. The program, which consists of 6-10 hours of behaviorally focused lessons is delivered to clients by culturally competent paraprofessionals trained by faculty at the University of Maryland, Maryland Cooperative Extension. The intent of the program is to facilitate diet and health related behavior change. Program outcomes are measured at entry and exit (at approximately one year) using a standardized evaluation instrument. EFNEP Maryland delivered nutrition education to 10,506 low-income individuals in 2,961 families in Maryland in fiscal year 2001-2002. Outcome data indicated that fruit and vegetable consumption as well as the consumption of whole grain cereals increased significantly in program families.

**Research Classification:**

- 3. Healthy, Well Nourished Population
- 5. Economic Development and Quality of Life for People and Communities



3 January 2003 mehta1

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### Impact of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program on Fruit and Vegetable Consumption of Low-Income Families in Maryland (continued)



#### **Research Benefits:**

Human Health and Economic Benefits- Fruit and Vegetable consumption have been identified as key indicators of dietary quality and increased consumption is associated with health promotion and prevention of chronic disease.

Although evidence has emerged for a role of vegetables and fruit in reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease, obesity, and diabetes, the most impressive body of evidence exists for protection against cancer. Eat 5-A-Day, the recommended 5 servings of vegetables and fruit a day is a minimum rather than a maximum target of consumption. Increases in consumption of fruits and vegetables above current levels should be encouraged for individuals and populations. Evidence has been accumulating for an inverse association between fruit and vegetable intake and the risk of several epithelial and hormone-dependent cancers. A variety of mechanisms have emerged for the protective effect of specific constituents in vegetables and fruit, both in animal and humans.

The actual cost benefit from increased fruit and vegetable consumption are to be determined.

