

NORTHWEST NEW JERSEY SNAP-ED SUPPORT NETWORK

Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Morris County

Mission

The Mission of the Northwest NJ SNAP-Ed Support Network is to help limited resource adults and families who qualify for SNAP reduce their risk for food insecurity through a collaborative agency and organizational effort to improve nutrition education aimed toward maximization of current food related resources, and identification of additional food resources, as needed to ensure food security.

Overview

The Northwest NJ SNAP-Ed Support Network is one of three regional Networks (Northwest, Central and Northeast, and Southern) comprising a statewide collaborative of representatives from state and community-based health organizations and programs that convene on a quarterly basis. The Northwest Network was launched March 2013 and enabled the expansion of SNAP-Ed programming to all of NJ's 21 counties. The Northwest Network works with community-based organizations serving the SNAP/SNAP eligible population in Morris, Hunterdon, Warren, and Sussex Counties.

The Northwest Network is operated collaboratively with New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, Rutgers Cooperative Extension housed at the Department of Nutritional Sciences at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey and Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Morris County.

The goal of the regional Networks is to support the efforts of SNAP-Ed and agency participation at the local level and the project level. At the project level, member organizations of the regional networks assist projects to provide input, as well as resources, including physical support, to local programming efforts.

Quarterly Meetings

Quarterly meetings of the regional Networks serve as an opportunity for community partners to report on current initiatives to help improve the food security and nutrition and physical activity behaviors of the SNAP/SNAP eligible population. At least one new partner is the focus of each meeting via a special "focus" presentation on related initiatives.

Northwest NJ Community Garden Initiative

In collaboration with the Morris County Parks Commission and the Rutgers Master Gardener Program of Morris County, the Northwest NJ SNAP-Ed Support Network is conducting a community-based needs assessment of Community Gardens and Emergency Food Providers (EFPs) (food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters) in Morris, Hunterdon, Warren, and Sussex Counties to

- 1) pilot systems to reduce identified barriers to produce donations from Community Gardens to EFPs;
- 2) identify barriers and supports related to the establishment of Community Gardens at EFPs; and
- 3) develop, implement and evaluate an assessment-based work plan for the *distribution of surplus* produce from Community Gardens to EFPs and the *establishment of Community Gardens* at EFPs.

For more information contact:

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NJ SNAP-Ed
NJ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education
USDA, Food and Nutrition Service



To Apply for SNAP call 1-800-328-3838