

Tara Dunker

MS, RD

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University of Nebraska
Lincoln, NE

Master's Degree

Community Nutrition &
Health Promotion
Leadership Education Minor +
Dietetic Internship at Iowa State

Bachelor's Degree

Dietetics
Psychology Minor

Nationally Accredited
ServSafe Certified
Instructor & Proctor

Notable Honors

Nebraska Extension–UNL | Food, Nutrition & Health Educator

FEBRUARY 2019 - PRESENT, Beatrice, NE

- Collaborate on food access, local food systems & health initiatives within an 11-county region in SE Nebraska (Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Nemaha, Pawnee, Richardson & Saline + Fillmore, Seward, Nuckolls & Thayer occasionally).
- Leverage partnerships with local, regional & state-wide non-profits, faith-based organizations, healthcare facilities, school districts & government agencies to alleviate hunger, lift up local foods & address public health concerns with policy, systems & environmental (PSE) approaches.
- Deliver in-person & virtual educational programs, professional presentations, radio & TV interviews on a range of food, nutrition & health-related topics.
- Author & co-author of over 100 published media articles, peer-reviewed professional publications & grant applications.
- **Of specific relevance in demonstrating my familiarity with SNAP-Ed & recent federal grant-related collaboration:**
 - Deployed Growing Together Nebraska funds for a community-wide produce rescue & school garden program annually redistributing 2500-4500 pounds of produce to >1100 Beatrice residents.
 - .25 FTE currently being utilized by the Double Up Food Bucks (DUFB) program for rural expansion & designated as an Investigator on a recently submitted DUFB dual-state GusNIP grant application.

Nebraska Extension–UNL | WeCook Program Coordinator

MAY 2015 - FEBRUARY 2019, Lincoln, NE

- Coordinated a \$648,750 USDA NIFA Children, Youth & Families At Risk grant.
- Developed authentic community partnerships for program success.
- Recruited, trained, mentored & managed 25-30 UNL students each semester.
- Delivered bi-weekly inclusive programming at five Title I elementary schools.
- Led the design, development & publication of a [research-based curriculum](#).
- **Collaborated on program research, evaluation, reporting & sustainability.**

Nebraska Extension (Excellence in Extension Team Awards)

Research & Discovery in Food Safety | 2022 | Team Member

Farm to School Institute | 2021 | Community-Level Coach

Growing Together Nebraska | 2020 | Community-Level Coordinator

WeCook | 2019 | Program Coordinator

National Extension Association of FCS (Team Awards)

Regional 2nd, Educational Curriculum Package: Healthy Food Fast | 2021

Regional 2nd, Social Media Education: Food Safety | 2021

Innovative Youth Development Programming: WeCook | 2019

National Association of Extension 4-H Agents (Team Award)

Excellence in Healthy Living Programming: WeCook | 2018

Nebraska Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics

Emerging Dietetic Leader | 2018

Leadership, Collaboration & Service

FNH Leadership Team

Current | Appointed in 2020
Perform state-wide internal communication, professional development planning & annual reporting to administration.

Co-Lead Educator

Current | Gage County Office
Coordinate hiring, onboarding & annual evaluations of support staff; draft & submit annual county Impact-at-a-Glance report; *serve as [NACEB](#) contact/representative.*

[NERFSI](#) Leadership Team

Current Member | Past Annual Conference Chair
Perform state-wide internal communication, professional development planning & annual reporting to administration.
In 2021-2022, served as chair for the Nebraska Food + Farm Conference.

Professional Presentations

Presented or Co-Presented

Crete Welcoming Committee

Member | MAY 2021 - PRESENT

Head Start Health & Safety Advisory Committee

Member | MAY 2021 - PRESENT

Salvation Army of Beatrice

Advisory Board Member | MAY 2021 - PRESENT

Child Nutrition Service (Beatrice)

Board Member | NOVEMBER 2020 - PRESENT

Beatrice Community Food Pantry

Volunteer & Board Member | AUGUST 2019 - PRESENT

Community Nutrition Partnership Council (Lincoln)

Member (Inactive due to current position location) | MAY 2016 - PRESENT

Nebraska Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics

Treasurer (Elected) | JUNE 2019 - JUNE 2021

- Managed the annual operating budget for an organization of >500 members using Quickbooks Online.
- Led efforts to set annual budgets, utilize funds in the service of members & abide by 501c3 financial policies & procedures.

Annual Meeting Chair (Appointed) | JUNE 2017 - JUNE 2019

- Managed a \$35,000 annual operating budget, while generating income.
- Led a team of 13 nutrition professionals in planning two consecutive annual conferences attended by approximately 230 state-wide colleagues.

Administrative Assistant | JULY 2013 - OCTOBER 2015

- Planned & implemented professional events as part of a team.
- Collaborated with local & national organizations, speakers & vendors.
- Supported elected board members in carrying out their responsibilities.

Member | 2008 - PRESENT

Dunker, T., Guenther, H. (2022, June). *Food in the Field: An adaptable, online program that meets busy rural families where they are by encouraging small shifts toward better health.* PowerPoint presentation at the National Rural Grocery Summit, Wichita, KS.

Dunker, T., Stoner, N. (2022, May). *Reducing Food Waste & Feeding a Community: Mobilizing Existing Resources in the Fight Against Hunger.* Oral and poster presentations at the Bryan Health Connect Conference, Lincoln, NE.

Dunker, T., Guenther, H. (2022, May). *Food in the Field: Rural Wellness & Filling Gaps in Nutrition Education for Nebraska Farm Families.* Poster session presented at the Bryan Health Connect Conference, Lincoln, NE.

Dunker, T., Jewell, B., Sale, B., Long, C. (2022, February). *Developing and Sustaining Food System Coalitions.* Panel webinar at the Nebraska Food + Farm Conference.

Dunker, T., Guenther, H., Brison, C., Jones, G. (2021, May). *Engaging New Audiences Through the Healthy Food Fast: Using Your Multi-Cooker Program*. Poster session presented at the National Health Outreach Conference, virtual due to COVID-19.

Dunker, T., Carroll, J., Krehbiel, M. (2019, June). *Pilot to Publication: Sustaining opportunities for WeCook through manualizing curriculum*. PowerPoint presentation at the CYFAR PDTA Workshop, Washington, D.C.

Dunker, T., Krehbiel, M. (2019, May). *Sharing Best Practices: An Out-of-School Time Cooking, Nutrition, and Physical Activity Program for Underserved Youth*. PowerPoint presentation at the National Health Outreach Conference, Fort Worth, TX.

Dunker, T., Miramonti, A., Krehbiel, M. (2018, October). *Assessing Nutrition Knowledge Using a Healthy Plate Photo Method Among Youth Participating in the WeCook Program*. PowerPoint presentation at the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents Conference, Columbus, OH.

Krehbiel, M., Franzen-Castle, L., Dunker, T. (2018, January). *Food, Fitness, and Families: Lessons learned from two Extension cooking programs*. Webinar for the Food, Nutrition, and Health Interest Group, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension.

Walther, A., Krehbiel, M., Dunker, T. (2017, May). *Examining new assessment tools for a 4th and 5th grade youth healthy living after school program, WeCook*. PowerPoint presentation at the National Health Outreach Conference, Annapolis, MD.

Dunker, T. (2016, November). *Creatively using your space, time, and materials*. Webinar presented for the Click2Science Organization.

Dunker T., Krehbiel M., Chai W., Walther A., Franzen-Castle L., Jones G., Wieczorek M. (2016, October). *Engaging underserved youth in fun food and fitness lessons to improve knowledge and skills*. Poster session presented at the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.

Franzen-Castle, L., Krehbiel, M., Dunker, T., Jones, G. (2016, September). *WeCook After School Program: Engaging Youth in Fun Food and Fitness Lessons to Improve Knowledge and Skills Among 4th and 5th Grade Participants*. Poster session presented at the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Annual Session, Big Sky, MT.

Krehbiel, M., Dunker, T., (2016, September). *WeCook: Fun with food and fitness*. PowerPoint presentation at the Nebraska Department of Education 21st CCLC Conference, LaVista, NE.

Walther A., Dunker T., Krehbiel M., Franzen-Castle L., Chai W. (2016, July). *Engaging youth in innovative food and fitness lessons to improve knowledge and skills among 4th and 5th graders*. Poster session presented at the Society of Nutrition and Education Behavior Annual Conference, San Diego, CA.

Dunker, T. (2016, May). *WeCook: Fun with food and fitness*. PowerPoint presentation at the CYFAR PDTA Workshop, Washington, D.C.

Krehbiel M., Dunker T., Chai W., Walther A., Franzen-Castle L., Jones G., Wieczorek M. (2016, April). *WeCook: Fun with food and fitness*. Poster session presented at the National Health Outreach Conference, Roanoke, VA.

Krehbiel M., Dunker T., Chai W., Walther A., Franzen-Castle L., Jones G., Wieczorek M. (2016, April). *WeCook: Fun with food and fitness*. Poster session presented at the Nebraska Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Lincoln, NE.

Professional Publications

Co-Authored

Jewell, B., Long, C., Dunker, T., Sehi, S. (2022). [Carving out space for small-scale producers through food system coalitions](#). Urban Food Systems Symposium. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Schlange, K., Franzen-Castle, L., Walther, A., Dunker, T., Krehbiel, M. (2020). [Parent/Caregiver Perceptions of Youth Health Outcomes After Participating in the WeCook: Fun with Food and Fitness Program](#). Health Education & Behavior (HEB).

Walther, A., Dunker, T., Franzen-Castle, L., Krehbiel, M. (2018). [Increasing at-risk youth self-reported and objectively measured physical activity in an afterschool program](#). Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences, 110(1), 59-63.

Walther, A., Chai, W., Dunker, T., Franzen-Castle, L., Krehbiel, M. (2018). [A New Way to Assess Nutrition Knowledge: The Healthy Plate Photo Method](#). Afterschool Matters, 28:3-9.

Franzen-Castle, L., Dunker, T., Chai, W., Krehbiel, M. (2017). [Fitbit and Fitabase Technology: Tracking and evaluating youth physical activity](#). Journal of Extension, 55(2).

Secured Local Grants

Authored or Co-Authored

\$44,500 Awarded To-Date

Beatrice Community Hospital Foundation Grant

Author | Awarded **\$25,000 in 2022** to support the construction costs incurred by the [Beatrice Community Food Pantry](#) in relocating to better serve those living with food insecurity in Gage County.

NDE Expanded Learning Opportunities Grant

Co-Author & Co-PI | Awarded **\$12,500 in 2022** to partner with Southeast Community College (SCC) and Beatrice Public Schools on a [2-year "learning league"](#) where SCC students teach after school 4-H & FNH lessons coordinated by Gage County Extension to elementary students to fulfill a class requirement.

ELCA World Hunger Education & Networking Grant

Co-Author & Event Coordinator | Awarded **\$2,000 in 2022** to support the grassroots community event ["Planting Hope, Cultivating Understanding: A Thoughtful Conversation About Poverty in Our Community"](#) where 75 southeast Nebraska residents & professionals attended a facilitated 3-hour discussion on poverty.

Toro Volunteer Grant via Exmark Manufacturing

Author | Awarded **\$5,000 in 2023** to support the equipment and moving costs incurred by the [Beatrice Community Food Pantry](#) in relocating to better serve those living with food insecurity in Gage County. As part of this grant, Exmark also supplies volunteers to assist with moving and assembly of equipment (shelves, cabinets, carts).