



Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

—*Latino Population 2004*

Putting Knowledge to Work for Georgia Families

The University of Georgia

Cooperative Extension Service

The Problem

- Georgia has the 3rd fastest growing Latino population in the U.S. Georgia's Latino population increased by 400% between 1990 and 2000. The projected Georgia Latino population increase between 2000 and 2003 is 24.3% (Georgia County Guide 2004).
- According to the US Census 2000, the Latino population (12.5% of the total population) exceeded the African American population (12.3% of the total population) in the United States. Latinos are the largest minority in the country.
- The estimated Latino population in Georgia was 541,123, in 2003. This is 6.2% of the total population in Georgia (Georgia County Guide 2004).
- According to the Georgia Diabetes Advisory Council, Latinos have the second highest rate (6.9%) of diabetes prevalence.
- Research studies conducted by UGA faculty have found that housing and transportation are the largest issues facing the new immigrants to the state.
- The language barrier, health care, and education are additional issues impacting the population and their ability to cope with Georgia's cultural, legal, and economic norms.

Research-based Solutions

- Recent immigrants benefit from educational programs that help them adjust to a new way of life. Research-based programs in extension provide information essential to access housing, understand nutrition and health care, address childcare needs, and learn basic financial skills needed to avoid financial scams and unscrupulous overcharging.

Extension's Role

- Family and Consumer Sciences agents are the leading source of research-based, reliable consumer education and information in the state. Many programs are currently being translated into Spanish to address the needs of the growing Latino population in Georgia.
- Several Extension Agents are learning Spanish and Hispanic culture to better serve the needs of growing Latino population.
- Spanish speaking bilingual educators were recruited to reach the growing Latino population.

Extension's Contribution to Solving the Problem

- More than 29,800 contact hours of family and consumer sciences education were provided to 10,681 Latinos in 2004. Of them, 39% participated in food and nutrition extension programs; 20% participated in financial literacy and fraud prevention education programs; 10% participated in child and family development programs; 7% participated in chronic disease prevention programs; and 6% participated in food safety extension programs.
- Family and Consumer Sciences Extension employed 18 bi-lingual Spanish speaking extension field staff to serve the needs of growing Latino population in Georgia.
- Various educational programs and extension publications such as water quality protection, child care, and nutrition were delivered in Spanish.

Impact on Georgians

- Ninety-four percent of the Latinos who participated in the *Diabetes Education Program* said that it was helpful to learn about diabetes and preventive measures. Many Latinos who completed the program cited healthy habits. For example, 53% said that they plan to eat at least two fruits each day; 42% said that they plan to identify the sign of low and high blood glucose levels; 45% said that they plan to modify their own recipes to cut sugar, fat or sodium; and 50% said that they plan to have their blood pressure checked regularly.
- Ninety-six percent of the Latinos who completed the *ServSafe® Employee Certification Training* improved their food safety knowledge. As a result of the training most of the participants said that they plan to follow recommended food safety practices. For example, 99% planned to wash their hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before working with food; 97% planned to use a thermometer to decide if meat, poultry, egg dishes or fish are done before serving; 99% planned to wash, rinse and then sanitize their cutting boards especially after cutting raw meat, poultry or fish; and 96% planned to thaw foods in the refrigerator, in the refrigerator, in cold running water, or in the microwave right before cooking.
- All the Latinos who participated in food and nutrition extension programs said that those were helpful to learn about healthy meal planning and dietary practices. At the end of the training most of them said that they plan to adopt healthy dietary practices. For example, 71% planned to think about healthy food choices when deciding what to feed their families; 74% planned to consume whole grain breads and cereals; 62% planned to follow simple nutritious recipes; and 56% planned to eat the recommended servings from the five food groups daily.

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