



# RNECE

Regional Nutrition Education and  
Obesity Prevention Centers of Excellence  
National Coordination Center at the University of Kentucky

POINTING THE WAY  
TO GOOD  
NUTRITION

## **RNECE Initiative Mission and Objectives**

The overarching goal of the RNECE is to improve the health of low-income Americans by fostering a culture of health through multiple strategies, including nutrition education and complementary public health approaches implemented at each level of the socio-ecological framework through policy, systems and environmental changes.

- Strengthen the evidence-base on effective nutrition education and obesity prevention programs for diverse population groups.
- Evaluate the long-term effectiveness of nutrition education and obesity prevention interventions for disadvantaged and underserved populations and opportunities for new research.
- Identify and create research collaborations and synergistic relationships among researchers and EFNEP/SNAP-Ed program directors, universities and other implementers, and state and federal agencies.
- Enhance the impact of state and community nutrition education and obesity prevention efforts by providing the public health-related training and evidence that practitioners need for improving nutrition and health behaviors, environments, and policies in ways that are equitable, efficient, and sustained over time.

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## **QUARTERLY REPORT**

**April 1 – June 30, 2016**

### **Message from the Director, National Coordination Center**

The work of the three-year RNECE Initiative enters the second half with the impressive body of work described in this report. Distinct research project and sub-award work is proceeding as planned. Multi-center work on PSE changes, evaluation, the SNAP-Ed toolkit, training system, and building of relationships among researchers and implementers is beginning to bear fruit. The work of the initiative is on track to meet the objectives set forth by the USDA, in support of EFNEP and SNAP-Ed programs, to help low-income consumers access a more nutritious diet and healthy lifestyle.

Dr. Ann Vail  
<http://rnece-ncc.org>



This work is supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service and National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the USDA.

## RNECE National Coordination Center at University of Kentucky

The Regional Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Centers of Excellence National Coordination Center (RNECE-NCC) hosts monthly conference calls with all Centers and participates in RNECE working groups for the SNAP-Ed toolkit, training platform, PSE changes, and evaluation. The NCC prepares a Quarterly Report submitted 30 days after the end of the quarter to the USDA. USDA representatives from FNS and NIFA are invited to join the monthly call following submission of the Quarterly Report.

For this report, the NCC requested new entries to the Research Project Inventory. For ongoing projects, status updates and revised project end dates were solicited. The table at the end of this report includes updated information for the 32 projects in the current portfolio. Updates to the NCC website include changes to reflect current personnel at each Center, new communication articles, and new presentations. The NCC has requested that by this fall each Center provide current posters or presentations to post or link on the NCC website. This will provide a central access point for materials presented by RNECE Centers at meetings and conferences.

Preparation has begun for a two-year report on the RNECE Initiative. This report will be a comprehensive document describing the work of the first two years of the initiative and will serve as a framework for the final report to be prepared at the end of the three-year initiative. The report will include background about the RNECE Initiative, the need for this work, sections for each Center, and a description of how the work of the Centers is addressing the four initiative objectives.

The evaluation working group is reviewing the current research project portfolio to prepare information for the two-year report. Each project will be reviewed independently by three evaluators and categorized by key project features. Results of this qualitative analysis, with a summary of projects using indicators from the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework, will be included in the two-year report. The NCC provided input on behalf of RNECE to the USDA for the newly released SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework.

Monthly conference calls with Principal Investigators and Center personnel in May and June 2016 included discussions about sustainability of portions of the RNECE Initiative work. Ideas for proposals that continue collaboration among the Centers and possible support for the work have been presented.

## RNECE Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change Center at University of Tennessee

The Regional Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Centers of Excellence Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change Center (RNECE-PSE) is committed to training, equipping, and empowering SNAP-Ed and EFNEP networks to effectively implement Policy, Systems and

Environmental (PSE) approaches to support healthy lifestyles for limited resource audiences where they work, live and play. Research shows targeting multiple levels of societal influence in conjunction with direct education to be a sustainable effort towards obesity prevention. In FY 2015 RNECE-PSE was designed to work cooperatively with the geographic RNECE centers to support the implementation of PSE approaches integrated into SNAP-Ed and EFNEP programs.

**Objectives:**

1. **Enhance the ability of SNAP-Ed and EFNEP networks** to effectively implement and evaluate obesity prevention PSE strategies for disadvantaged low-income populations throughout the lifespan.
2. **Strengthen SNAP-Ed and EFNEP nutrition education interventions** through incorporation of effective culturally-responsive public health approaches that are centered on readiness to change best practices.

RNECE-PSE is finalizing a situational analysis of SNAP-Ed and EFNEP programs to identify facilitators, barriers, best practices, training and evaluation needs related to PSE adoption and implementation. Development of systematic competency-based PSE instruction, guidelines, and resources that are tailored to the needs of SNAP-Ed and EFNEP coordinators and community educators are underway. Included in these resources are tailored readiness to change resources to strengthen SNAP-Ed and EFNEP organizational, community, and neighborhood coalition efforts to implement PSE strategies and an intercultural framework to increase intercultural competence in SNAP-Ed and EFNEP PSE implementation.

**TARGET AUDIENCE**

*Those who were served by the RNECE Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change Center (RNECE-PSE) projects this quarter. Where appropriate, population groups such as racial, and ethnic minorities and those who are socially, economically, or educationally disadvantaged are listed.*

Target Audience Type	Description
Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SNAP-Ed and EFNEP Networks</li> </ul>

**PRODUCTS**

*RNECE-PSE products for this quarter, with a brief description, reference, and/or link.*

Type of Product	Product Description
Websites (new, current, and/or updated)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered domain name and developed splash page for RNECE-PSE website to be live in mid-July</li> </ul>

*RNECE-PSE products for this quarter continued on next page.*

*RNECE-PSE products for this quarter continued.*

Type of Product	Product Description
<b>Posters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poster abstract was developed and submitted to Society for Nutrition Education &amp; Behavior. It was accepted and will be presented at Society for Nutrition Education &amp; Behavior annual conference next quarter - July 2016: "A Delphi Study to Identify Barriers, Facilitators and Training Needs for Policies, Systems, and Environmental Interventions in Nutrition Education Programs for Low-Income Audiences"</li> </ul>
<b>Websites (new, current, and/or updated)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered domain name and developed splash page for RNECE-PSE website to be live in mid-July 2016</li> </ul>
<b>Surveys</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DACUM evaluation survey distributed to 10 member expert panel</li> <li>• Online DACUM SNAP-Ed PSE task verification survey produced and distributed to State and Regional Directors</li> </ul>
<b>Toolkits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with RNECE-South to populate obesity prevention intervention templates for online interactive toolkit</li> </ul>

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

*RNECE-PSE accomplishments for this quarter.*

Achievement / Goal Accomplished / Major Activity Completed	Specific Objectives Met	Results, including major findings, developments or conclusions (both positive and negative)	Key Outcomes or Other Achievements Realized	Additional Information
<b>Conducted DACUM Workshop for SNAP-Ed Coordinators / Supervisors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gathered a panel of 10 PSE subject matter experts diverse in region and type of implementing agency to develop PSE competencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six general areas of competence and 56 specific tasks identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SNAP-Ed PSE competencies closely align with public health competencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competencies needed for PSE approaches by implementing agency coordinators /supervisors will serve as a guide for training efforts</li> </ul>

*RNECE-PSE accomplishments for this quarter continued on next page.*

*RNECE-PSE accomplishments for this quarter continued.*

<b>Achievement / Goal Accomplished / Major Activity Completed</b>	<b>Specific Objectives Met</b>	<b>Results, including major findings, developments or conclusions (both positive and negative)</b>	<b>Key Outcomes or Other Achievements Realized</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>
<b>Delphi summary report completed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarized and disseminated findings from the Delphi study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A coherent PSE message which will allow staff at all levels (local, state, regional) to understand the scope of PSE</li> <li>• Evaluation expertise and resources specifically related to evaluating PSEs</li> <li>• Support from staff, partners and management</li> <li>• PSE specific training and other professional development resources</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Results to be disseminated at annual conference for Society of Nutrition Education &amp; Behavior</li> <li>• Results to inform PSE training plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A guide for prioritizing PSE training efforts</li> </ul>
<b>Completed search for e-Learning Extension Assistant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviewed</li> <li>• e-Learning Extension Assistant candidates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hired e-Learning Extension Assistant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RNECE-PSE Change Center now fully staffed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• e-Learning Extension Assistant will assist in developing PSE instructional technologies</li> </ul>

*RNECE-PSE accomplishments for this quarter continued on next page.*

*RNECE-PSE accomplishments for this quarter continued.*

<b>Achievement / Goal Accomplished / Major Activity Completed</b>	<b>Specific Objectives Met</b>	<b>Results, including major findings, developments or conclusions (both positive and negative)</b>	<b>Key Outcomes or Other Achievements Realized</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>
<b>PSE trainings reviewed with Quality Matters (QM) standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewed current and available PSE trainings identified in the environmental scan with Quality Matters standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 trainings met quality matters standards</li> <li>• 31 were classified as resources rather than trainings</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainings are to be organized with links available on web page</li> </ul>
<b>Distributed SNAP-Ed PSE task verification survey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop SNAP-Ed PSE task verification survey</li> <li>• Obtain IRB approval</li> <li>• Distribute survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey developed and IRB approval received</li> <li>• Participant recruitment letter sent to USDA RNECE program officers for suggestions for best way to disseminate for maximum response</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panel will identify PSE competencies</li> <li>• PSE competencies will be used to systematically guide RNECE-PSE efforts for PSE training and technical assistance</li> </ul>
<b>Tailored Readiness to Change Collaboration tools completed for implementing Agencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tailored readiness tools for collaborations for SNAP-Ed agencies based on SNAP-Ed implementing agency input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two tools tailored for SNAP-Ed PSE collaboration efforts to be piloted in the Fall 2016</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waiting for IRB approval to begin pilot</li> </ul>

## COLLABORATIVE WORK AND MEETINGS

*RNECE-PSE collaborative work and meetings held this quarter.*

Major Activity (Name of Work Group, f2f, Site Visit, etc.)	Specific Objectives Met	Results, including major findings, developments or conclusions (both positive and negative)	Key Outcomes or Other Achievements Realized
<b>Quarterly Co-PI Meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revise work plan with new end date of August 31, 2017</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Made minor edits to outcome measures based on available resources and new timeline</li> <li>Assessed and prioritized activities to accomplish with available resources and new timeline</li> <li>PSE technical assistance planned for years 2 and 3 will not be possible with available resources and timeframe. Alternate plans were made to focus on sustainable web applications that provide training of PSE concepts.</li> </ul>	
<b>Evaluation Framework Interpretive Guide Meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RNECE-PSE assist with readiness indicator of the Evaluation Framework Interpretive Guide</li> <li>RNECE-PSE to provide additions and edits to sampling chapter of the interpretive guide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Readiness / needs assessment decision tree was adapted and included in the Evaluation Framework Interpretive Guide</li> <li>Additions and edits to sampling document were provided and considered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Readiness /needs assessment decision tree disseminated through Evaluation Framework Interpretive Guide</li> </ul>
<b>RNECE-Northeast and the National Training Workgroup Meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a plan for PSE training in collaboration with RNECE-Northeast and the National Training Workgroup</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A draft of the SNAP-Ed PSE competencies was shared and discussed</li> <li>A draft of potential learning modules based on SNAP-Ed PSE competencies was developed and is currently under review and being compared to the PSE training needs assessments conducted in fall '15/spring '16</li> <li>More discussion and revisions</li> </ul>	

## RNECE North Central Region Center at Purdue University

The goal of the Regional Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Centers of Excellence North Central Center (RNECE-NC) is to expand the evidence base of SNAP-Ed and EFNEP interventions, with a primary focus on the impacts of policy, systems and environmental change strategies on rural, limited-income participants. The center also facilitates relationships between researchers and SNAP-Ed and EFNEP implementers through an affiliates program. A face-to-face affiliate meeting was held on April 18, 2016 in Chicago. Over fifty researchers and implementers from the North Central region attended the meeting. The agenda included presentations from the primary investigators of each of the five research projects currently being funded by the Center. Participants had an opportunity to discuss each research project and consider ways to increase cross-state collaborations among the highlighted researchers and implementers. At the end of the meeting participants brainstormed high priority research needs for the region that are not yet being studied by the Center. The result of this discussion was the formation of a new multi-state research project to examine low-income rural SNAP-Ed and EFNEP participants' perceptions of their acceptance of policy, systems and environmental change strategies. The new research will be led by Purdue.

### Progress Update

During the quarter progress was also made in each of the funded research projects.

- **Eat Smart in Parks:** University of Missouri, Sonja Wilhelm Stanis. As part of Eat Smart in Parks, a nutrition environment initiative named a promising practice by SNAP-Ed, a youth photovoice engagement project is being used to identify the food environment issues and needs of youth in urban and rural parks in Missouri. Four photovoice projects (two urban and two rural) with youth ages 10-17 were conducted. Food environment photos and themes were shared with the wider community at exhibition gallery events. Surveys were conducted with the participating youth before and after the photovoice project to assess youth's perceptions of the environment, leadership and empowerment. Surveys with community members were also conducted at the gallery events. Data collection is now completed and is in the process of being evaluated.
- **Evaluating a Multi-Modal Community Nutrition Education Model within SNAP-Ed and EFNEP (Phases 1 and 2):** University of Illinois Extension, Jennifer McCaffrey. Data collection is ongoing. Being assessed is the nutrition and physical activity environment in five Illinois counties, the complexity and depth of each county's social support network for limited income populations and their SNAP-Ed and EFNEP participants' food security status, dietary behaviors, and bio-markers (phase 1). This quarter also saw the addition of six sites in Michigan to the social network analysis component of the study (phase 2).
- **Influence of PSA on dietary quality at diverse low income child care settings,** Michigan State University Extension, Dawn Earnesty: This newly funded project received IRB approval this quarter, assembled the tools needed for data collection, trained data collectors, and has begun to recruit family and group home day care providers (licensed and unlicensed) to participate in the study.

- **Does SNAP-Ed affect food security and obesity differentially in urban and rural environments?** A longitudinal, randomized and controlled study, Purdue University, Heather A. Eicher-Miller. This project is also newly funded. They have completed their IRB application and are moving forward with participant recruitment.
- **Weight and Environmental Assessment Trial (SWEAT)** – part 1 and SWEAT conducted with Ohio SNAP-Ed – part 2, The Ohio State University, Carolyn W. Gunther. This research was another project funded in early 2016. They have also completed their IRB approval and are moving forward with securing study sites.

## RNECE Northeast Region Center at Cornell University

The primary goal of the Regional Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Centers of Excellence Northeast Center (RNECE-NE) is to expand the evidence base that supports effective nutrition education of diverse low-income program participants delivered in conjunction with policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) approaches that make healthy choices easier in order to prevent obesity. The Northeast key initiatives are a signature research program, a nationwide training program, and a systematic review of literature with these objectives:

1. **Foster sustainable regional and local collaborations** among researchers working in a variety of relevant disciplines and nutrition and health program implementers serving low-income audiences across the northeastern United States, a region of stark geographical contrasts from dense urban to remote and isolated rural;
2. **Develop a signature research program** that combines direct education with PSE changes able to be effectively implemented by programs such as the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education (SNAP-Ed) that serve low-income rural and urban participants from a wide range of ethnic, racial and linguist backgrounds;
3. **Create a system of sub-awards to fund projects that rigorously test the effectiveness of emergent or practice-based interventions** that combine nutrition education and public health approaches to support a culture of health among low income populations;
4. **Develop a communication and dissemination system** including mentoring and staff development through eXtension, social media, and on-line platforms as well as research articles to share: (1) the work of the Center, (2) research results from Center projects, and (3) best practices for nutrition education approaches that include PSE change efforts.

## **Progress Update**

### **Center Steering Committee**

The regular bi-monthly conference call for the Center Steering Committee was held on May 19, 2016, with updates provided and input received on the center's work.

### **Signature Research Program**

The goal of the signature research program is to investigate whether the combination of direct nutrition education and PSE changes have greater impact on dietary intake and physical activity than either strategy alone. Five research projects are supported; one internal and four as external sub-awards. Center staff approved three month no-cost extensions for the external signature research projects to complete the work. The new end dates are 9/30/16. The Adopting Healthy Habits in Worksites project being conducted in New York State will be extended through 6/30/17. Worksite wellness policies have been adopted in the three agencies and implementation is underway. A subset of agency staff and clients will be enrolled in the direct nutrition education curriculum, Healthy Children Healthy Families, in January – May 2017.

### **Training**

The RNECE-NE and PSE Change Center's leadership teams are collaborating on training. The draft PSE Competency Chart for SNAP-Ed Coordinators, based on the PSE Change Center's DACUM results, is informing the training plan. The nationwide training workgroup, with representatives from all RNECEs, held conference calls on April 6, May 5, and June 22 in 2016. The workgroup reviewed the results of the national PSE training needs survey, discussed next steps in developing training, and explored opportunities for collaboration with other universities and agencies engaged in PSE training efforts. During the most recent call, the workgroup provided input on a draft training plan which incorporates the PSE survey topics as well as the PSE Change Center's draft PSE Competency Chart.

### **Systematic Review Workgroup**

The systematic review workgroup met on April 7, 2016 to discuss the systematic review workflow and protocol. The Systematic Review Management Team met regularly to refine the protocol, conduct preliminary searches and pilot test a full-text screening inclusion-exclusion checklist. Once the protocol is complete, it will be registered in PROSPERO, the International prospective register of systematic reviews, and the review will begin.

### **Presentations**

In addition to contributing to other presentations as indicated above under the National Coordinating Center report, RNECE-NE staff presented on the center's work at the FNS Tri-Regional Healthy Eating Meeting in April:

- Dollahite J. *The Northeast Regional Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Center of Excellence*. Presentation at the FNS Tri-Regional Healthy Eating Meeting, April 4-6, 2016, Baltimore, MD.

## RNECE South Region Center at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

The Regional Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Centers of Excellence South Center (RNECE-South) at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (UNC) and North Carolina State University (NC State) equips SNAP-Ed and EFNEP implementing agencies to create a culture of wellness where program participants experience measurable improvements in their health, nutrition and physical activity through multiple strategies including nutrition education and public health approaches. This regional center has promoted nutrition education and policy, systems and environmental change (PSE) through the Faithful Families Signature Project and Innovation Sub-Awards; the research in social media interventions for EFNEP and healthy retail interventions for SNAP-Ed; and the online training opportunities and SNAP-Ed Obesity Prevention Toolkit website development. RNECE-South serves SNAP-Ed and EFNEP efforts in: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Oklahoma, Virginia, Louisiana, South Carolina, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, Texas, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

### Progress Update

#### **Eat Well Be Well Healthy Stores Project**

During this reporting period, the Eat Well Be Well Healthy Stores intervention began in the eight participating stores in Orange, Warren and Lenoir counties. Eleven and a half weeks of the intervention have been completed, which includes a preview week promoting the program in the stores and two and a half phases. Messaging and materials were developed for Phase 1 (ReThink Your Drink: Choose Water), Phase 2 (Fuel Up With Breakfast), and Phase 3 (Eat Well on the Go). Materials for each phase include a main message poster, laminated shelf labels for promoted foods, an educational display poster and handouts, and recipe cards. Store leaders for each county conducted weekly check-ins with store managers to distribute gift cards to purchase promoted foods and check for program fidelity (i.e. make sure promoted foods were purchased and stocked and materials remained posted in stores). Project staff conducted two food demonstrations in each store during each phase, a total of 42 demos thus far. During the food demos, staff interacted with 644 customers, handed out 901 healthy recipe cards, and share 528 educational extenders. The food demos shared water flavored with fruit and herbs, whole grain Cheerios with banana, and whole grain crackers with cheese and apple or peanut butter and banana. Store leaders and food demo staff complete process reports for each store visit, and current feedback on the intervention is very positive and store owners/managers are very engaged in the work.

#### **Social Media**

In order to identify key characteristics of communication content of Facebook posts and measures of user engagement, 490 posts across 24 counties in North Carolina (NC) have been identified from EFNEP Facebook pages. The codebook for the qualitative content analysis has been finalized and data analysis has begun. The objective is to identify the type of posts that result in the most engagement. Follow-up site visits with Signature Sub-award Projects will include interviews and a review of data to help determine if the collective evidence across Signature Projects supports whether or not social media (SM) has an impact on program outcomes, recruitment and retention. Five states will be recruited to test the social media

guidance materials using a one month social media campaign. Survey development and IRB submission are underway to administer an EFNEP participant survey on the use of NC EFNEP Facebook pages.

### **Faithful Families Signature Sub-Award**

**University of Florida:** The team completed the nine week Faithful Families curriculum at two sites. All participants completed post-assessments. In addition, those individuals who took part in the accelerometer subgroup wore an accelerometer a second time. PSE approaches were strategized and are in the process of being implemented at both locations. Team and lay leaders explored a variety of approaches, however both faith-based communities were interested in the development of walking trails, proclamations of healthy behaviors via posters and installations of water coolers with fruit infusers. Moreover, the South Regional Center team had regular conference calls with the Florida team to strategize best approaches for maintaining participant engagement and overall success of programming. Subsequent to each week's Faithful Families session, an online survey was emailed to each participant at the intervention site. In this survey, these participants were prompted to "Reflect" on the past week, "Take a Step" towards a behavior change, and "Connect" with each other on our Facebook page. Weekly reminders were also mentioned in class to encourage participants to complete the surveys. As a result, many participants routinely engaged in the Facebook page. Staff members consistently monitored the Facebook page to further engage and acknowledge participant involvement. Regular conference calls have begun to continue programming in Hillsborough County and extend the project into Escambia County for a total of four additional sites.

**University of Tennessee:** Programming, evaluation, data collection and analysis are complete at all sites and a final report will be submitted August 1, 2016.

**University of Arkansas:** Programming and weekly check-ins for county staff have been completed in all five study counties. Signed informed consents were obtained for all participants. All entry surveys (24-hour Diet Recall, Behavior Checklist, Social Media) and biometrics (BMI, BP) have been collected for the six sites enrolled in the study as well as collection of the Faith Community Health Assessments. Exit surveys and biometrics have been collected for four of the six sites with two more scheduled for collection in early July (5<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016). The three month follow-up data collection period has been scheduled from August – October, 2016. Comments/notes from field staff indicate that policy and environmental approaches have been implemented and include healthy tips in monthly newsletters, water policy, and parking lot/walking track mapped with signage. Data analysis will be completed in October 2016.

### **Innovation Sub-Award**

**University of Georgia:** With the goal of exploring users' expectations and experiences of Food eTalk in order to establish a basis for the iterative development and implementation process of an innovative eLearning program targeted to low-income individuals, the team

has recruited 19 participants to interview. Fifteen participants have completed all three interviews, two participants completed one interview, and two participants completed two interviews. Data from these individual interviews are being transcribed verbatim and preliminary analysis is ongoing as a part of the transcription and preliminary coding process. Individual participants are taking images of their food environment including: food at the supermarket, at home (both packaged and prepared meals), and meals when dining out. Among the individual interviewees (n = 19) 485 images have been collected and will be analyzed using Photovoice methods. All images taken by individual interviewees are geo-tagged. At the second and third interviews, participants are asked to discuss their photos with the researcher, and probes such as “tell me more about this image” and “help me understand what this image means to you” were used. After the third interview, when the loaned smartphone is collected, the images are removed from the phone and stored for future analysis.

Significant achievements during this reporting period include successful recruitment of 19 participants and data collection. The abstract submitted to the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior Annual meeting was accepted for poster presentation, and the data for this abstract includes preliminary findings from the aforementioned focus group portion of this project. They also presented Food eTalk at the eLearning Guild’s annual national conference in Austin, TX on June 9, 2016. This eLearning Guild conference highlighted the Food eTalk program as an exemplar developed by Yukon Learning Group, and the current qualitative evaluation served as a talking point during the “DemoFest” evening of this conference. Preliminary findings from this evaluation of Food eTalk are being used to inform the development of UGA SNAP-Ed’s next nutrition education and obesity prevention curriculum, titled *Food Talk: Healthy Weight*, which will include eLearning opportunities.

The University of Georgia (UGA) requested and received approvals for a no-cost extension and budget reallocation on this project in order to continue the Food eTalk evaluation in different settings (health fairs, safety-net clinics, farmers markets). As informed by the individual interviewees and focus groups, they determined that expanding moderator-facilitated Food eTalk sessions using larger devices (tablets) may be a lucrative means by which to include an older audience and/or those who do not have the self-efficacy of using the internet to engage in Food eTalk on their own. During this no cost extension they will present preliminary findings in a poster presentation from the focus groups at the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior conference (August 1, 2016).

### **Toolkit**

Work continues on the development of the interactive toolkit website. The website has been populated with information on the 21 most recently reviewed interventions. A tour and overview of the draft website was provided to FNS staff and feedback has been received. The RNECE-South is working with the RNECE-PSE to complete templates on the remaining 60 previously reviewed interventions to allow for their inclusion on the website.

A Word version of the Evaluation Framework Interpretive Guide has been obtained. This has allowed the RNECE-South to develop web pages to include information from the Interpretive Guide onto a website that will be searchable. This information currently is being added to the website. Web pages are being created that are consistent with the design of the Evaluation Framework to create a standard user interface for SNAP-Ed implementers. This is expected to go live in August 2016.

### **Webinars**

A training webinar was held on May 2, 2016 titled *Strengthening Outcomes Through Collective Impact*. Speakers gave an overview of the concepts and theories behind collective impact and how it may be used in SNAP-Ed and EFNEP interventions. The materials and a recording of the webinar are posted on the RNECE-South website for review. Plans are underway for a webinar in the next quarter on the use of behavioral economics nudges in Health Retail. Toward that end, a brief that was developed for the Duke-UNC USDA Center for Behavioral Economics & Healthy Food Choice has been cross posted on the RNECE website: *Uses of Behavioral Economics Nudges within Healthy Retail Interventions in the SNAP-Ed Program: Research Opportunities* ([https://becr.sanford.duke.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/SNAP-Ed\\_BE\\_ResearchOpps.pdf](https://becr.sanford.duke.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/SNAP-Ed_BE_ResearchOpps.pdf)).

### **Steering Committee**

The RNECE South Region Center Steering Committee was convened once during this time period (June 20, 2016). Feedback was sought on the upcoming webinar (September 20, 2016) on Behavioral Economic Nudges in Healthy Retail Interventions. Updates were provided on the four sub-awards. Input on the toolkit and social media activities included recruiting three states to pilot the social media communications material.

## **RNECE West Region Center at Colorado State University**

The Regional Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Centers of Excellence West Center (RNECE-West), a joint effort of Colorado State University and Washington State University Extension, aims to improve the health of low-income Americans, especially Hispanics, through strategies at the individual and environmental levels of the social-ecological model, including complementary nutrition education and public health approaches particularly for EFNEP and SNAP-Ed programs.

The RNECE-West primary goals include:

- **Working to build the evidence-base** for nutrition education and obesity prevention strategies and interventions that produce measurable improvements in health, obesity, nutrition (food behavior), and physical activity-related outcomes of interest to USDA;
- **Developing effective education/extension, and policy, systems and environmental translational activities** that promote health and prevent/reduce obesity in disadvantaged low-income families.

RNECE-West objectives address:

1. **Building the evidence-base for nutrition education** interventions through rigorous evaluation;
2. **Developing research collaborations and synergistic relationships;**
3. **Supporting effective education, policy, systems and environmental (PSE) activities** that promote health.

## TARGET AUDIENCE

*Those who were served by RNECE-West projects this quarter. Where appropriate, population groups such as racial, and ethnic minorities and those who are socially, economically, or educationally disadvantaged are listed.*

Target Audience Type	Description
Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited resource families</li> </ul>
Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EFNEP and SNAP-Ed program leaders, educators, participants and stakeholders</li> </ul>
Population Group: Racial Minorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African Americans</li> </ul>
Population Group: Ethnic Minorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Latinos and Non-Latinos</li> </ul>
Population Group: Economically Disadvantaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals/families at 185% of poverty and below</li> </ul>

## PRODUCTS

*RNECE-West products for this quarter, with a brief description, reference, and/or link.*

Type of Product	Product Description
Posters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Auld, G., Baker, S., Batchelder, J. (April 2016). <i>Pilot Study for Assessing Moderate to Long-Term Outcomes of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)</i>. Annual Meeting of Experimental Biology (EB) 2016. San Diego, CA</li> </ul>
Websites (new, current, and/or updated)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated RNECE-West website (<a href="http://www.wrnece.org">www.wrnece.org</a>)</li> </ul>
Non-National Trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biometric data collectors in Washington were trained on collection processes by Dr. Chris Melby, nutrition faculty at Colorado State University</li> </ul>

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

*RNECE-West accomplishments for this quarter.*

Achievement / Goal / Major Activity Completed	Specific Objectives Met	Results, including major findings, developments or conclusions (both positive and negative)	Key Outcomes or Other Achievements Realized	Additional Information
<p><b>Testing of Mediums to Reach Program Graduates Long-term</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine the best way to reach EFNEP and SNAP-Ed graduates 6 and 12 months post-graduation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Response rates for each strategy combining 6 and 12 months responses Colorado (CO), West Virginia (WV) and Kentucky (KY):            Postal mail: 17/13/5%            Email: 17/0/25%            Text from educator: 18/7.5/25%            Text from state office: 2/5/no data%            Phone call from educator: 20/35/60%            Phone call from state office: 16/22/10%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reaching the EFNEP/SNAP-Ed target population long-term is difficult due to the transient nature of this population</li> <li>Response rates were low in all categories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collection for Phase I (retrospective attempt to contact graduates) has been completed in Colorado, West Virginia and Kentucky. Georgia and New Mexico are currently collecting data for Phase I</li> <li>The second phase of this project is to ask current EFNEP / SNAP-Ed participants (in the same 5 states) at graduation how best to reach them at 6 and 12 months post-graduation. We will follow-up using their suggested approach to see if response rates improve</li> </ul>

*Additional details provided in the narrative at the end of RNECE-West section.*

*RNECE-West accomplishments for this quarter continued.*

<b>Achievement / Goal / Major Activity Completed</b>	<b>Specific Objectives Met</b>	<b>Results, including major findings, developments or conclusions (both positive and negative)</b>	<b>Key Outcomes or Other Achievements Realized</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>
<b>Secondary Data Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a secondary data analysis of national EFNEP evaluation data set from 2007-2014</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 512,899 subjects with complete data</li> <li>• National race / ethnicity breakdown was roughly 30% white, 30% black and 30% Hispanic</li> <li>• Regionally % black was highest in the south (42%) and % Hispanic was highest in the west (57%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pretest scores are consistent over time as are change scores suggesting that EFNEP’s impacts are consistent over the years</li> <li>• Predominant change scores: Healthy Eating Index (HEI) 70% of states improved 3-7 points on total score; more than 2/3 of states improved on 3 Behavior Checklist Questionnaire (BCL) scales of 0.5-1 pts; more than 70% of states improved by less than a ½ serving of fruits and less than a ½ serving of vegetables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final report is under review</li> </ul>

*Additional details provided in the narrative at the end of RNECE-West section.*

*RNECE-West accomplishments for this quarter continued.*

<b>Achievement / Goal / Major Activity Completed</b>	<b>Specific Objectives Met</b>	<b>Results, including major findings, developments or conclusions (both positive and negative)</b>	<b>Key Outcomes or Other Achievements Realized</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>
<b>Long-Term Follow-Up Evaluation of Eating Smart Being Active</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine the long term impact of Eating Smart Being Active on participant behavior, blood pressure, Body Mass Index (BMI) and HbA1c, delivered through EFNEP and SNAP-Ed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IRB submitted by CO and Washington (WA)</li> <li>IRB approved in CO</li> <li>Biometric data collectors have been trained and have practiced collecting biometric data on several different groups including the target audience</li> <li>Additional states identified and confirmed to implement the intervention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biometric data collection protocols refined</li> <li>First data collections on actual participants scheduled</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colorado State University (CSU) has begun collecting data from English and Spanish speakers</li> <li>16 participants have provided data at time 1</li> <li>Washington State University (WSU) has begun recruiting</li> </ul>
<b>Food Pantry Environmental Scan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore avenues to pursue the development, field testing and validation of a food pantry environmental survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forty-one interviews with managers (20 food bank, 15 food pantry, 5 EFNEP and SNAP-Ed, and 1 anti-hunger advocate) representing every state in the West Region (excluding the Pacific Islands) have been completed, coded and entered into qualitative data analysis software <i>[Results continued on next page]</i></li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A graduate research assistant at Colorado State University will assist with data analysis and field testing</li> </ul>

*Additional details provided in the narrative at the end of RNECE-West section.*

*RNECE-West accomplishments for this quarter continued.*

<b>Achievement / Goal / Major Activity Completed</b>	<b>Specific Objectives Met</b>	<b>Results, including major findings, developments or conclusions (both positive and negative)</b>	<b>Key Outcomes or Other Achievements Realized</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>
<b>Food Pantry Environmental Scan</b> <i>cont.</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A scoring tool has been developed and is currently in the pilot-test phase in California, Colorado, Nevada, Oregon and Wyoming. Pilot testing will be completed in August. Revisions will be made to the instrument in August/September. The revised instrument will begin field testing in October, 2016.</li> </ul>		
<b>Environmental Support Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop environmental support activities to couple with direct education</li> <li>• Activities will be designed to empower EFNEP and SNAP-Ed participants to initiate change in their micro - environments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literature review complete</li> <li>• Paraprofessional educators from various states identified and currently being scheduled for phone focus groups</li> <li>• Practice phone focus group with CO paraprofessional educators completed</li> <li>• Focus group questions tweaked based on practice focus group</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 phone focus groups with paraprofessional educators from several states have been completed</li> <li>• Individual focus groups will include only 1 educator from a state</li> <li>• Transcriptions have been checked and analyses begun</li> </ul>

*Additional details provided in the narrative at the end of RNECE-West section.*

*RNECE-West accomplishments for this quarter continued.*

<b>Achievement / Goal / Major Activity Completed</b>	<b>Specific Objectives Met</b>	<b>Results, including major findings, developments or conclusions (both positive and negative)</b>	<b>Key Outcomes or Other Achievements Realized</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>
<b>Validation of nutrition items on new EFNEP Behavior Checklist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect 3 phone dietary recalls after first and last lesson; new BCL items completed at those two time points</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>States agreeing to participate: Rhode Island (RI), Colorado (CO), Wyoming (WY), South Dakota (SD), South Carolina (SC), Tennessee (TN), Maryland (MD), Minnesota (MN)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RI, CO, WY, and SD have begun collecting data</li> <li>TN has received IRB approval and will start collecting data soon</li> <li>MN, MD, and SC are waiting for IRB approval</li> <li>Data from about 20 participants have been collected</li> </ul>
<b>RNECE-West Needs Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a needs assessment to understand the regional implementation of nutrition education and obesity prevention public health approaches</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low response rates on both PSE and direct education surveys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activities are completed and a write-up is in process</li> </ul>

*Additional details provided in the narrative at the end of RNECE-West section.*

*RNECE-West accomplishments for this quarter continued.*

Achievement / Goal / Major Activity Completed	Specific Objectives Met	Results, including major findings, developments or conclusions (both positive and negative)	Key Outcomes or Other Achievements Realized	Additional Information
Multi-disciplinary methods for effective, sustainable, and scalable evaluations of nutrition education programs (RNECE Longitudinal Research Study, Utah State University)				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is the new signature research project being done in Utah but reported through RNECE-West (additional details are in the narrative at the end of this section)</li> </ul>

*Additional details provided in the narrative at the end of RNECE-West section.*

## **COLLABORATIVE WORK AND MEETINGS**

RNECE-West collaborative work and meetings held this quarter.

Major Activity	Specific Objectives Met	Results (major findings, developments or conclusions; positive and negative)	Key Outcomes or Other Achievements Realized
RNECE-West Leadership Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conference calls: 4/22/16 4/27/16 5/5/16 5/17/16 6/3/16 6/21/16 6/28/16</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership team meets weekly to discuss center project progress, develop project protocols, develop advisory and steering committee agendas, complete reporting and work on center led research projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project protocols developed, advisory and steering committee agendas developed</li> </ul>

*Additional details provided in the narrative at the end of RNECE-West section.*

*RNECE-West collaborative work and meetings held this quarter continued.*

<b>Major Activity</b>	<b>Specific Objectives Met</b>	<b>Results (major findings, developments or conclusions; positive and negative)</b>	<b>Key Outcomes or Other Achievements Realized</b>
<b>PSE Advisory Group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference call 5/2/16</li> <li>• Email update 6/12/16</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advisory group members provided input for Food Pantry contacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated advisory group on change in grant funding</li> <li>• Beginning June 2016, the advisory group will receive email updates following steering committee calls. If additional input is needed, the PSE Advisory group will be reconvened</li> </ul>
<b>Nutrition education advisory group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference call 4/28/16</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated advisory committee on project progress</li> </ul>	
<b>Steering Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference calls 4/14/16</li> <li>6/9/16</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated steering committee on project progress</li> </ul>	

*Additional details provided in the narrative at the end of RNECE-West section.*

## **OUTREACH ACTIVITIES AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION TO CONSTITUENTS OF INTEREST**

*Outreach activities that have been undertaken by RNECE-West to reach members of communities who are not usually aware of these activities for the purpose of enhancing public understanding and increasing interest in learning and careers in science.*

### **Graduate Student Projects:**

- Two graduate students involved in research projects (as Master's Theses) with the center:
  - Environmental support activities
  - Long-term follow-up of Eating Smart • Being Active curriculum
- Graduate Research Assistant recruited to be involved in field testing and validation of food pantry assessment tool. To begin summer 2016.

## **ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS**

*RNECE-West additional observations, findings, developments and / or conclusions (both positive and/or negative).*

### **Amended Deliverables:**

The RNECE-West leadership team amended deliverables and timelines for all projects as needed. The document was sent to NIFA during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2016.

### **Needs Assessment Update:**

RNECE-West is conducting a needs assessment to understand the regional implementation of nutrition education and obesity prevention public health approaches. We are assessing gaps in interventions to inform research priorities and staff development needs through a review of the literature and public health data, as well as surveying program leaders in NIFA's Western Region on direct education and PSE efforts.

- Direct Education Program Leader Survey: the Center released a survey to the NIFA Western Region EFNEP and SNAP-Ed program leaders in Spring 2015. The survey aimed to assess current direct education efforts in the region. Despite sending the survey link to program list serves multiple times, the response rate to this survey was low. Data is currently being summarized.
- PSE Program Leader Survey: A survey on current PSE activities and interventions plus staff development needs will be sent to EFNEP program leaders and SNAP-Ed implementing agencies in the NIFA Western Region. The survey was distributed in Fall 2015. Results will be analyzed and incorporated into the RNECE-West needs assessment.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2016:

The needs assessment completion date has been moved to August, 2016.

### **Food Bank Scans update:**

The RNECE-West is currently exploring avenues to pursue the development, field testing and validation of a food pantry environmental survey. This environmental survey also referred to as an "e-scan", will be used in coordination with EFNEP supervisors and SNAP-Ed managers to measure and report changes in the food pantry environment. Environmental data and data gathered from USDA food assistance program clients will strengthen the evidence for policy actions that support environmental adaptations making the healthiest choice the easiest choice for food bank clients.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2016:

Forty-one interviews with Food Pantry managers have been completed, transcribed, coded and entered into qualitative analysis software. Interviews were conducted with managers representing every state in the Western Region, excluding the Pacific Islands (20 food bank, 15 food pantry, 5 EFNEP and SNAP-Ed, and 1 anti-hunger advocate). A scored instrument was developed. IRB review of pilot test procedures deemed the project exempt. Pilot testing will be completed during July/August 2016 in California, Colorado, Nevada, Oregon and Wyoming. A graduate research assistant at Colorado State University will work on data analysis and field testing which starts in October 2016.

**Behavior Checklist Validation:**

NC2169, the multi-state Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) research project looking at EFNEP evaluations, is coordinating with several EFNEP volunteer committees to develop a new Behavior Checklist Questionnaire (BCL). Since the BCL is used by all EFNEP programs as well as many SNAP-Ed programs, the timely development of a new, validated tool is critical to building the evidence base for both EFNEP and SNAP-Ed. The RNECE-West are working in conjunction with NC2169 and the EFNEP Behavior Checklist Committees to finalize the validation (including reliability and construct validity testing) on the newly developed questions for the nutrition domain.

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2016:

Test and retest surveys from a total of 173 participants in seven states have been collected. Data entry is underway and analyses are expected to be completed in May. Construct validity testing on the nutrition domain items will be conducted in six states using multiple phone dietary recalls at pre and post class series at which time the nutrition items will also be completed. This phase of the validation is anticipated to be completed over the summer. Project is on track to be completed in 2016.

**Developing Environmental Support Activities for Use in Conjunction with Direct Education:**

The RNECE-West will develop, pilot and evaluate six environmental support activities to complement direct nutrition education curricula. The purpose of this project is to help bridge the gap between direct education and PSE interventions and provide new educational resources for EFNEP and SNAP-Ed to incorporate participant engagement specifically related to change in their micro-environment. These new activities will be designed to be added to existing direct education curricula and will add to the body of knowledge that behavior change related to healthy eating and active living may be improved and sustained by addressing multiple levels of the SEM. A literature review has begun and the other preliminary steps for this project began in Fall 2015.

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2016:

A pilot focus group was completed with educators in Colorado. Subsequently, questions were refined. A total of 72 educator's names and contact information was collected in ten states and four focus groups have been scheduled and more will be scheduled to be completed by early June. Project is running a little behind the original timeline. Some aspects of this project might be modified to accommodate the new contract.

**Long-Term Follow-Up Evaluation of Eating Smart • Being Active (ESBA):**

The RNECE-West will collect longitudinal data, including biometric data (BMI, blood pressure, HbA1C), from EFNEP and SNAP-Ed class participants at pre, post and six (or twelve) months. The EFNEP Behavior Checklist (BCL), 24 hour recall and biometric data will be compared to demonstrate program outcomes long-term.

These studies will be conducted initially in Colorado and Washington. Once protocols are established, six additional programs (at least one from each NIFA region) using *ESBA* will be recruited to provide a broader reach and generalizability to findings. The long-term follow-up

evaluation will provide objective outcome data and assess how behaviors change after graduation, i.e., do they continue to improve, maintain or regress.

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2016:

Data collectors in Colorado have been trained and have practiced several times including with the target audience. Data collection will begin in Colorado in May. Washington received IRB approval for this project. Data collectors were hired and trained in May 2016. Data collection will begin in July. Other states (n = 4) have been identified and equipment purchased but will not collect data until it is determined if there is enough funding remaining in budget.

**Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR):**

The RNECE-West is contracting with the Public Health Institute (PHI) to complete a two-year assessment of Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) in Hawaii and Los Angeles, California. There is also a possibility for a one year assessment of YPAR in a California Cooperative Extension rural site in FFY 2017. YPAR is a practice-based intervention according to SNAP-Ed Strategies and Intervention: An Obesity Prevention Toolkit for States, May 2014. This evaluation will assess if the program should: 1) continue use of the intervention without change; 2) strengthen the intervention to be more effective; or, 3) de-emphasize or discontinue the intervention because the evidence of its effectiveness is limited. YPAR is currently used in SNAP-Ed programs resulting in meaningful youth-driven policy, systems and environmental change (PSE) change.

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2016:

Deliverables have been revised to include reliability protocol and a written evaluation plan to be completed by August, 2016.

**Best Practices:**

No additional work has been completed on this project in order to accommodate the new RNECE-West priorities.

**RNECE-West Sub-awards:**

**Utah: Evaluation of a novel, low-cost, low-burden, scalable technology for evaluating EFNEP and SNAP-Ed Effectiveness**

The purpose of this study is to assess changes in fruit, vegetable, whole grain, and dairy grocery purchases before and after participation in Utah EFNEP and SNAP-Ed. Researchers will assess the utility of a novel technology QualMART that detects changes in grocery purchases using customer loyalty cards, and that quantifies expenditures on these foods. The technology is automatic, requiring no effort by the participants, minimizing reporting bias. The analysis is quick, low cost, and promises to scale to any population.

2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2016:

Utah State and University of Utah IRBs remain in place and were unchanged this quarter.

Participant recruitment is ongoing. We have recruited 33 participants to date.

During this quarter, the mapping of the UPCs/PLUs to What We Eat in America food groups for

fruits, vegetables, and dairy was completed and work continued on the mapping for whole grains.

A poster on a project supported by this grant was presented at the National Nutrient Databank Conference by Phil Brewster. He and his coauthors began writing a paper for the conference proceedings.

The Kroger analytics company, 84.51°, has not yet agreed to provide the data needed for our study. Discussions continue.

### **Alaska: Sugar Sweetened Beverage Intake among EFNEP Participants – An Evaluation of the National EFNEP Database**

Project Investigator will conduct a secondary analysis of the EFNEP data set from 2014. The analysis will include estimations of the change in sugar sweetened beverage (SSB) intake and expenditures among program participants. The primary objective of this project is to evaluate the impact of EFNEP on SSB intake, to calculate the impact of the EFNEP intervention on diet quality as estimated by the Healthy Eating Index 2010 (HEI2010) and to estimate the expenditures being made on SSBs by EFNEP participants. Analysis of data will be limited to the West Region EFNEP participants.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2016:

The 2014 EFNEP West Region data set included 215,657 foods reported by 13,775 participants in a 24 hour recall format. The diet recall data was sorted according to *What We Eat In America* (WWEIA) food categories. For each food, for each category, for each participant, the recalls were split into pre- and post-intervention recalls. Likewise, the percent of daily calories for each food for each participant was calculated for each recall. Analysis of Variance was performed for each of the nine major WWEIA categories to determine if pre/post recalls were different in percent calories. The F-test showed a significant difference existed for mixed dishes (category 3), with increased reporting for exit recalls. The F test did not indicate a likely difference in SSB intake between pre/post recalls, corroborated by the t-test (P = .74). The mean intake of SSB at entry was 23.6% of calories, compared to 26.2% of calories at exit.

The top ten SSBs reported in this data set (using the eight digit FNDDS5 coding system) were:

- Soft drink, cola-type
- Fruit flavored drink (formerly lemonade)
- Soft drink, fruit-flavored, caffeine free
- Milk fruit drink
- Soft drink, pepper-type
- Fruit smoothie drink, made with fruit or fruit juice and dairy products
- Fruit smoothie drink, NFS
- Soft drink, NFS
- Soft drink, fruit flavored, caffeine containing
- Horchata beverage, made with rice

Further grouping of the SSBs by common category may indicate effective intervention targets.

### **Significant Progress on Other Projects (those not included in the West Region SNAP-Ed Evaluation):**

- **Multi-disciplinary methods for effective, sustainable, and scalable evaluations of nutrition education programs (RNECE Longitudinal Research Study, Utah State University):**

This program will evaluate the effectiveness of EFNEP and SNAP-Ed, using rigorous methods and new technologies to compare program participants and non-participants in multiple states. The first objective is to evaluate EFNEP and SNAP-Ed effectiveness in changing the home food environment over time by assessing the quality and cost of household grocery food purchases for 12 months before and after program participation, as compared to matched controls. This work extends the pilot data collection funded through a RNECE-W sub-award. The second objective is to evaluate EFNEP effectiveness in changing individual dietary intake by assessing diet quality before and after program participation, as compared to matched controls. First, the mobile version of the Automated Self-administered 24-hour Recall (ASA24) will be validated for the low income population, using two modes: unassisted and assisted by a paraprofessional. Both modes will be evaluated in a feeding study (FEAST II). The observed foods consumed will be compared to those reported by study participants. Then EFNEP will be evaluated in multiple states, using the ASA24 pre-and post-intervention. This project strengthens the evidence base for the effectiveness of EFNEP and SNAP-Ed. It is a collaboration among researchers at the University of Utah, Utah State University, and NCI and directors of EFNEP and SNAP-Ed in participating states.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2016:

- Utah State's IRB remains in place and were unchanged this quarter. IRB approval gained by colleagues at Westat, CO, TN, and ID.
  - The management team continued to meet regularly to coordinate activities.
  - A revised scope of work and no cost extension was submitted to NIFA on May 31, 2015 in response to the changed timeline and budget for the project. These requests were approved early in June.
  - Final advisory group members were identified and recruited.
  - The first meeting of the advisory group was held on June 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016.
  - Main findings from the advisory group meeting were reported to Helen Chipman on June 9, 2016.
- **Qualmart Aim**
    - Qualmart management team continued to meet regularly.
    - Household recruiting and training procedures continue to be refined, through experience with the RNECE-W sub-award, "Evaluation of a novel, low-cost, low-burden, scalable technology for evaluating EFNEP and SNAP-Ed Effectiveness."
    - During this quarter, work continued on improving the QualMART methodology, including developing an ontology for identifying foods in the USDA food coding system. A poster

on this work was presented at the National Nutrient Databank Conference by Dr. Le-Thuy Tran.

- Work on the grocery purchase quality measure was begun. Issues related to it were discussed during the Advisory Group meeting and with nutrition researchers at NIH and at the National Nutrient Databank Conference.
- The Kroger analytics company, 84.51°, has not yet agreed to provide the data needed for our study. Discussions continue. Resolution expected in Quarter 4.

- **ASA24 Aim**

- The FEAST II objective team continued to meet regularly to plan, conduct, and coordinate activities.
- FEAST II data collection procedures and tools are developed and finalized.
- FEAST II currently has 224 participants completed out of the goal of 300 participants. Recruitment and data collection continues.
- ASA24 training manual was developed and initial pilot testing was conducted.
- AS24 pilot field-testing was planned and IRB was submitted at USU.
- Dr. Sharon Kirkpatrick (first author of the original FEAST study) was recruited as a collaborator on FEAST II with her time contributed pro-bono.

**RNECE Research Project Inventory**

	Center	Implementing Organization	Project Title	Projected End Date	Project Status
1	South	University of Tennessee	Faithful Families in Tennessee: Improving the Health of Low Income Faith-Based Audiences	6/30/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intervention and Evaluation completed.</li> <li>• Analyzing data.</li> <li>• Final report due August 1.</li> </ul>
2	North Central	University of Illinois	Phase 1 Evaluating a Multi-Modal Community Nutrition Education Model within SNAP-Ed and EFNEP	8/1/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRB approval received.</li> <li>• Subaward contract finalized.</li> <li>• Data collection instruments identified and/or developed.</li> <li>• Recruitment and baseline data completed.</li> <li>• Intervention and follow-up data collection nearly complete.</li> </ul>
3	West	Colorado State University	Secondary Data Analysis	8/1/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final report has been drafted and is undergoing final edits.</li> </ul>
4	West	University of Alaska Fairbanks	Sugar Sweetened Beverage Intake among EFNEP Participants - An evaluation of the National EFNEP Database	8/15/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data analysis continuing.</li> </ul>

	Center	Implementing Organization	Project Title	Projected End Date	Project Status
5	West	Colorado State University	Two-Year Assessment of Youth Participatory Action Research - A PSE Intervention	9/1/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amended deliverables will include reliability protocol and a written evaluation plan.</li> </ul>
6	Northeast	Hispanic Health Council	Nutrition Ed, Access and Texting (NEAT): Combining the Hartford Mobile Market with e-Marketing	9/30/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRB approval received.</li> <li>• Subaward contracts finalized.</li> <li>• Data collection instruments identified and/or developed.</li> <li>• Recruitment and baseline data collection nearly complete.</li> <li>• Intervention and follow-up data collection nearly complete.</li> </ul>
7	Northeast	Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health	Successful Youth-Leader Program as part of a Multi-Level, Multi-Component Food Environment, Behavioral Intervention	9/30/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRB approval received.</li> <li>• Subaward contracts finalized.</li> <li>• Data collection instruments identified and/or developed.</li> <li>• Recruitment and baseline data collection completed.</li> <li>• Intervention and follow-up data collection nearly complete.</li> </ul>
8	Northeast	University of Maryland Extension	Transforming Lifestyles: Integrating Direct Nutrition Education with Physical Activity Using the Health Care System Expansion Model	9/30/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRB approval received.</li> <li>• Subaward contracts finalized.</li> <li>• Data collection instruments identified and/or developed.</li> <li>• Recruitment and baseline data collection completed.</li> <li>• Intervention and follow-up data collection nearly complete.</li> </ul>

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9	Northeast	University of Rhode Island	Empowering Urban Schoolchildren to Increase Fruit and Vegetable Consumption through EFNEP-enhanced PSE Interventions	9/30/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRB approval received.</li> <li>• Subaward contracts finalized.</li> <li>• Data collection instruments identified and/or developed.</li> <li>• Recruitment and baseline data collection completed.</li> <li>• Intervention and follow-up data collection nearly complete.</li> </ul>
10	West	Colorado State University	Behavior Checklist Validation (Nutrition Domain)	12/1/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reliability data entry is complete and analyses in progress.</li> <li>• Validation data is being collected.</li> </ul>
11	South	UNC Center for Health Promotion Disease Prevention Healthy Retail	Healthy Retail	12/16/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducted pre surveys with costumers and store managers.</li> <li>• Conducted baseline store environment assessment.</li> <li>• Conducted 3 phases of promotions and food demonstrations.</li> <li>• During Phase 1 and 2, 32 total food demonstrations were conducted and 721 recipes were handed out to corner store customers.</li> </ul>

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12	North Central	University of Missouri	Eat Smart In Parks: Youth Mapping and Photovoice to Inform Healthy Food Environments	1/1/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRB approval received.</li> <li>• Subaward contracts finalized.</li> <li>• Data collection instruments identified and/or developed.</li> <li>• Recruitment and baseline data collection nearly complete.</li> <li>• Intervention and follow-up data collection nearly complete.</li> </ul>
13	South	University of Florida	Building Faith Through Health in the Community and Online	2/28/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First round of interventions and data collection for 2 sites are complete.</li> <li>• No-cost extension has been approved.</li> <li>• Interventions at 4 new sites will begin soon.</li> </ul>
14	South	University of Arkansas	Faithful Families: Implementation and Outcome Evaluation of Paraprofessionals and Volunteer Delivery Methods in Low-income Faith Communities	2/28/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First round of interventions and data collection for 2 sites are complete.</li> <li>• No-cost extension has been approved.</li> <li>• Interventions at 4 new sites will be completed by end of September.</li> </ul>
15	South	University of Georgia	Evaluation of online nutrition education eLearning program tailored to SNAP-Ed eligible adult Georgians	2/28/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus groups are complete.</li> <li>• Individual interviews are complete.</li> <li>• No-cost extension has been approved.</li> </ul>

	Center	Implementing Organization	Project Title	Projected End Date	Project Status
16	West	Utah State University	Evaluation of a novel, low cost, low burden, scalable technology for evaluating EFNEP and SNAP-Ed effectiveness	3/1/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is the new signature research project being done in Utah but reported through RNECE-West.</li> </ul>
17	West	Utah State University	RNECE-West Subaward Evaluation of a novel, low cost, low burden, scalable technology for evaluating EFNEP and SNAP-Ed effectiveness	3/1/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Testing the feasibility of using QualMART to evaluate improvements in the home food environment through retail grocery food purchases.</li> </ul>
18	Northeast	Cornell Cooperative Extension in Orange and Jefferson Counties	Adopting Healthy Habits in Worksites: Increasing adoption and acceptability of policy, systems, and environmental changes within agencies serving low-income families	6/30/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRB approval received.</li> <li>• Subaward contracts finalized.</li> <li>• Data collection instruments identified and/or developed.</li> <li>• Recruitment and baseline data collection underway.</li> <li>• Interventions underway.</li> </ul>

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19	South	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	SNAP-Ed UNC Healthy Stores Project	6/30/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-test data has been collected in 8 intervention stores and 8 control stores in Orange, Warren, and Lenoir Counties, NC.</li> <li>• 10 weeks of the intervention completed, including incentivizing specific promoted foods in the store, posting in-store promotion materials, and implementing 24 food demos and nutrition education events.</li> <li>• Completed 2 of 5 phases.</li> </ul>
20	South	North Carolina State University	Social Media Guidance Materials	6/30/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About 450 posts across 24 NC counties have been identified from EFNEP Facebook pages, and we have begun to develop the codebook for analysis. The aim is to identify the type of posts that result in the most engagement.</li> <li>• Follow-up site visits with Signature Projects will include interviews and a review of data to help determine if the collective evidence across Signature projects supports whether or not SM has an impact on program outcomes, recruitment and retention.</li> <li>• Looking for 5 EFNEP agencies willing to use the SM Guidance materials to develop a 1-month campaign to be implemented in the Fall 2016 (September – November). The participating agencies will participate in a phone interview in January to share thoughts regarding the design, engagement, and usefulness of the tools. All of this information will be used to revise and develop the tools for broad use by EFNEP and SNAP-Ed.</li> </ul>

	Center	Implementing Organization	Project Title	Projected End Date	Project Status
21	North Central	University of Illinois	Phase 2 Evaluating a Multi-Modal Community Nutrition Education Model within SNAP-Ed and EFNEP	7/31/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRB approval received.</li> <li>• Subaward contract finalized.</li> <li>• Data collection instruments identified and/or developed.</li> <li>• Recruitment and baseline data collection in process.</li> <li>• Intervention in process.</li> </ul>
22	North Central	Michigan State University Extension	Influence of PSA on Dietary Quality at Diverse Low Income Childcare Settings	7/31/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRB approval received.</li> <li>• Subaward contract finalized.</li> <li>• Data collection instruments identified and/or developed.</li> <li>• Recruitment and baseline data collection in process.</li> <li>• Intervention in process.</li> </ul>
23	North Central	Purdue University	A Longitudinal Randomized and Controlled Evaluation of the Integrated Impact of SNAP-Ed on Food Security and Obesity Prevention in Rural and Urban Counties	7/31/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRB approval received.</li> <li>• Subaward contract finalized.</li> <li>• Data collection instruments identified and/or developed.</li> <li>• Recruitment and baseline data collection in process.</li> <li>• Intervention in process.</li> </ul>

	Center	Implementing Organization	Project Title	Projected End Date	Project Status
24	North Central	Ohio State University	Summer Weight and Environmental Assessment Trial (SWEAT)	7/31/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRB approval received.</li> <li>• Subaward contract finalized.</li> <li>• Data collection instruments identified and/or developed.</li> <li>• Recruitment and baseline data collection in process.</li> <li>• Intervention in process.</li> </ul>
25	North Central	Michigan State University Extension	Social Support Analysis and SNAP-Ed Multi-State Pilot with Illinois	7/31/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRB approval received.</li> <li>• Subaward contract finalized.</li> <li>• Data collection instruments identified and/or developed.</li> <li>• Recruitment and baseline data collection in process.</li> </ul>
26	North Central	Michigan Fitness Foundation	Social Support Analysis and SNAP-Ed Multi-State Pilot with Illinois	7/31/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRB approval received.</li> <li>• Subaward contract finalized.</li> <li>• Data collection instruments identified and/or developed.</li> <li>• Recruitment and baseline data collection in process.</li> </ul>
27	North Central	Purdue University	Survey development of 'participant survey of PSE' at Purdue	7/31/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRB approval received.</li> <li>• Subaward contract finalized.</li> <li>• Data collection instrument in development.</li> </ul>

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28	North Central	Ohio State University	Ohio SNAP-Ed in collaboration with the Ohio State University summer weight and environmental assessment trial	7/31/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IRB approval received.</li> <li>• Subaward contracts finalized.</li> <li>• Data collection instruments identified and/or developed.</li> <li>• Recruitment and baseline data collection ongoing.</li> </ul>
29	West	Colorado State University	Testing of Strategies to Reach Direct Education Participants Long-Term	8/1/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data collection (phase 1 retrospective attempt to contact graduates) for this project was completed in Colorado and West Virginia.</li> <li>• Three additional states are currently collecting phase 1 data for this project.</li> <li>• Phase 2 involves a 6 or 1 year prospective follow-up of graduates to occur in 2017.</li> </ul>
30	West	Colorado State University	Food Bank Environmental Scan	8/1/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This project has completed 41 interviews with managers (20 food bank, 15 food pantry, 5 EFNEP and SNAP-Ed, and 1 anti-hunger advocate) representing every state in the Western Region (excluding the Pacific Islands).</li> <li>• A scoring tool has been developed and will be piloted in Nevada, Arizona, Colorado, California and Oregon in July and August.</li> <li>• The pilot instrument will be ready for field testing in early September, 2016.</li> <li>• A graduate research assistant will start at Colorado State University in August 2016 and her work will include field testing for validation.</li> </ul>

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31	West	Colorado State University	Long Term Follow Up Evaluation of Eating Smart Being Active	8/1/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amended deliverables will include completed collection of long-term follow-up data (BMI, blood pressure, Hemoglobin A1c, behavior checklist) in Colorado and Washington; protocols for long-term evaluation.</li> </ul>
32	West	Colorado State University	Developing Environmental Support Activities for Use in Conjunction with Direct Education	8/1/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A pilot focus group was completed with educators in Colorado; subsequently, questions were refined.</li> <li>10 phone focus groups were completed with educators in multiple states. Transcriptions are complete and analysis has begun.</li> <li>Interviews and surveys with program coordinators are planned to augment the focus group results.</li> </ul>

For more information, visit <http://rnece-ncc.org>