

Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program



**EFNEP**

# **EFNEP Marketing Toolkit**

ECOP/BoHS/EFNEP Task Force  
Extension Committee on Organization and Policy  
Board on Human Sciences  
Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program  
[www.NASULGC.org](http://www.NASULGC.org)

**December 2007 (revised)**

*Extension Programs serve people of all ages regardless of socio-economic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national orientation.*

## **ECOP/BoHS/EFNEP Task Force PREFACE**

### **Charge to EFNEP Task Force**

The NASULGC ECOP and BoHS, who identified the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) as a priority program in need of increased visibility and funding, commissioned the Task Force. The charge to the Task Force is to work toward increased Federal funding for EFNEP for five years (2003-2007) to reach more of the eligible audience.

### **Strategies**

The Task Force uses telephone conference calls and face-to-face meetings to develop strategies and tools to communicate EFNEP's effectiveness and fiscal needs to internal audiences (Extension Administrators, University Administration and USDA) and external audiences (Congressional members and EFNEP partners). The Task Force also meets face-to-face with Congressional members who have indicated an interest in EFNEP's mission and funding status.

State EFNEP Coordinators play a crucial role in assisting local EFNEP staff as they interpret EFNEP to Congressional members and their legislative staff. This Marketing Toolbox was developed by the Task Force in March of 2003 to help EFNEP Coordinators with these efforts. At that time, Task Force members Jamie Dollahite, Robin Orr, Barbara Sutherland, and Debra Reed represented State EFNEP Coordinators. Current EFNEP Coordinators on the Task Force are Robin Orr (North Central), Linda Drake (Northeast), Gail Hanula (South), Barbara Sutherland (West), De'Shoyn York Friendship (1890). Please feel free to contact them or other Task Force members if you have any questions about the process of communicating EFNEP internally or externally.

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# EFNEP Marketing Toolkit

## INTRODUCTION

Under the leadership of the Task Force, EFNEP funding in FY 2005 was restored to FY 2003 level (\$58 million). FY 2006 funding was \$62,634,000 but ended at \$62,008,000 because of the rescission. Keep in mind that EFNEP has never been funded at its authorized level, from 1969, of \$83,000,000. In FY07, this task force was instrumental in achieving the highest level of EFNEP funding ever received - \$63,538,000. Another increase was attained in FY08 at \$65,557,000. For the last two years, a base of \$100,000 is being provided to all participating institutions. In the coming years the ECOP and BoHS will turn its focus to other priorities, so it will be important for us to continue to communicate the relevance and success of EFNEP to all elected officials and stakeholders. This guide provides some suggestions for how to work effectively with leaders in your state/territory.

Interpretation or Communication Events/Meetings may take several forms:

- a. An informational packet, letter, newsletter, fax, or e-mail describing successes of EFNEP clients who live in the Congressional member's District;
- b. An informal visit by EFNEP Coordinator, Agent, staff, client and/or other state Extension administrative faculty to the Congressional member's office (locally or in Washington, DC) and meeting with him/her or legislative staff.
- c. A large event held in conjunction with an EFNEP graduation (EFNEP agent, staff, clients and representatives from partnering agencies attending).
- d. A combination of these; for example, a large event may be overwhelming to clients who are not used to talking in front of groups, so try a round robin approach where the Congressional member or legislative assistant goes from station to station in a room in an informal manner. You may want to limit the number of stations in order to allow adequate discussion time. A station may include a client or EFNEP staff member or an exhibit of nutritious refreshments prepared using an EFNEP recipe. To illustrate food insecurity, you could calculate the cost of feeding a family using a sample nutritious menu, and show how much of a family's budget is needed for healthy food. You could also serve an actual low-cost meal, and show how it can be done with adequate education and skills. EFNEP can be part of other Extension Interpretation Events.

Depending on timing, one of these may be more feasible than another. A key idea to remember is that it is important for your Congressional members to hear from you frequently. Experts suggest that it takes seven contacts to get and maintain interest. Some State Coordinators and Agents are very skilled at conducting Interpretation or Communication Events. New State Coordinators and Agents may want to try some simple strategies (a or b above) before they undertake a large event (c or d above).

Develop a plan for communicating with your Congressional members. The most important first step is to make contact with your state's Congressional members doing (a and b) above. Then build on your plan each year. Strategies may need to be different depending on whether your Congressional members are new or re-elected and whether they are familiar with food and nutrition issues.

## **Activities to do before Interpretation Event**

### *Obtain Approval and Support*

It is important that your Extension and University administrators and federal legislative liaisons are aware of your efforts to increase funding for EFNEP. They must approve your efforts and may also help you contact Congressional members to inform them about EFNEP successes. The people you need to contact will vary by state but may include the following: Extension County or District Administrator, Program Leader, Associate Director, and Director; University Department Head and Dean; University government relations staff; and the NASULGC Council on Government Affairs (CGA) member.

Provide these people with a list of Congressional members who have EFNEP in their District and a suggested timeline for making contacts. Ask for their support and any protocol issues that you need to keep in mind as you contact the offices of these selected Congressional members. By doing this, we will extend our voice as these Directors and University Presidents talk with Congressional members when they visit Washington, DC.

1. *Identify Congressional members in the Districts where you have EFNEP.* These can be located at <http://clerk.house.gov> or <http://www.senate.gov>. At this website, you can also see if your Congressional members are on any relevant committees such as Agriculture, Appropriations, or Education and Workforce. The Congressional member's district office phone number is listed in the Government section of your local phone book. To call your members in Washington, DC, contact the U.S. Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121.
2. *Do some basic research on your Congressional members:*
  - a. The correct spelling of their name, party affiliation, committee assignments, when first elected and key interests. Review their websites.
  - b. Try to imagine what they need to hear about EFNEP. Read press releases posted on the Congressional members' websites. What aspects of EFNEP are related to their interests?
3. *Identify current and former adult and youth EFNEP clients who can tell their "success story."* Choose clients who:
  - a. Reside in the Congressional member's district.
  - b. Have articulated the positive benefits of EFNEP to their EFNEP educator or representative of a partnering agency where classes are provided.
  - c. Are representative of the types of success stories you see in your state (for example, adult clients getting a job in school food service using their EFNEP graduation certificate). Involve a diverse group.
  - d. Feel confident expressing themselves to strangers.
  - e. Have a flexible schedule to accommodate the Congressional member's schedule; you may have short notice regarding schedule and date of interpretation event.
  - f. Be willing, enthusiastic, concise, and brief! Practice too!

**NOTE:** It may be helpful to have several clients identified for the Interpretation Event (sort of like a speaker pool) so that they can be called on short notice due to changes in the Congressional member's schedule or need for substitution due to illness of another client.



Also, identify EFNEP Staff (education assistants and secretaries) who have professional success stories related to their employment in the program and who would be effective spokespersons. Consider starting an EFNEP Alumni or Ambassadors group for clients and staff. This could be an excellent way to continue to develop leadership in these individuals and provide a “voice” for EFNEP. Remember to provide necessary update or “refresher training.”

4. *Contact Offices of Congressional Members*

Distribute/e-mail “talking points” (see resources) document developed by the national Task Force, to the Congressional member’s office and indicate that you would like to schedule a meeting to share information about EFNEP including how the program has positively affected his/her constituents. You may want to develop a state-specific informational sheet or packet (see resources) to bring with you. Follow up with a phone call. Determine dates and times when they will be home from Washington, DC for a meeting or Interpretation Event. Work through the staff contact and the scheduler to schedule a meeting or site visit in the community. Determine the length of time the Congressional member can commit and plan accordingly. If he/she cannot attend personally, then schedule a visit with staff members, or invite staff members to an interpretation event. Staff members carry substantial influence and a visit with them can be equally effective.

5. *Plan for Media Coverage*

A site visit from a Congressional member is a great opportunity for media coverage. Obtain approval from their office before proceeding and work closely with their press secretary to coordinate. Also, work with your county or area Extension Communications specialist to plan for successful coverage and photos of the Interpretation Event (see resources for photo release).

6. *Practice Session*

Have a practice session with clients who will be presenting their success stories so that they can tell their stories perhaps in front of other Extension educators before they present to the Congressional members. (This may be controversial; some people don’t like a rehearsed sound. However, you want the clients to feel confident so that their sincere feelings are expressed instead of stage fright). Also, this is a good time to test equipment and evaluate different room arrangements.

7. *Format of Interpretation Event*

- a. The key message to communicate is that EFNEP equals effective education on dietary choices to improve health in diverse audiences.
- b. Interpretation Events may be held at the EFNEP office or other Extension facility, at a partnering agency where EFNEP classes are held, at the Congressional member’s district office, or other convenient place.
- c. Facilitate a discussion of issues that people in your communities face regarding food choice and nutrition. You could start with a warm-up, such as everyone state what their favorite food (perhaps favorite vegetable, fruit or whole grain) is and why they like it. Then talk about how many people face food insecurity and have limited

access to healthy food. Discuss how the knowledge and skills that EFNEP teaches can help people make positive changes.

- d. A power point presentation containing short historical perspective of EFNEP; use of the paraprofessional model for outreach (this produces diverse workforce); USDA CSREES graphic slide showing static funding for ~ 20 years (actually a drop in real dollars from \$58.2 million to \$11.6 million in today's real dollar amount); mention some critical health problems that EFNEP addresses and could address more effectively with more funding and outreach such as obesity; cost benefit data; number of eligible people and the percentage of eligible people currently being reached, increased fruit and vegetable intake, etc.
- e. USDA/EFNEP Task Force has developed several videos that are available on line for viewing. <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/food/efnep/efnep.html>
- f. You can also go to <http://www.efnep.org>; scroll down to the Marketing Section for additional resources.

#### 8. *Ensure Effective Communications*

**Before sending any communication to your Congressional offices, have at least one other person proofread it.** Also, make sure that you follow necessary protocol within your University and Extension Administration. For example, determine if you need to go through an Extension Administrator or University Legislative liaison before you communicate each time with your Congressional member or whether copying them on the communication is sufficient. This protocol may vary depending on whether it is an initial contact or a follow-up contact. Check to make sure.

Remember, Congressional members were elected by the people; they like to know your issues. They appreciate politeness, intelligence, dedication to one's cause, and logical comments that are presented in a careful, concise, and factual manner.

#### 9. *Confirm Arrangements!*

Follow up in writing on the schedule/arrangements, confirm by telephone and offer to answer any questions in advance. Provide an agenda several weeks before the visit. Call the day before to confirm one last time (date, time, and place).

## **Letter Format for Member of Congress**

Letters to the Congressional Member's Washington, DC office should be faxed or e-mailed. Do not send postal mail to the Washington office, as it will not get there, due to current security procedures. Letters to the district office can be faxed, e-mailed or mailed through the postal service.

Address your letter properly; name and address should be on the letter and envelope or cover page, if faxed. Locate the correct address from the Congressional Member's web page.

### **Letter to a Senator**

The Honorable John Smith  
United State Senate  
Room \_\_\_\_ Russell, Hart or Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Smith:

### **Letter to a Representative**

The Honorable Steven Jones  
United States House of Representatives  
Room \_\_\_\_ Longworth, Rayburn or Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Congressman/Congresswoman Jones:

### **Letter to the Chair of Congressional Committee and Speaker of the House of Representatives**

When writing to the Chair of a Congressional Committee or the Speaker of the House of Representatives, it is proper to address them as:

Dear Mr. Chairman/Madam Chairwoman

**OR**

Dear Mr./Madam Speaker:

### **Sending e-mail to a Member of Congress**

When addressing e-mail to a Member of Congress, follow the same suggestions as for a printed letter. For subject line of your e-mail, identify your message by topic or bill number. The body of your message should use the following format:

Your name

Address

City, State ZIP

Dear (Title) (Last name),

Start your message here.

Many members now have web forms rather than public e-mail addresses. Visit the Member's web site or <http://congress.org> to send your message through the Internet.

### **Suggested letter content/points**

Your purpose for writing should be stated in the first paragraph of the letter. If the letter pertains to a specific piece of legislation, identify it accordingly, e.g, House bill: H.R. \_\_\_\_, Senate bill: S. \_\_\_\_.

Address only one issue in each letter, and, if possible, keep the letter to one page.

- Briefly describe what EFNEP is; they may not know.
- If the correspondence provides information only about EFNEP, then use your Extension/EFNEP stationary. Use your personal stationary if you mention supporting a specific bill.
- Write legibly or type if possible and use only one side of the paper.
- Check your spelling even when using a spell check program.
- Put your full return address on both the letter and envelope since these are often separated.
- Sign your letter above either printed or typed name.
- Include your title if you wish.
- Keep a copy of your correspondence and material accompanying any letter for your records. Send a copy to your Extension county or district Director or other Administrator according to your Institution's policy.

### **Activities/Information to have available at the Interpretation Event**

1. The key/main messages to use during Interpretation Meetings:

Review these points with each EFNEP person (write on a card for easy reminding) and emphasize the importance of consistent messages.

- EFNEP equals effective education on dietary choices to improve health in diverse audiences.
- EFNEP is cost effective in reducing health care costs.\*\*
- EFNEP had level funding of around \$59 million for more than 20 years. In FY 2004 EFNEP's funding was reduced by about 12%. In FY 2005, the funding was restored to FY 2003 level, which was wonderful. However, we have never had the level of funding (\$83 million) authorized in 1969. The EFNEP budget for 2006 was approved for \$62,008,000. This has allowed the 1890 Land-Grant institutions, the historically Black Colleges, to receive a small amount of funds to start EFNEP programs at their institutions. EFNEP's budget is part of USDA/CSREES (Smith Lever 3d funds) in case there are questions about where to find EFNEP in the total U.S. budget.

\*\* Cost/Benefit studies have been done in several states and consistently show that for every \$1 invested in EFNEP, up to \$10 is saved in health care costs. The benefits of EFNEP were characterized as dollars estimated to be saved on health care costs by the potential delay/avoidance of chronic diseases and conditions as a result of EFNEP participants adopting optimal food, nutrition and lifestyle behaviors such as increasing fruit and vegetable intake, decreasing salt intake, improving food safety and being more active. (FYI: even if your State has not done a cost/benefit study, you can generalize the results of other states to your state since similar curriculum and evaluation methods are used.)

\* \*In 2002, Produce for Better Health Foundation identified EFNEP as the best Federal program for increasing fruit and vegetable intake.

- Due to funding that barely keeps up with inflation, we are only reaching about two percent of the eligible population nationwide at a time when there's an increased need for nutrition education to combat obesity and nutrition related chronic diseases.
  - EFNEP reaches diverse audiences and employs a diverse staff.
2. Have posters and exhibits with pictures or video clips showing active involvement of diverse EFNEP adult and youth clients.
  3. Have an example of an EFNEP recipe to taste (make sure it is nutritious!)
  4. Take black-and-white photographs of the visit for use in newsletters or digital photos for websites (see photo release form in resource section).

### **Activities to Do After Interpretation Event**

Within a week, follow-up with a phone call to answer any questions from the Congressional member and office staff; send a written thank-you note emphasizing again the main message: EFNEP equals effective education on dietary choices to improve health in diverse audiences. If you send an e-mail, also send a written letter on your Extension/EFNEP letterhead.

Within a week, write a follow-up 'thank you' letter to each person assisting in your Interpretation Event (clients, representatives from partnering agencies, your EFNEP staff).

Once you have established a relationship with the Congressional members, stay in touch with them and their staff members. Look for ways to stay in touch that will reinforce the value/benefit of EFNEP. It is recommended that you make seven contacts with your Congressional members in order to have a lasting impression. These contacts can take the form of faxes, e-mails, and newsletters featuring constituents from their districts.

### **Resources Available to State EFNEP Coordinators**

1. Templates of NASULGC EFNEP Task Force 4-page and 1-page versions of "talking points." NASULGC Web site:

<http://www.nasulgc-bac.com/documents.htm>

2. List of Task Force EFNEP Coordinators who can be contacted for information and assistance with advocacy/educational work.

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Gail Hanula (South): [ghanula@uga.edu](mailto:ghanula@uga.edu)

Barbara Sutherland (West): [bsutherland@ucdavis.edu](mailto:bsutherland@ucdavis.edu)

3. Worksheet for EFNEP staff to use in planning the Interpretation Events. (See page 9.)
4. Report and evaluation of events (See page 10.)

5. Examples of one page fact sheet about EFNEP

National: <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/efnep/resources.html>

State (Ohio) <http://hec.osu.edu/hn/osue/efnep/2001-summary.htm>

State (California): <http://efnep.ucdavis.edu/EFNEPCountyFacts.htm>

6. Sample photo release form (University of California version) to use with clients featured in photos in exhibits, on power point, brochures, etc. (see page 11).

[http://ucce.ucdavis.edu/freeform/anrcs/documents/Release\\_Forms3359.pdf](http://ucce.ucdavis.edu/freeform/anrcs/documents/Release_Forms3359.pdf)

7. Healthier U.S. website (<http://www.healthierus.gov/>)

Centers for Disease Control website on obesity <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/obesity/>

8. CSREES EFNEP DVDs and Kansas State University Dole Center EFNEP video.

<http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/efnep/efnep.html>

## General Tips for Working with Elected Officials

- Wear your official EFNEP nametag.
- If EFNEP in your state is called something other than EFNEP, show EFNEP in parenthesis after the name you use.
- Don't say negative things about other nutrition programs like WIC, Head Start, FSNEP, etc. Focus on the messages about EFNEP.
- Remember, all politics are local. Local examples and stories are more meaningful than national statistics. Involvement of local people and organizations will get the attention of the Congressional member and his/her staff. Tie relevant issues directly to their home districts/state, e.g., how EFNEP is relevant for addressing obesity, reducing chronic disease and health care costs, reducing health disparities across races, ethnic diversity among EFNEP Staff, etc. For example, if the local major paper has recently featured a large article on obesity or nutrition-related health costs, use that as a launching point for the event/meeting.
- A picture is worth a thousand words. Visual images are powerful. A current picture, graph or diagram attached to a letter or included in a handout are very effective. Identify relevant personal stories and then capture them visually.
- Have open and honest communication. Don't exaggerate. If you don't know something, say so, and get back with more information promptly. Be positive and constructive; don't argue.
- Plan ahead for contacting a Congressional member. We can interpret EFNEP continuously throughout the calendar year with the local staff of our Congressional members. However, with regard to the timeline of the Federal budget process, contacts in the early spring and summer are important. We may have greater access to Congressional members when they are home on break (Easter, August recess, etc.). Remember that continued EFNEP funding depends on Congressional support!
- Consider the busy schedule of the Congressional members and their staff. Keep to the agreed upon beginning and ending times for the Interpretation Event. And plan time for questions and answers, photos, etc.

- Prioritize your messages and relate them on a personal level.
- Don't assume that Congressional members, or their assistants, know the intricacies of EFNEP. They deal quickly and superficially with many issues everyday.
- This is a continual process, not a one time contact, as all stakeholders are constantly changing.

**When using an acronym (e.g. WIC) give the full name the first time it is mentioned. Don't assume that people know the meaning of the acronym.**

To engage the Congressional members or their Legislative Assistant, it may be helpful to ask "What advice do you have for increasing EFNEP funding?" or "Is there someone on your staff I could alert when funding comes up?" Use open-ended questions to start the discussion. **Only do this when you feel comfortable with the dialogue. (Perhaps not on the first visit, educate first.)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## EFNEP Agent Worksheet for Planning Interpretation Events/Meetings

1. Goals and outcomes of the Interpretation Events:

2. Plan of event

Start with arrangements for contacting and scheduling the Congressional member.

People involved in the Event	Responsibilities Discussed	Task Completion Date
State EFNEP Staff		
County Staff		
District Staff		
Administrative Staff		

3. Equipment and Resources needed:

Arrangement made:

4. Notes and concerns:



## Report/Evaluation of Interpretation Event/Meeting

1. Date of event/meeting: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Names of individuals attending and their responsibility in Congress member's office:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Was this a (circle one):
- a. Informal office visit
  - b. Formal meeting; give location \_\_\_\_\_
4. Who attended? List names:
- a. Clients \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. EFNEP staff \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. EFNEP agents \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Extension administrators \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Representatives from partnering agencies \_\_\_\_\_

5. Were outcomes and goals met?

6. What were the reactions from the Congressman/woman and/or their assistants?

7. Is there potential for this Congressman/woman to be a supporter of EFNEP?

Strengths of the event:

Suggested action for follow-up/future events:

Name of person submitting report \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Send to your State EFNEP Coordinator within 24 hours after event.*

**SAMPLE**

DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
ANR COMMUNICATION SERVICES  
1850 Research Park Drive, Suite 200  
Davis, California 95616  
(530) 757-8304  
FAX (530) 297-4438

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Project Title (if any):

(Signature)

(Date)

(Printed Name)

(Street Address)

(City, State, Zip Code)

(If the person signing is under age 21, there should be consent by a parent or guardian, as follows:)

I hereby certify that I am the parent or guardian of \_\_\_\_\_,  
the minor named above, and do hereby give my consent without reservations to the foregoing on behalf of this person.

(Signature)

(Date)

(Printed Name)