

# Building a Healthier Future for Alabama: The Alabama Extension at Auburn University's High Obesity Program



## University Partnership

CDC's High Obesity Program (HOP) promotes healthy eating and active living in counties that have more than 40% prevalence of adult obesity. CDC provides funds to land grant universities that work with communities — mostly in rural areas—whose residents may have less access to healthy foods and fewer opportunities to be physically active.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) at Auburn University works with 14 local Extension offices and their partners to:

- Create community programs and resources such as health classes and school gardens.
- Increase healthy eating options with retailers, farmers' markets and concession vendors.
- Develop safe places for physical activity such as walking trails.

## Programs in Action

- Across the 14 HOP counties, community coalitions, in partnership with ACES, established or enhanced 39 school and community gardens and installed or repaired playground equipment in over a dozen community parks. They also coordinated nutrition education for over 18,000 youth and adults.
- Bullock County worked with Union Springs Associated Grocers—one of only two grocery stores in the county—to improve access to fresh produce through additional refrigeration space and storage for fruits and vegetables.
- Bibb, Bullock, Coosa, Greene, Macon, Pickens, and Sumter counties adopted the Good Choice initiative, a collaboration between ACES and the Alabama Department of Public Health, to provide guidance on healthy food choices for stores, vending machines, concession stands, and food banks.
- Lowndes County enhanced and increased safety in a community park, providing more than 1,200 Fort Deposit residents increased opportunity for physical activity.

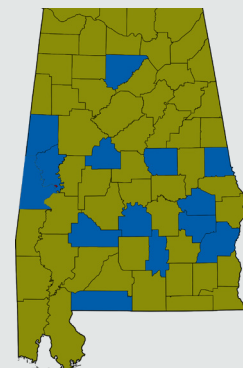


## Alabama by the Numbers\*

Alabama HOP counties include: Barbour, Bibb, Bullock, Chambers, Coosa, Crenshaw, Cullman, Escambia, Greene, Lowndes, Macon, Pickens, Sumter, and Wilcox.

In these counties:

- The estimated adult obesity prevalence ranges from 40.2% to 48.9%, well above the state adult obesity prevalence of 33.8%.
- Approximately 1 in 3 adults don't get any physical activity.
- The percentage of children enrolled in public school eligible for free and reduced lunch ranges from 44.8% to 98.1%.



\*These data were obtained at the time of funding.

## Voice from the Community

*"We're trying to get people fresh fruits and fresh vegetables because the closest store to us is 23 miles away. We grow cucumbers, tomatoes, cabbage, squash and carrots and we go throughout the town and we give it to the people. We let them know that food is not growing in Piggly Wiggly, it's growing in the fields."*

—Jimmy Williams, ALProHealth Program Director