

Increasing Fruits' and Vegetables' Share of the Plate: Programs That Get Results!

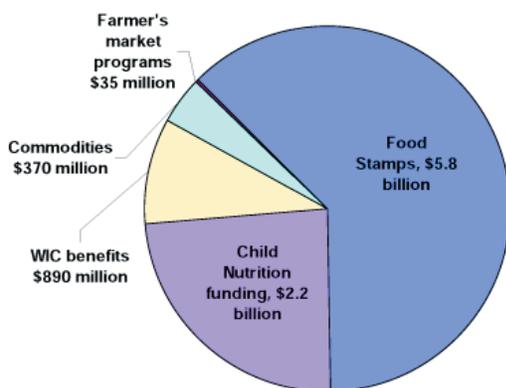
Moderator: Yvette Jackson, Regional Administrator, Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Robbinsville, NJ

Cross-Program FNS Policies and Programs to Promote Fruits and Vegetables

Stanley Garnett, Director, Child Nutrition Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Alexandria, VA

I will be talking to you this afternoon about our various programs that we administer within the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), and our efforts to increase consumption of fruits and vegetables among the populations that we serve, including our special effort on fresh fruits and vegetables that is a relatively new program.

The FNS administers 15 nutrition assistance programs. We serve one in every five Americans over the course of a year and our budget is now approaching \$60 billion a year. It's well over half of the budget for the entire U.S. Department of Agriculture. FNS programs provide basic assistance, particularly for the very needy populations in this country, most evident by our Food Stamp Program, which is the largest of our food assistance programs. The programs also provide supplemental assistance benefits to specific groups of children or adults, and commodity assistance, which is food distribution in emergency feeding situations and also food distribution to selected groups such as Native Americans. Of course, given the disaster that we have recently been going through the last couple of weeks, the commodity programs have played a big role in that.



We spend over \$9 billion a year to support fruits and vegetables. This chart shows you how much of the dollars, that are spent on our programs, support our fresh fruit and vegetable consumption.

Let's look at the Food Stamp Program first, which is a program that enables the needy population of the country to purchase foods at retail outlets. An estimated 20 percent of the purchases that the Food Stamp population makes go for the purchase of fruits and vegetables.

In our Child Nutrition Programs, the largest is the National School Lunch Program. It also includes the School Breakfast Program, the After-School Snack Program, and some of the child care programs. About 20 percent of the funding for these programs goes for the purchase of fruits and vegetables for the population that the Child Nutrition Program serves. If we look at the popular WIC Program, which is targeted to low-income pregnant and postpartum women, infants, and young children under five, they are provided food vouchers, which they can redeem at their local grocery stores for healthful foods that include fresh fruits and vegetables. It includes fruit and vegetable juice, fresh carrots, and dried legumes. About \$890 million a year of the WIC Program goes for the purchase of fruits and vegetables.

We mentioned our Food Distribution Program. Not only does our Food Distribution Program get involved in disaster feedings, such as the Katrina disaster and the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, but it also provides about 20 percent of the food that is served in our Child Nutrition Program. Those foods are provided to the schools, and they then put meals on the plates that meet the nutritional requirements for the program. We have some farmers' market programs. These programs provide coupons to WIC participants and low-income seniors to redeem at local farmers' markets for fresh fruits and vegetables.

Then, we have the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program began as a pilot program in the Farm Bill that was authorized about 4 years ago. It started off as a pilot in four Midwestern states and the Zuni Pueblo Indian Tribal Organization in New Mexico. It became a permanent program in the recent authorization of the Child Nutrition Program. It is now funded at \$9 million a year, mandatory funding. We have expanded the program to a total of eight states and three ITO's. The original four were Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, and Iowa. We expanded it to Mississippi, Washington, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania, and added two Indian tribal organizations: the Ogalala Sioux in South Dakota, and the Intertribal Council of Arizona: the Gila River Pima Community and the Tohona Oodham community.

That program is geared to 25 schools in each of the geographic states and 25 schools spread among the three Indian tribal organizations. The program provides fresh fruits and vegetables free to school children outside of the regular school meals. It has been a very popular program. Joanne Guthrie was very instrumental in the evaluation of the initial pilot and will probably be talking somewhat about the program.

We feel very strongly about partnerships in working to increase fresh fruit and vegetable consumption. We work very closely with the National Cancer Institute and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the expanded Five-a-Day Program in approaching all of our programs, but particularly in implementing the original fresh Fruit and Vegetable Pilot and the expanded permanent program that we are currently operating.

I'll go over some other activities that we have that provide guidance to our cooperators to help increase fresh fruits and vegetables into schools and institutions. First is our

Team Nutrition effort. Team Nutrition is just celebrating its tenth anniversary. We are currently funded at \$10 million a year. Team Nutrition is an integrated, behavior-based comprehensive plan for promoting the nutritional health of the Nation's school children. Team Nutrition is geared to our school nutrition programs, providing a lot of technical assistance to our cooperators. Three of those technical assistance guidance materials are designed in very user-friendly format. *Fruits and Vegetables Galore: Helping Kids Eat More*, is a material that we developed after implementing the Fruit and Vegetable Pilot. It's a handbook that is available to schools to enable them to know how to purchase, prepare, and market fresh fruits and vegetables.

Another guidance material is *Changing the Scene*, a user-friendly handbook in a suitcase format, that is available for the school communities, PTAs, school boards, etc. This publication gives them ideas on how they can take the lead in bringing about changes in and improving the school nutrition environment, using foods and some of the things that you've heard discussed by the panel that preceded us earlier today.

Another material is *Making It Happen*. It is a publication that we developed with nutrition money in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It provides 32 case histories of what school districts have done to bring about changes to improve the environment on their school campuses—from eliminating competitive foods to improving the foods that are sold in the school stores, vending machines, etc., and other activities to make the school campus healthy, provide opportunities for physical education and for more nutrition education. Those are all available through the Food and Nutrition Service. We have distributed thousands of these materials to encourage our cooperators to not only “make things happen,” and “change the scene,” but to increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables.

We recently announced a *HealthierUS School Challenge* as part of the administration's *HealthierUS* initiative. We announced this about 15 months ago. The Under Secretary announced it at the Annual Conference of what was then called the American School Food Service Association; it has since changed to School Nutrition Association. It's an effort to have schools step up to the plate to improve their school environment and provide a reward system on two levels, gold and silver recognition, for their efforts.

The schools have to do such things as, first of all, meet the nutritional requirements for the school meals that are served. Secondly, they have to address competitive food—either have no competitive foods or serve competitive foods that meet certain established standards. They must offer fresh fruits and vegetables and whole grains. They must offer physical activity and must provide nutrition education. It is currently available only at the elementary level; we started at that level. We have awarded gold levels to several schools now. The first one was in Slidell, Louisiana. I was able to visit that school when they were given their award. It was a wonderful experience to see what can be done in an elementary school. They had a participation level in that school that was about 90 percent of the students that attend school on any given day eat the school meals. We also recently gave gold awards

to schools in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Jefferson County, Kentucky, and Sweetwater County, Wyoming. We have given three awards at the silver level, to schools in Haywood County Tennessee.

We are encouraging schools through this voluntary effort to step up to the plate and beat the standards. We started the project 2-1/2 years ago and had hoped that we would do more in terms of financial incentives to schools, but I'm not able to get that. The challenge, as I say, is that it is optional. We are very excited about getting various elementary schools to step up to the plate. We're looking to expand it to the upper grade levels as we get a little more experience at the elementary level.

The next item, which is entirely new, is local wellness policies. It's another provision that came out of the Child Nutrition Reauthorization in 2004. It requires every school authority across the country to develop a local wellness policy and it must be in place by June 30, 2006. We are working very diligently with our partners in the Department of Education and the CDC to facilitate and provide guidance to schools as they implement school wellness policies. It requires schools to involve the entire school community, parents, students, school boards, school administrators, teachers, etc. in the development of a wellness policy, and must include a plan for measuring the policy implementation. Of any of the items out of the reauthorization that had to be implemented, probably this one, the wellness policy, got the most attention and the most interest of anything that was in that extensive piece of legislation.

That concludes what we are doing on the fruit and vegetable front.

Understanding Fruit and Vegetable Choices and Consumption

Joanne Guthrie, PhD, MPH, RD, Assistant Deputy Director for Nutrition in the Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program (FANRP), Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and not necessarily those of ERS or USDA.

I'm going to talk about understanding fruits and vegetable choices and consumption. The Economic Research Service (ERS), where I work, is a relatively small agency within USDA, and may be less familiar to many of you than the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). We're part of the research mission area. We focus on applied policy-oriented social science research to inform on issues that are relevant to the USDA, such as food consumption and the factors that drive it.

Like FNS, we're part of USDA's partnership with the Five-A-Day Fruit and Vegetable Promotion program. As part of that partnership, one thing we did was to put together a

range of ERS research on the topic of understanding fruits and vegetable choices and consumption into a series of research briefs. We also did a short article on the topic, which appeared in our magazine, *Amber Waves*.

ERS, as part of its program principles, focuses on broad dissemination of its research findings. Everything I will talk about today is available on the USDA website. If you're not familiar with our website, go to www.ers.usda.gov; you can sign up for regular updates on topics of interest to you. Probably a lot of you are interested in food assistance, nutrition, diet, and health. You can identify what you're interested in and get regular information about what's new from us at ERS. I hope that you will do so.

I want to go over my objectives for this presentation. The first is to compare current consumption of fruits and vegetables to Federal dietary recommendations; second, to discuss the economic and behavioral factors that influence fruit and vegetable choices and consumption, drawing on our ERS research; and third, to discuss projected trends in fruit and vegetable consumption, again drawing on our research.

One graph shows the recommended number of servings of fruits, according to the new *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005 Report*. It also shows the actual consumption based on the U.S. Food Supply Data Series--this series is maintained by ERS, and shows trends in fruit and vegetable consumption and other food consumption trends since the turn of the 20th Century. It shows that we're eating less than half of the recommended servings of fruits. I also provided the breakout by subgroups, although the *Dietary Guidelines* didn't really make subgroup recommendations for fruits--this just gives you a sense of the variety of fruit we're eating.

Turning to vegetables, we're doing a little bit better than half of the recommended servings of total vegetables. On the other hand, the new *Dietary Guidelines 2005* emphasize the choices within the group, as well as total consumption. They urge more consumption of dark green and orange vegetables, but we're way below recommendations. The place where we're really exceeding recommendations is with potatoes and other starchy vegetables. If we turn to more detailed data, as I'm sure you're aware, most of those potatoes are fried--not really where we want to be in our choices as well as in our consumption.

Let's think about some of the hypothesized reasons why our choices may not match recommendations. One of the possible reasons I think that you hear a lot about is the issue of cost. One thing I hear frequently is that fruits and vegetables are too expensive to eat regularly and, in particular, fresh costs too much. This was something that we wanted to take a look at. Besides our per capita data, we also recently invigorated our data resources by purchasing household food purchase data. Many of you are aware that market research firms buy data on what is actually purchased by households in a wide range of product areas. So, ERS did the same and purchased national data from A.C. Nielsen, a major market researcher, on what fruits and vegetables and other grocery quantities are purchased by a national representative sample of consumers. The Nielsen HomeScan data, as it is called,

has information on what foods are bought by a national sample of households, how much they buy, and how much they pay for each item.

Then, using the 1999 A.C. Nielsen data, we took a look at cost. The problem with this is that they report price in terms of cost per pound or, maybe if it's something that's a unit, cost per bunch of carrots or something like that. But, we used USDA data methodologies to translate that into *Food Guide Pyramid* servings so that we got the cost per serving. We found that more than half of all fruits and vegetables were estimated to cost 25 cents or less per *Food Guide Pyramid* serving in 1999. These were prices paid by consumers. The current price, given changes in the Consumer Price Index, would be about 2 to 4 cents higher on average. That gives you a rule of thumb about how much consumers are likely to pay per serving, on average.

One of the other things we found that was interesting was that the differences in prices paid for fresh, frozen, or canned versions of fruits and vegetables were small and that fresh was often less expensive. So the idea that fresh will always be more expensive may perhaps be an idea that is overemphasized in people's minds. The price differences between fresh, frozen, and canned were also usually relatively small. We do not know the reasons why people seem to have an exaggerated perception that fresh fruits and vegetables are so expensive per serving. We don't really have data on attitudes in this data set—just what they bought and what they paid for it.

But, one thing we suggest is that sometimes there's a real difference in sales unit and serving sizes. The old *Food Guide Pyramid* servings, for example, were pretty small. So, a pound of peaches at 97 cents per pound, for example, yielded four *Food Guide Pyramid* servings for 21 cents per serving. People might have a relatively exaggerated idea maybe of how much it would cost to eat the Pyramid servings because of a confusion between the cost of the unit purchased and the number of servings it yields.

We actually came up with different ways of eating the old *Food Guide Pyramid* recommended servings for less than \$1 a day to give some illustrations of the range on this. That would have to be adapted down to the new *MyPyramid* recommendations. But, the general idea of translating purchased amounts into recommended consumption might be a useful thing for nutrition educators to do. We should also point out to people that the differences in fresh, frozen, and canned are often relatively small in terms of price and the *Dietary Guidelines* don't really distinguish between the forms.

So perhaps, we should encourage people to get their fruits and vegetables in a way that's most useful to them. For example, food stamp households typically shop relatively infrequently compared to higher income households. Those people who are in food stamp households might want to keep this in mind, while working with them on their choices.

Going on to further consider the issue of cost, an illustration is picking a better snack. A lot of programs emphasize this message of more often choosing fruits and vegetables as

snacks, using the “pick a better snack” slogan or some similar message. Does it cost more to “Pick a Better Snack” of fruits and vegetables? If you translate dollars per serving of some popular snack foods, we found that it really doesn’t cost more to have an apple for a snack than a serving of potato chips or a serving of ice cream. It doesn’t cost more to have a serving of fresh baby carrots than it does to have chocolate, or frozen pizza. I think that educators might want to do something similar, perhaps, for example as a part of the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program, which emphasizes healthy eating on a budget. Is it really that much more to take a better snack? National data don’t indicate so.

Another way to look at the issue of affordability that’s frequently discussed, because most of our programs focus on the low-income, is that low-income households find it less easy to purchase fruits and vegetables. Turning to another source of data, the Computer Expenditure Survey, we found that, in the year 2000, low-income households spent significantly less on fruits and vegetables than other households, on a per capita basis, more than \$1 less. Also, 19 percent of low-income households bought no fruits and vegetables at all in a 1-week period. This indicates that low-income households are probably are purchasing less fruits and vegetables.

Now, why? That’s a tougher question to answer. One thing that we tried to address was the issue of what would happen with a relatively small increase in income. Would they be sensitive to this? Would they buy more fruits and vegetables? One thing we found was that given small increases in income, low-income households were less responsive. They were less likely than higher-income households to spend more on fruits and vegetables. Hypothesizing about this, economic theory suggests that given that you have only so many dollars, you make tradeoffs between your competing needs. For example, this consumer here, does he want the fruits and vegetables or does he want the taste of another food, like, say, ice cream? Or, does he want the convenience of a fast food meal?

These are things that if you only have a fixed number of dollars, they are tradeoffs. You may not be able to have them all. Lower-income households probably have more things that they haven’t been able to buy. They might have more wants and more pressing wants, and that might influence how likely they are to spend additional income on fruits and vegetables.

Interestingly, we did find that formal education—we didn’t have nutrition knowledge of this dataset, we just had measures of formal education, like whether people had finished high school or college—appeared to influence the likelihood of spending additional dollars on fruits and vegetables more than income does. Does this indicate that if there’s a knowledge factor, there is a role for nutrition education? Supporting that idea, we turned to another dataset, USDA’s CSFII-1994/1996, which measured food consumption by individuals, and also measured diet and health knowledge. We found that consumers with more nutrition and dietary knowledge ate a more nutritious mix of vegetables. In particular, they ate more of the dark green and orange vegetables and they ate less of the fried potatoes. So, knowledge did relate to different choices. This should be encouraging news for nutrition educators.

Nutrition educators are becoming increasingly savvy that other factors could play a role, such as culture, lifestyle, household composition. Some other findings from our research support this. For example, we used Nielsen HomeScan data to study what influenced consumers to buy a more varied mix of vegetables, as recommended by the “5 A Day the Color Way” campaign. We found that purchasing more variety of vegetables was again associated with education. It also was associated with certain ethnicities, being Asian or Hispanic households, and being households that cooked more from scratch.

On the other hand, less vegetable variety was associated with having children in the household. Maybe it’s that veto factor of children, as suggested by our speaker this morning, who said children may not like bitter-tasting vegetables.

These are insights that may help educators promote fruits and vegetables. We can’t make people Asian or Hispanic of course, but we can expose them to Asian or Hispanic recipes that incorporate a variety of vegetables, and to more vegetable cooking ideas in general, since home cooking seems important. I know that many educators focus on these kinds of cooking messages and preparation messages. Maybe tips for helping households with children to accept more of a range of vegetables could also be useful.

A major factor in America’s changing eating habits is the switch from consumption of home-prepared food to more food that is prepared away from home, whether eaten out, delivered, or takeout. For most vegetables, home food is more likely to be associated with vegetable consumption. The only area where there is a flip-flop is the fried potatoes. So, eating out is an issue that educators may also need to address.

Since a lot of people here work with specific programs, I thought it would be useful to show some data from some recent reports USDA has done, looking at nutrition and health characteristics of low-income populations. This has to do with the percent of individuals meeting the Healthy Eating Index score for fruit and vegetable consumption by Food Stamp Program participation status. We found that the higher-income male nonparticipants score higher on the fruit and vegetable score. But, with the low-income group, whether participating or nonparticipating, there’s no difference.

Turning to women, we find that the higher-income female nonparticipants and the income-eligible female nonparticipants score higher on the fruit and vegetable scores than the food stamp-participating women. These are cross-tabulations; they don’t show cause and effect relationships. But, they may, for those of you who are working with the programs, tell you something about the target population you’re dealing with and what your baseline is, as our speaker said this morning. For WIC-participating children, we found no significant differences. These data are only for children 2 to 4 years old. They don’t represent all the target groups, either by income or by participation status.

For the USDA National School Lunch Program, Philip Gleason and Carol Sutor, on behalf of FNS, found that participants consume more vegetables both at lunchtime and over a

24-hour period; this information is in a report on the FNS website. Gleason and Sutor also found that school breakfast participants consume more fruit, both at breakfast and over the 24-hour period. Of course, fruit is more commonly served in school breakfasts than are vegetables.

As Stan Garnett mentioned, I was fortunate to be involved in the evaluation of the USDA Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program in the pilot stage, along with my colleagues, Jean Buzby and Julie Skolmowski, who is in the audience and is now with the School Nutrition Association. We found that this was definitely a very popular way to offer children fruits and vegetables. The reaction of students, parents, teachers, food service, and principals to the idea that the program would be continued was overwhelmingly very positive; they wanted the program to continue. The fact that it's now permanent shows that the response was listened to.

Now, going into the future, what will you as educators be facing? ERS did a project looking to the future, specifically to the year 2020, for food consumption trends. We made some projections based on what's currently expected to happen—changing demographics such as an older population, a more expanded population. We project more nutrition knowledge and more eating out, more food prepared away from home. We concluded, based on these projections, that demand for fruits and most vegetables was likely to increase. However, these projections were very much affected by assumptions about the rise in eating out. If eating out continues to increase and people tend to continue to eat less of most fruits and vegetables when they eat out, we could expect that to reduce the amounts of fruits and vegetables consumed. This is a real challenge for nutrition educators, to deal with this changing world and fruit and vegetable consumption.

Certainly, nutrition educators have many opportunities in terms of fruit and vegetable promotion. There are educational, information, and promotion opportunities. Our programs can be modified to include more promotion, as Stan Garnett mentioned. There are product development opportunities, for example, bagged salads and spinach and other easy-preparation vegetables, that can play a role.

However, there are also many challenges in adapting these strategies to individual preferences, changing demographics, and changing lifestyles. ERS's role in all of this is to provide you, the action agents, with information. I hope you will seek us out at our website at www.ers.usda.gov. Thank you.

Senior Farmers' Market Program: From the Farm to the Fork

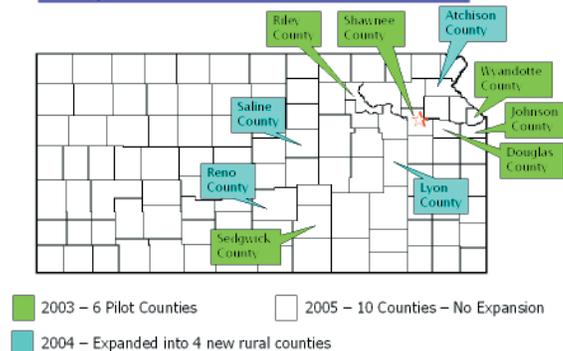
**Tamara Tiemann, MS, RD, LD, Nutrition and Community Services Manager,
Kansas Department on Aging, Topeka, KS**

The phone calls start coming in about January. This surprised us last year, the second year to implement the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program in Kansas. Now we know, that's just the way it is. Seniors are anxious to find out when they'll get checks for the upcoming market season. Farmers want new contracts and the farmers' markets preparing spring meeting notices want a program update on their agenda.

The notes from seniors trickle in all season. They are wonderful—always appreciative, often touching, and sometimes oozing personality. For example, a note from a lady last week tells us, in no uncertain terms, that “For once the government did something right!” It seems that, at times, everybody loves the Kansas Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. Even the media. They started calling us about our 2005 grant award right after USDA issued its press release last spring, before we even had the official notice in hand.

I am both honored and privileged to be here today to tell you about one of the hallmarks of the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs across the country. My remarks are about nutrition education, but my message, however, is really about strong, effective partnerships—partnerships that prove it is possible to do a lot with a little. We are very proud of the partnerships that continue to bring this program to the State. In the absence of Federal and State general funds for administrative costs, they are absolutely critical. But, the contributions of Kansas State University Cooperative Extension Service and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment in the area of nutrition education for seniors served under this program are truly remarkable.

Program Locations in Kansas



I've started reading Malcolm Gladwell's *The Tipping Point, How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*, a book that explores why modern change happens the way it does. We can't claim that our program is fueling a social epidemic with increased fruit and vegetable

consumption among seniors. We haven't seen Gladwell's tipping point. But, the anecdotal stories and self-reported survey data suggest that it is making a difference. Our program is currently implemented in 10 of 105 Kansas counties. This map shows where it was piloted in 2003 and expanded in 2004.

We are working to achieve two goals. First, to promote better nutrition among low-income seniors. Only people over age 60 who receive food assistance from one of three Federal programs are eligible to participate in our program:

- ◆ The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)
- ◆ Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)
- ◆ Older Americans Act (OAA) Congregate Nutrition Program (if below 100 percent Federal poverty level); also OAA Home Delivered Nutrition (if below 100 percent Federal poverty level) through a CSA pilot.

Their eligibility is automatic. This year we are serving nearly 6,500 older Kansans, many of whom are already accustomed to getting nutrition education or nutrition information on a variety of topics from one of these three programs, at least on an occasional basis.

Each senior gets a \$30 benefit from a local TEFAP or CSFP agency or Older Americans Act nutrition provider. The majority get 15 \$2 checks in May to purchase eligible foods at authorized outlets throughout the season. Homebound seniors in three areas, however, get three \$10 boxes or bags (which we call bundles) of eligible produce during the season at the time their commodity boxes are delivered instead of the checks. By way of explanation, only locally grown, fresh fruits, vegetables, and herbs can be purchased with the checks or put in the bundles.

Along with their checks or bundles, each senior also gets two educational pamphlets. This year it was a *Buying Guide for Kansas-Grown Fresh Fruit and Vegetables* and a pamphlet focusing on the cost of produce called *Fruits and Vegetables...Good For You!*

K-State's leadership with the nutrition education component of our program, however, goes far beyond a few pamphlets issued with program benefits. Nutrition education programming funded through K-State's Family Nutrition Program grants is offered to seniors four times during the market season in several areas. The Family Nutrition Program is the name Kansas gave its Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program. K-State Research and Extension and community agencies collaborate to provide nutrition education for people with limited resources, or food stamp-eligible clients. Locally, Family and Consumer Sciences agents and/or their nutrition assistants deliver these programs in settings such as senior or neighborhood centers, low-income senior housing facilities, church kitchens near open air markets, etc.

Our program is also linked to volunteers trained through K-State's Master Food Volunteers Program in some areas. K-State piloted this program in 2002, a year before our first Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program grant. It is the first of its kind in the country and is modeled on the successful Master Gardener Program. Master Food Volunteers have at least a high school diploma or equivalent and receive at least 40 hours of training in nutrition, food science, food preparation, food preservation, and food safety. They contribute a minimum of 40 hours of approved volunteer service back to the community. Volunteers provide programs and information at some farmers' markets on Saturday mornings.

Since 2004, the cost of printing nutrition education materials provided to our seniors through this program has been underwritten in part by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE). KDHE awarded \$10,000 of unobligated preventive health and health services block grant funds to K-State to promote the State's Five-a-Day Initiative to our seniors. The 5-A-Day logo is printed on educational materials.

What does K-State bring to the table? First, this partner continues to help increase public awareness about our program. They have produced and sent out several media releases.

Second, K-State started developing nutrition education materials in 2003 that are appropriate for seniors and funded by USDA's Food Stamp Program through a contract awarded by the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services. This includes an exceptional fresh fruits and vegetable recipe series and a collection of fact sheets and tested recipes, that promote buying and eating various fresh crops and give tips on their selection, storage, and preparation. Several issues of *The Fruits and Vegetables Gazette*, a newsletter for seniors, are published during each market season. You can download the *Fix It Fresh! Fruits and Vegetables Recipe Series*, other information about K-State's Family Nutrition Program, and the Master Food Volunteer Program from the K-State website (at www.oznet.ksu.edu/humannutrition/), as well as frequently asked questions about our program from our website: www.agingkansas.org/kdoa/programs/Farmers/Farmers_Index.htm).

Third, our Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program also benefits from K-State's community presence. In each county, the Family and Consumer Sciences agent meets at least annually with others helping to implement the program locally, including agencies that distribute checks to seniors and a farmers' market contact, to discuss program changes and plan activities for the upcoming market season. Programming varies by county but is supported by K-State's leading specialist for senior nutrition, Dr. Mary Meck Higgins, and a listserv that accommodates the sharing of ideas and experiences. I am very proud of this partnership and what Dr. Higgins and her colleagues in each county do to promote better nutrition among our low-income seniors. I believe that it is a class act.

We are also working to achieve a second goal which is to expand the revenue base for farmers' marketing fresh, locally grown produce at authorized outlets in select communities. We authorize three types of outlets in Kansas (how many of each type of outlet currently authorized is in parentheses):

- ◆ Farmers' markets (14) and once-a-month satellite market (1);
- ◆ Roadside stands (which we define to be located on a farm in a permanent structure) (10);
- ◆ Community-supported agriculture (CSA) farms (16).

To clarify, in Kansas, we contract with one farmer or a group of farmers, called CSAs, to provide bundles of food that are purchased for our home-bound seniors. If our entire Federal award is expended this year, as was the case in 2004, this program will expand the revenue base for authorized outlets by at least \$178,539. In 2004, the mean revenue per authorized farmers was \$1,298 with the range being between \$0 and \$21,144. Dollars leveraged by these funds (such as any discretionary spending by the seniors) are not estimated.

K-State surveyed seniors to evaluate the program's impact.

During the conference, I shared some unpublished data showing what we learned in our nutrition education component of the program from two surveys conducted by K-State. I also talked about what we learned from surveys conducted by my agency, the Kansas Department on Aging (KDOA), during the same period, although our evaluation focuses on how to improve programming.

I am unable to share these data in this transcript, however.

In summary, we believe that the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program gets results. K-State has the data to prove it. But you only have to talk to seniors participating in the program to find out what \$30 worth of checks and the information they get means to them. We are indebted to Donna Hines at USDA for her wisdom about the need and value of establishing solid partnerships on which to build this program. She was so right. At some point in our first year, it occurred to me that Dr. Higgins at K-State was working as hard as I was to support the startup of what has become a very successful and respected program. Mary is with us today--she has been doing a lot of great work in Kansas.

K-State is a valued partner and has done a tremendous job promoting better nutrition among low-income seniors served through this program. The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program and K-State are impacting what happens from the farm to the fork in Kansas. For more information about the nutrition education component of our Kansas Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, contact either Dr. Higgins or me. Finally, Kansas will host the National Association of Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs' Annual Conference in October of 2007, and you are all invited. Thank you.