

impact

University of Idaho Extension programs that are making a difference in Idaho.

Get the Dish! Multistate Extension educator collaboration

AT A GLANCE

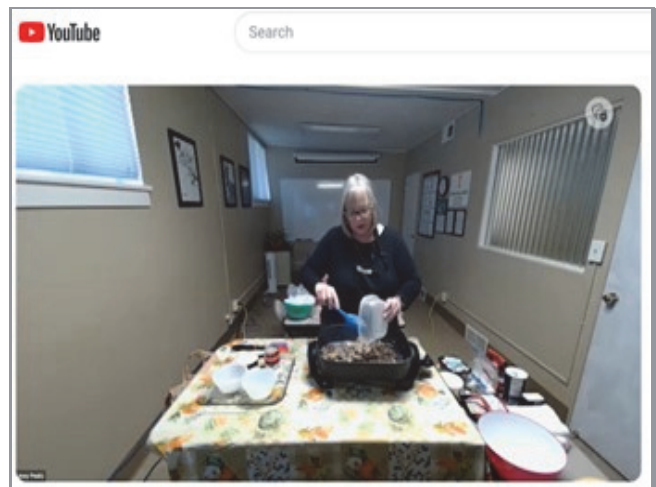
Family and consumer sciences Extension educators in four different states designed an online cooking series to meet clientele demand nationwide.

The Situation

Across the nation, Extension professionals encounter similar clientele needs that must be addressed through educational programming opportunities. They often get tasked with multiple topics and information that can be difficult for one professional to cover with the necessary knowledge and expertise. In addition, attendees may encounter transportation, cost and time constraints as common barriers to program participation. This continued desire and need to prepare food in the home leads to the demand for Extension to provide up-to-date proper food handling, food safety and food preparation educational opportunities and resources for clientele.

Our Response

In 2023, nine Extension educators from University of Idaho Extension, University of Georgia Extension, University of Tennessee Extension and North Carolina Cooperative Extension collaborated to create an online virtual cooking series titled *Get the Dish!* This nine-week series offered in the fall of 2023 was designed to educate the public regarding food-focused preparation and safety content while accommodating multiple learning styles by including hands-on activities and visual demonstrations.



Extension Educator Joey Peutz teaching "Freezer Meals Ready When You Are."

The topics covered in these classes included electric pressure cooking, vegetarian cooking, using slow cookers, air frying, gluten-free cooking, cooking with beans, making whole grain artisan bread, candy making and preparing freezer meals. To overcome participation barriers, the classes were offered free of charge and online via the Zoom platform. The classes were also recorded and housed on a YouTube channel so those unable to attend the class live still had the opportunity to view the content.

Program Outcomes

A total of 314 people participated in the live virtual classes and 612 people viewed the online YouTube videos. A significant factor in this program's success is the multistate approach that has brought together family

and consumer sciences educators with varying content expertise.

A total of 168 participants from 12 different states completed the online post-program survey. Respondents were asked to rate their knowledge of the topic covered before and after participation in this program using a 10-point Likert scale with one being no knowledge and 10 being extremely knowledgeable. Prior to attending the class, the mean knowledge score was 4.77 and following the class the mean knowledge score was 8.08. The evaluation contained questions regarding usefulness, timeliness and program satisfaction.

- 109 respondents stated they were very satisfied.
- 112 respondents stated they found the class very useful.
- 109 respondents reported the topic was very timely.

Ninety-eight percent of respondents said they would recommend this series to others and 95% plan to attend this series in the future.

A retrospective three-month follow-up survey asked questions to determine the continued use of knowledge, confidence and skills gained as a result of participating in *Get the Dish!* A total of 34 individuals located in eight different states responded.

The three-month follow-up survey also asked questions regarding participant confidence before and after participating in this series (Table 1). The greatest increase in participant confidence after attending this program was preparing meals in a way that saves time, represented by a mean increase of 1.03 (Table 1). In addition, participants also identified a noteworthy

increase in the skills needed for different cooking methods with a mean change of .73.

Table 1. Average (mean) of participant responses ranging from one (very low) to five (very high) when answering “Rate these topics for you level of confidence before and after participating in this series.”

Topics rated on level of confidence	Before	After
Preparing Meals that are healthy	3.61	4.27
Preparing meals in a way that saves money	3.52	4.09
The skills needed for different cooking methods	3.27	4.00
Food safety practices in the kitchen	3.67	4.21
Following a new recipe	3.58	4.27
Preparing meals in a way that saves time	3.21	4.24

The Future

Due to continued interest in this program, this multi-state team of Extension educators has begun planning the next online cooking series for fall of 2024.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

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- Elizabeth Renfro-University of Tennessee Extension
- Jennifer Brown-North Carolina Cooperative Extension
- Jessie Moore-University of Georgia Extension

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