

Daily Union Article  
Saturday, March 17, 2018  
Title: SNAP-Ed in Geary County

One of the programs I work with through Geary County K-State Research and Extension is a nutrition education and healthy eating program called SNAP-Ed. It is the education arm of its parent program – SNAP or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. This program, in place since 1961, was formerly known as the Food Stamp Program. Congress adopted the new name as part of the 2008 Farm Bill. The new law increased the commitment to Federal food assistance programs by more than \$10 billion over the next 10 years. In efforts to fight stigma, the law changed the name of the Federal program to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP as of Oct. 1, 2008, and changed the name of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 to the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008. States maintained flexibility to name the program on their own but were encouraged to change the name to SNAP or another alternate name. In fact, more than ten States had already changed the names of their programs by this time.

Why does Kansas need SNAP-Ed? Our state health statistics and socio-economic needs speak for themselves.

In Kansas, an average of 219,804 individuals in 102,607 households received food assistance in December 2017. (Kansas DCF)

Kansas has the 22nd highest adult obesity rate in the nation (2017). Kansas adult obesity rate is currently 31.2% -- consistent across races, ethnicities and income levels. Additionally, Kansas had a 9.4% rate of adult diabetes in 2016. Kansas ranks 20th in the U.S. for in children in poverty, and Kansas ranks 42<sup>nd</sup> for per capita public health spending, and was the 25<sup>th</sup> healthiest state in 2017. Low income Kansans are more likely to face negative health outcomes. SNAP benefits help fight poverty, reduce food insecurity, improves dietary quality, protects against obesity and improves health. SNAP-Ed is delivered across Kansas by K-State Research and Extension educators to SNAP participants and others eligible to receive SNAP benefits.

Why does Geary County need SNAP-Ed? Our county health statistics and socio-economic status explains our need.

The following data is taken from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's County Health Rankings and Roadmaps report that was just released this past week. Geary County's obesity rate is currently 35% which is an increase of 5% from 2014. Additionally, Geary County has 8% of our population diagnosed with diabetes. Geary County ranks 86<sup>th</sup> out of 103 reporting Kansas counties in Social and Economic Factors which includes a childhood poverty rate of 16% of county youth ages 18 and under.

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Through the resources created by the Federal SNAP-Ed program, which is housed within the United State Department of Agriculture, Geary County K-State Research and Extension's SNAP-Ed staff provide nutrition education in our communities. Here's a snapshot of some of the services we provide.

We are working with the school district and building administrators to provide nutrition education classes in nearly every elementary school in USD 475. Schools with over 50% of their enrollment who qualify for free and reduced lunch can qualify for this free education service. During the summer, we are in the two middle schools providing nutrition education classes with food labs for incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders.

We also work with the Geary County Health Department and the WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) program to offer monthly adult nutrition education programs. In the summer months, we encourage parents to participate in the Mommy and Me program that targets caregivers and their children.

Recently, we have begun working with Grandview Plaza City Commission, Handy's LLC, and Grandview Elementary on a focused program called Stock Healthy Shop Healthy. This program is designed to help build awareness of the nutritional needs families have and how to use locally owned convenience stores or grocery stores to help meet those needs.

We have been actively involved in other community initiatives that are tied to health and wellness such as Live Well Geary County and the Junction City Food Policy.

Additionally, we create, print, and supply a monthly Commodity Newsletter that targets tips and uses for the foods that are distributed to our local food pantries.

SNAP-Ed provides us with the training, curricula, fact sheets, and other resources that help us meet the needs of County residents through the program mentioned above. Additionally, they provide timely news releases and recipes to share with our audiences.

Most recently, I received a lower-fat, lower sodium St. Patrick's Day menu complete with recipes and nutritional facts.

Here is one of the recipes from that menu:

### **Shepherd's Pie** (*Makes 6 serving*)

#### **Ingredients**

2 [potatoes](#), large with skin, diced

1/3 cup milk, skim

1/2 pound ground turkey, 85% lean

2 tablespoons flour

1 package frozen mixed vegetables (10 ounces)

1 can vegetable stock, low sodium

shredded cheese (optional)

## Directions

1. Place diced potatoes in saucepan. Cover with water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer (about 15 minutes).
2. Drain potatoes and mash. Stir in milk and set aside.
3. Preheat oven to 375°F.
4. Brown turkey in a large skillet. Stir in flour and cook for 1 minute, stirring constantly.
5. Add vegetables and broth. Bring to a slow boil.
6. Spoon vegetable/meat mixture into an 8-inch square baking dish. Spread potatoes over mixture. Bake 25 minutes.
7. Serve hot. Garnish with shredded cheese (optional).

Source: <https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/recipes>

SNAP-Ed is hard at work in Geary County and we are privileged to serve the people of our communities. For more information about our programming and resources you can contact Deb Andres, FCS Agent or Ann Katt, SNAP-Ed Nutrition Educator with Geary County K-State Research & Extension at 785-238-4161. Until next time, keep living resourcefully!



*Nutrition Information (inset)*

Nutrients	Amount
<b>Calories</b>	<b>208</b>
<b>Total Fat</b>	<b>5 g</b>
Saturated Fat	1 g
Cholesterol	28 mg
<b>Sodium</b>	<b>72 mg</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b>	<b>31 g</b>
Dietary Fiber	5 g
Total Sugars	4 g
Added Sugars included	0 g
<b>Protein</b>	<b>11 g</b>
Vitamin D	N/A
Calcium	56 mg
Iron	2 mg
Potassium	N/A