Objective: To increase the availability and usage of fresh, locally grown produce in emergency food programs (EFPs) in NYC, while supporting local farmers.

Use of Theory or Research: Low income New Yorkers report low levels of fruit and vegetable intake, increasing their risk of obesity and chronic diseases.

Target Audience: Public health nutritionists.

Description: Since 2001, United Way of NYC (UWNYC) and Just Food (JF) have collaborated to connect EFPs to local produce. Inspired by the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) direct marketing model, the Local Produce Link (LPL) model establishes a network of five neighboring EFPs. One EFP serves as the “host” site, receiving produce from the farmer and organizing it for pick-up by the other EFPs. This meets the needs of both the EFPs and farmers. Education and cooking demonstrations are key program components, ensuring that EFP staff and clients develop skills and confidence to create safe and nutritious meals using the produce.

Evaluation: EFPs report high satisfaction with the quality of produce and educational programming, particularly the cooking demonstrations. Farmers report high satisfaction with the program.

Conclusions and Implications: In 2008, thirty EFPs received 132,000 pounds of fresh produce from 5 local farmers. These farmers received $202,950 from UWNYC and JF. Approximately 1,000 clients, staff and volunteers participated in educational trainings. LPL increases access to local produce in low income areas, while sustaining local agriculture. Funding provided to UWNYC and JF by the New York State Department of Health’s Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program.

Objective: An effective fight against food insecurity requires reliable evaluation systems. This paper reviews research conducted in the Americas, Africa and Asia aiming the development of an international household food security instrument.

Design, Setting and Participants: Initial research with Latinos in California assessing the validity of the USDA-Household Food Security Supplemental Module (HFSSM) set up the platform for further studies in Latin American rural areas. Subsequently, the proposed tool was applied in a large variety of settings (Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Ghana, and the Philippines). Research conducted in Brazil and Colombia demonstrated the suitability of such instrument at regional and national levels, allowing the development of a regional scale (Escala Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Seguridad Alimentaria –ELCSA).

Outcome, Measures and Analysis: Using Rasch modeling techniques, the internal validity of the tool has been established. INFIT values and relative severity scores were generated to assess psychometric characteristics of the proposed instrument.

Results: INFIT values were generally within a range of 0.8–1.2. Relative item severity scores reflect the concepts underlying each of the tool items. Additionally, no significant differences in relative severity scores have been found when comparing sub-population groups responding to this tool (i.e., gender of respondents, area of residence, households with and without children).

Conclusions and Implications: The consistency of the findings supports the proposal of an international HFSSM generating valid and reliable food security statistics that accurately reflect the situation within households. A measurement that facilitates cross-national comparisons would greatly enhance the communication among food security agencies, allowing an effective interventions’ evaluation. Research was funded by UCMEXUS, FAO, and the World Bank.

Objective: To determine whether there are differences in access to fruits and vegetables between two racially homogeneous regions, one considered low-income and the other middle-income, in the city of Atlanta, Georgia.

Design, Setting and Participants: This was a cross-sectional, exploratory study. A convenience sample of fifty-six food stores (convenience, grocery and supermarket) was assessed using an instrument based on the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) 2006 fruit and vegetable categories for a family of four.

Outcome, Measures and Analysis: Fruit and vegetable access was measured as availability, quality and cost. Fisher’s Exact and Chi Square Tests were used to analyze categorical data. ANOVA analyses were used to determine cost differences for fruits and vegetables within and between the regions.

Results: The low-income region had a significantly greater number of stores that met whole fruits (p=0.03) and the variety constraint for vegetables (p=0.05). The low-income region had a significantly greater number of stores charging more than the mean ($52.91 ± 14.85) for the TFP fruit and vegetable basket (p=0.04). Store type, not income, was the significant factor contributing to price differences between and within the regions.

Conclusions and Implications: The low-income region pays more for the TFP 2006 fruits and vegetables for a family of four. Cost has been cited as a barrier to
complying with healthy diets. Further research is required to aid in policy development that considers the cost implications of healthy foods for low-income families.

O28 Supermarket Savings: Educating Consumers on How Small Changes Add Up!

Alice Henneman, MS, RD, ahennema@unlnotes.unl.edu; University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension; 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln, NE 68528

Objective: The objective was to increase consumers’ knowledge of how small changes in their grocery-shopping behaviors can result in significant savings over a period of time.

Use of Theory or Research: Having enough money during these uncertain financial times is on the minds of many people. The American Psychological Association’s 2008 Stress in America Survey indicated the declining state of the nation’s economy was taking a toll on the physical and emotional health of people nationwide. About half of those surveyed indicated they are increasingly stressed about their ability to provide for their family’s basic needs.

Target Audience: The general population of consumers trying to purchase food on a reduced or uncertain income.

Description: “Supermarket Savings: 16 Tips that Total BIG Bucks” materials were made available directly to consumers through tips on a Web page and indirectly through other consumer educators as a downloadable PowerPoint and handout from the Web.

Evaluation: There were over 13,900 page views for Supermarket Savings tips during the first five months online; 94% (total n = 207) of respondents to an online survey stated these tips will help them save money with an average savings of $17/week or close to $900/year. The PowerPoint version, which was put online later, was downloaded by 1,506 other educators during first two weeks online, increasing potential outreach.

Conclusions and Implications: Giving specific examples and showing the cumulative effect over time provided an incentive for making changes. As one respondent remarked, “I think pointing out the amount of savings for the year is eye-opening.” This project was funded through regular office operating expenditures.

O29 Perspectives of Food Assistance Program Personnel on Utilizing GIS as a Community Food Security Tool

Joel Lindau, Masters Student, jlindau@cahs.colostate.edu, Colorado State University, Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition, 214 Gifford Building, Fort Collins, CO 80523-1571

Objective: The objective of the research was to gather information from agencies involved with food security issues in order to facilitate the design of a Food Security Geographical Information System (GIS).

Design, Setting and Participants: A prototype Food Security GIS, survey and guided presentation were designed to be administered to target agencies involved with food security issues. Multiple agencies participated in the presentation including the Colorado Department of Health and the Colorado Anti-hunger Network.

Outcome, Measures and Analysis: Results of the survey and comments gathered during the guided presentation are intended to act as a guide in the creation of a Food Security GIS. The survey’s purpose is to narrow the focus of what information should be mapped. Feedback received will be analyzed and patterns will be sought for pinpoint data, attribute data, benefits of GIS, and drawbacks to GIS.

Results: A total of 6 guided presentations were conducted representing 12 differing agencies. Respondents indicated that Supermarkets, Farmers Markets, Community gardens, Food Stamp Locations, and Transportation Routes should be included. Attribute data, like disability rates, were agency specific and inconsistent. Intra-agency cooperation, help with grant writing, and helping clients would benefit their agencies; while difficulty using the GIS and updating data were drawbacks.

Conclusions and Implications: Pinpoint locations, benefits for and drawbacks to a Food Security GIS were established. Based on the feedback and survey responses, a Food Security GIS is needed in the state of Colorado and would be utilized by multiple agencies for a variety of reasons.

O30 Making Our Meals SUPER (MOMS): A Nutrition Program for Pre-K Parents

Michelle Vineyard; Betty C. Neilson, Henderson County Extension Office, P.O. Box 159, Lexington, TN 38351; Karen Franck, PhD, University of Tennessee Extension, 2621 Morgan Circle, 119 Morgan Hall, Knoxville, TN 37996-4501

Objective: Making Our Meals SUPER (MOMS) is a nutrition program targeted for mothers of preschoolers. Program objectives included broadening the scope of feeding children a healthy diet following MyPyramid, strengthening the concept of the importance of eating meals together as a family, and gaining knowledge of how to stretch food dollars so that a healthy plate can be served to children.

Use of Theory or Research: Adult Learning Theory with an emphasis on participant involvement in lesson planning.

Target Audience: The target audience was mothers of children in the pre-kindergarten program of a semi-rural community in Tennessee. This school system represented the diversity of this area with 20% African American and 77% Caucasian students. Fifty-three percent were economically disadvantaged.

Description: Parents, particularly mothers, make critical decisions for their families and are an important audience for nutrition education efforts. MOMS was a 6 week program provided once a week to mothers during after school hours. This program was developed by Henderson County Continued on page S13