

### **June 2012**

#### **Interim Director**

- 1 Greetings
- 1 Summer in FCS
- 1 Search Updates
- 1 Dirty Rotten Scoundrels
- 2 Connections

### **Food Safety**

- 3 Social Media Is Changing the Way We Learn about Food
- 4 FoodNet Examines 10 Years of Data

### **Family Development**

- 5 Happiness for Parents
- 6 Physical and Emotional Health of Older Couples Linked for Better or Worse

#### **Nutrition Education**

- 7 Obesity Update
- 7 Type 2 Diabetes in Children
- 8 Five Strategies to Decrease Obesity





## **Greetings**

This will be our last *Communicator* for the summer, so I wish you the best for your summer activities, both professionally and personally. I know many of you will be representing us at fairs and other outdoor community events. I shared that experience demonstrating sewing machines at state and county fairs all over the country when I was with Viking. So, wear cotton, stay hydrated, and bring healthy snacks. Deep-fried Snickers bars are not on My Plate.

#### Summer in FCS

The Moscow campus is always spiffed up for commencement and now the flowering shrubs are just blooming. FCS is offering over 20 summer session courses—including Food Preservation—plus 23 internships or practica. Sandy McCurdy's garlic and herb research is in full swing in the foods lab with graduate assistant Heather Blume. The Laura Miller outdoor play area for the Child Development Lab is getting new sand in the sandbox, bark under the jungle gym, and hand-rails on the gazebo. The product development lab is a hive of activity with Lori Wahl's FCS 404 Apparel Product Development for a Client class. This year the client is the UI cheerleading squad. Teams of students are developing new uniforms for this real-world client. Susan Torntore and her graduate student Vanessa Casad are presenting posters at the Costume Society of America in Atlanta. Susan's poster is on

# Interim Director

Sandra Evenson Family and Consumer Sciences University of Idaho PO Box 443183 Moscow, ID 83844-3183 sevenson@uidaho.edu



"Coral as Fashion: Understanding the Complexities of the Natural Resource, Production, and Sustainability in a Global Marketplace." Vanessa's poster is on the history of the Northwest linen industry within the global trade. And, three Master's students have defended. You'd hardly know it was summer around here.

## **Search Updates**

Exam week here in FCS was very exciting as we interviewed two candidates for open positions. The search committee for the Director voted to accept the candidate and Dean Hammel is now is discussion with her. The search committee for the Food and Nutrition position voted to accept their candidate and we are waiting on final approval to make an offer. Now that activity around here is back to a simmer, we will complete the search committee for the Extension Specialist in Personal Finance.

## **Dirty Rotten Scoundrels**

As a general rule, marketers are my friends. They are the professionals that have the skills to tease out of consumers what it is they really want and then communicate those specifications to manufacturers. However, there are messages that come across in advertising that irritate me because their

success depends on the ignorance of consumers. Here are a few examples:

- "Mopping with dirty water"—This is the advertisement that claims that using a bucket of water with a cleaning agent and a mop only redeposits the dirty water you just mopped up back on the floor. While not a textile example, the concept relates. Soaps and detergents not only remove soil from surfaces, they also hold that soil in suspension until the wash water is rinsed away. Some products have additional anti-redeposition agents so that rinsing is not required (as in floor cleaners) or less detergent can be used. The only reason soil would redeposit on a surface is if too little or too much cleaner is used. Use the amount of detergent and water temperature recommended by the manufacturer on the back of the bottle.
- "Fabric softener for softer, fresh-smelling towels"—Before the invention of synthetic fibers like polyester and acrylic, fabric softeners were not needed. Good smelling scents like lavender or verbena might be added to rinse water, but was a luxury for most people. Synthetic fibers and fabrics are at their foundation hydrophobic—they do not like water, which conducts electricity. So, when you rub them against each other, they create static. When you dry your polyester yoga pants, acrylic sweater, nylon running shorts, and acetate underthings in the dryer, they create static and stick to themselves and you. The marketing solution was to develop fabric softener, which provides a lubricating film on fibers, allowing them to hold and absorb moisture and reduce static cling. Line drying synthetics reduces the need for fabric softeners, though some products may still require machine drying for fluffiness. Having said that always read the care label. Some fluffy sweaters specifically direct the consumer NOT to use fabric softeners to reduce flammability. But, my complaint is with towels. Fabric softeners also help fibers move past each other, so does increase fluffiness in towels and flannels. But most of towels and flannels are usually cotton. Adding a fabric softener coats these fibers, also, and limits their absorbency to the quantities of moisture for which they are intended and their ability to keep you warm. What makes

- moisture transfer happen on synthetics has the opposite effect on natural fibers. So, toss some fabric softener in with your towels from time to time, but not every time.
- "Bleach all your whites"—Some commercials for stain removal additives declare that the only way to get those white socks white again is to use chlorine bleach. Maybe, maybe not. If the socks are cotton and were bleached white to achieve their white color, then bleaching is appropriate. However, many white textiles are made from "greige goods"—batches of cotton blended together to achieve uniformity in the yarn. Greige goods are then dyed as yarn, as fabric, or as a garment. So, if you bleach white socks that were dved white, they will revert to their icky greige color, which is often a weird greenish, lavenderish color. In addition, chlorine bleach whitens only cellulosic fibers such as cotton and flax (linen). Synthetics like polyester, are not only hydrophobic, they are oleophilic, meaning they absorb oil. That marinara sauce you slopped on your white cotton/polyester shirt can't be bleached out because the polyester bonds with the oil molecules. So, your white cotton and nylon socks won't bleach white either; the nylon will grey and look dingy. Not that non-chlorine bleach is the answer for everything either. The key is to read the fiber content and care labels required for every textile and apparel product sold in the United States.

#### Connections

Watch for your copy of the *Connections* FCS magazine in the mail and on-line. It will include a reflection by retiring professor Janice Fletcher, the new date for the alumni brunch and news from faculty travels afar.





## Social Media Is Changing the Way We Learn about Food

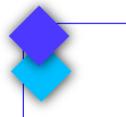
According to an article in a recent issue of *Food Technology*, almost half of American consumers use social networking sites, such as Twitter and Facebook, to learn about food.

Two public relations/market research firms (MSLGROUP Americas and The Hartman Group) conducted a joint study, *Clicks & Cravings: The Impact of Social Technology on Food Culture*, to learn more about the changing consumer behavior. The study suggests that social and digital media are displacing mom as the go-to culinary source of knowledge for many people.

The study found that while eating or drinking at home, nearly one-third of Americans used social networking sites. Among those 18-32 years old, this figure jumped to 47 percent. More Americans are learning to cook, select recipes, plan meals, purchase food, and share culinary secrets via social media.

The article gives advice about how food companies can use the new online culinary culture to market products to consumers, but some of the advice can be applied to how Extension can use social media to interact with consumers about food choices and preparation.

The article notes that social media changes food culture by influencing how consumers think about, talk about, and experience food. As consumers use social media to discover and share information about food, they become more active participants in food culture. They look to bloggers and other opinions online to expand their culinary horizons and make purchase decisions. They want to learn about food based on the experiences of people like themselves. They follow people on Twitter, become friends on Facebook, and read the blogs of people who have authentic voices, sincere posts, and meaningful content about eating and cooking.



# Food Safety

Sandra M. McCurdy Food Safety Specialist Family and Consumer Sciences University of Idaho PO Box 443183 Moscow, ID 83844-3183 smccurdy@uidaho.edu



Consumers look to public communities for deals and recipes. For example, 47 percent of respondents say they've searched for online/digital coupons/specials, while 42 percent say they've consulted online recipes before shopping. They want easy-to-use apps that make shopping, meal planning, and saving money easier for them.

The article notes the best way to engage consumers in the social culture of food and beverage online is by providing interaction that enriches their lives in some tangible way, such as useful information, money saving deals, or entertainment.

The authors note that for companies to reach consumers, they must use social media to communicate in ways that are *authentic* and *personable*. Their advice to food and beverage companies to access social media opportunities is to:

- Craft a distinct online personality
- Enlist the support of other authentic social media voices
- Be generous and humorous
- Reflect their customers' values
- Reveal their true personalities

This advice is worth considering as we contemplate using social media in our outreach programming.

Source: Bryant, S. & Demeritt, L. "Social Media Dis-

places Mom for Food Facts," Food Technol-

ogy 66(5):164, May 2012.

Keywords: consumer, outreach, internet.



Yellow indicates the location of the FoodNet intensive data collection sites in 10 states or parts of states.

## FoodNet Examines 10 Years of Data

FoodNet is the program which connects 10 state health departments with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) to gather information on confirmed foodborne illness caused by nine pathogens. The 10 participating areas represent about 15 percent of the U.S. population.

FoodNet publishes an annual report (for example, see *The Communicator*, June 2007, "Recent *FoodNet* Data"). However, in a special supplement to the journal *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, a number of researchers took a more varied and detailed look at current and past data to publish 18 articles examining trends, illness sources, pathogens and testing. Some of the highlights of their findings are reported below.

- by six bacterial pathogens, Campylobacter, Listeria, Salmonella, E. coli O157, Yersinia and Vibrio, was 23 percent lower in 2010 than 1996-1998. But the rate of decrease in illnesses has slowed. The overall change for these pathogens was only 3 percent lower in 2010 when compared to the more recent 2006-2008 period.
- In fact, Salmonella enterica Enteritidis (SE) infections are on the rise in the United States, with chickens and eggs as the likely major sources of SE infections. SE is the most common strain of Salmonella found in the U.S. Since FoodNet began in 1996, the incidence of SE infections has risen 44 percent; the increase has been led by cases among children, older people, and residents in southern FoodNet sites.
- Fourteen percent of the most common foodborne diseases were linked to direct contact with animals, including pets, livestock, and wild animals, or with their feces, bodily fluids, or other environmental exposure (for example, pet bedding). The pathogens causing the most infections related to animal contact were Campylobacter, Salmonella,

- and *Cryptosporidium*. The increasing popularity of backyard chickens was cited as increasing the risk for *Salmonella* infections.
- Men were more likely to eat such "high risk" foods such as undercooked hamburger, raw oysters, and undercooked eggs than women. Woman reported higher consumption offruits and vegetables than men and were more likely than men to eat only one high risk food, alfalfa sprouts.
- Approximately 40 percent of U.S. travelers to less developed countries experience diarrheal illness. Campylobacter, Salmonella, and Shigella are the most common causes of traveler foodborne illness in those returning from overseas. Risk was greatest after travel to Africa (75.9 cases of illness per 100,000 population), followed by Asia (22.7 cases per 100,000), and Latin America and the Caribbean (20.0 cases per 100,000). In absolute numbers, most travel-associated infections were in travelers who had been in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- The frequency of vibriosis increased in the U.S. from 1996 to 2010, from 0.15 cases per 100,000 to 0.42 cases per 100,000. The authors note a need for more public education about the dangers of raw shellfish consumption and measures to reduce oyster contamination.
- Researchers quantified the greater relative risk for of listeriosis for older populations, pregnant women, and Hispanic women. Those groups have a higher risk of invasive diseases including bloodstream infection, meningitis, miscarriage, and stillbirth.

Identification of foodborne illness trends over time helps to identify populations where targeted interventions are most needed and a number of the articles included recommendations.

Source:

Flynn, D. "FoodNet Shares Lesson from More Than a Decade of Data," FoodSafetyNews. com, May 11, 2012, <a href="http://www.foodsafetynews.com/2012/05/after-a-year-numbers-are/?utm\_source=newsletter&utm\_medium=email&utm\_campaign=120511;" Studies from the Foodborne Diseases Active Surveillance Network," Clinical Infectious Diseases 54 suppl 5, June 1, 2012, <a href="http://cid.oxfordjournals.org/content/54/suppl-5.toc#">http://cid.oxfordjournals.org/content/54/suppl-5.toc#</a> SupplementArticles.

Keywords: foodborne disease, trends.

## **Happiness for Parents**

New research by psychologists at three North American universities, including the University of British Columbia, finds that parents experience greater levels of happiness and meaning from life than non-parents. The findings, which contrast sharply with recent scholarship and popular beliefs, suggest that parents are happier caring for children than they are during other daily activities.

"This series of studies suggest that parents are not nearly the 'miserable creatures' we might expect from recent studies and popular representations," says UBC Psychology Prof. Elizabeth Dunn, who co-authored the study with colleagues at the University of California, Riverside and Stanford University. "If you went to a large dinner party, our findings suggest that the parents in the room would be as happy or happier than those guests without children."

Over three studies, the researchers tested whether parents are happier overall than their childless peers, if parents feel better moment-to-moment than non-parents, and whether parents experience more positive feelings when taking care of children than during their other daily activities. The consistency of their findings, based on data and participants in both the U.S. and Canada, provides strong evidence challenging the notion that children are associated with reduced well-being, the researchers say.

The study identifies age and marital status as factors in parental happiness. "We find that if you are older (and presumably more mature) and if you are married (and presumably have more social and financial support), then you're likely to be happier if you have children than your childless peers," says co-author Sonja Lyubomirsky, a professor of psychology at UC Riverside. "This is not true, however, for single parents or very young parents."

Fathers in particular expressed greater levels of happiness, positive emotion and meaning in life than their childless peers. "Interestingly, the greater levels of parental happiness emerged more consistently in fathers than mothers," says Dunn. "While more research is needed on this topic, it



Harriet Shaklee Family Development Specialist University of Idaho, Boise 322 E Front St., Suite 180 Boise, ID 83702-7364 hshaklee@uidaho.edu



suggests that the pleasures of parenthood may be offset by the surge in responsibility and housework that arrives with motherhood," she says.

The researchers found that the stresses associated with single parenthood did not wipe out the greater feelings of meaning and reward associated with having children.

"We are not saying that parenting *makes* people happy, but that parenthood is *associated* with happiness and meaning," Lyubomirsky says. "Contrary to repeated scholarly and media pronouncements, people may find solace that parenthood and child care may actually be linked to feelings of happiness and meaning in life."

In addition to Dunn, Lyubomirsky and Nelson, paper co-authors include lead author S. Katherine Nelson, a doctoral candidate at UC Riverside, UBC doctoral candidate Kostadin Kushlev and Stanford University postdoctoral scholar Tammy English.

Source: In Defense of Parenthood: Children Are As-

sociated With More Joy Than Misery,

www.ubc.ca/news.

Keywords: fathers, mothers, parenting.



# Physical and Emotional Health of Older Couples Linked for Better or Worse

A study of older married couples that gives new meaning to the matrimonial adage "for better or worse" finds that spouses have a much greater impact on their partner's health than previously known.

The study, published in the American Psychological Association's journal *Health Psychology*, finds strong associations between the physical and emotional health of older married couples—and provides important new information on the psychological toll of physical limitations in old age.

Researchers from the University of British Columbia and Pennsylvania State University tracked the emotional and physical histories of more than 1,700 older couples over a 15-year period, using data from a major U.S. survey. Participants ranged in age from 76 to 90 and many had been married for more than 40 years.

In individuals and couples, the researchers found a strong relationship between "depressive symptoms" (unhappiness, loneliness, and restlessness) and "functional limitations"—the physical inability to perform such basic tasks as climbing stairs, picking up objects, cooking, and shopping. While previous studies have linked physical and emotional health in individuals, this is the first study to show the phenomenon in couples.

The researchers found that spouses' depressive symptoms waxed and waned closely with those of their partners. Functional limitations in one spouse was not only associated with their own depressive symptoms but also with depressive symptoms in the other spouse. Increases in depressive symptoms in one spouse were also associated with greater functional limitations in both spouses.

"When people are depressed, they tend to want to stay at home—but that causes a spouse to stay home more too," says Hoppmann. "That's a problem, because when older adults stop being active—going for walks, socializing, shopping—they risk losing that functional ability. It's that old saying, 'use it or lose it."

"These findings help to illuminate the often vicious cycle between depressive symptoms and our physical abilities," Hoppmann adds, noting that associations remained after controlling for individual (age, education, cognition) and spousal covariates (marriage duration, number of children) and did not differ between women and men.

"Being married for a long time is a very specific situation, it really ties your lives together," says Hoppmann, whose previous research has explored happiness in older couples. "These findings show just how interdependent, emotionally and physically, long-term couples can become."

Source: stonehearthnewsletters.com, May 5, 2011.

Keywords: health, marriage, senior.



## **Obesity Update**

Currently, approximately 34 percent of American adults are obese (based on a Body Mass Index of 30-39) and 5 percent are severely obese (based on a Body Mass Index of 40 or higher). By the year 2030, researchers at Duke University and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) predict that 42 percent of American adults will be obese and 11 percent will be severely obese.

The researchers used obesity prevalence data from 1990 through 2008 to extrapolate future obesity trends. This prevalence data came from nationwide telephone surveys in 1990 (n=72,059) and 2008 (n=375,091) where adults were asked to estimate their height and weight. The fact that people underestimate their weight was included as part of the mathematical model.

Researchers also analyzed data on three factors contributing to weight gain: (1) cost of fast food items, (2) number of restaurants per 10,000 people, and (3) internet access. They found that fast-food prices remained relatively stable, averaging \$5.95 per meal in 1990 and \$5.77 per meal in 2008. The number of restaurants per 10,000 people increased from 13 in 1990 to 23 in 2008. The percentage of people with internet access increased from 1 percent in 1990 to 68.8 percent in 2008. When restaurants are close by and fast food items are inexpensive, people eat out more frequently which causes weight gain. Access to the internet and other technologies encourages sedentary behavior which also contributes to weight gain.

These results indicate that the easy access to low cost food and technological advances over the last 20 years have probably contributed to the increase in overweight and obesity. If changes are not made by individuals or to the environment, incidence of obesity will continue to increase.

Source: American Journal of Preventive Medicine,

June 2012, <a href="http://www.ajpmonline.org/webfiles/images/journals/amepre/AMEPRE">http://www.ajpmonline.org/webfiles/images/journals/amepre/AMEPRE</a> 3

3853-stamped2.pdf.

Keywords: overweight, obesity.



Martha Raidl Nutrition Education Specialist University of Idaho, Boise 322 E Front St., Suite 180 Boise, ID 83702-7364 mraidl@uidaho.edu



## Type 2 Diabetes in Children

Type 2 diabetes usually occurs in adults over the age of 40, who are overweight or obese. These individuals are either not producing enough insulin or the insulin they produce is not being used by the body to keep their blood sugar levels under control.

As the incidence of overweight and obese children has increased, so has the incidence of type 2 diabetes. In the 1990s, type 2 diabetes rarely occurred in children. The most recent statistics shows that from 2002-2005, there were approximately 3,600 new cases diagnosed each year.

Doctors at Columbia University Medical Center in New York studied 699 overweight or obese children, ages 10 to 17 years-old with type 2 diabetes for four years, to determine the most effective diabetes treatment. The treatment included medications and implementing an intensive diabetes lifestyle program that had been proven effective in adults with type 2 diabetes.

At the beginning of the study, the children received one or two pills, Metformin and Avandia that stimulate insulin production and utilization. Some of them also participated in an intensive lifestyle intervention program that targeted diet, exercise, and weight loss.

None of the medications or the intensive lifestyle intervention care program helped the children keep their blood sugar levels under control. The two dia-

betes medication (Metformin and Avandia) that typically helps adults control their blood sugar did not work in the children. Within a few years, half of the children started needing daily insulin shots to control their blood sugar levels. Researchers theorized that rapid growth and hormonal changes at puberty might be playing a role. They suggested that a new intensive diabetes diet, exercise, and weight-loss program be designed specifically for young children with type 2 diabetes.

When blood sugar levels are not kept under control, there is an increased risk of heart disease, eye problems, nerve damage, amputations, and kidney failure. The longer a person has diabetes, the greater the risk. In theory, children who develop diabetes may suffer complications much earlier. One of the researchers, Dr. Nathan stated, "I fear that these children are going to become sick earlier in their lives than we've ever seen before."

Dr. Barbara Linder, a senior advisor for childhood diabetes research, believes that individualized therapy may help these children keep their diabetes under control.

Source: New England Journal of Medicine, April 29,

2012, http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/

NEJMoa1109333.

Keywords: diabetes, children.



## **Five Strategies to Decrease Obesity**

The Institute of Medicine released a report on May 8, 2012, entitled *Accelerating Progress in Obesity Prevention: Solving the Weight of the Nation*. Their five major goals and strategies for solving this problem were based on a review of more than 800 obesity prevention recommendations and identify those

that could work together most effectively to accelerate obesity prevention.

The five goals and strategies are:

- Make it easier for people to work physical activity into their daily lives. This includes having safe places for physical activity, such as parks, playgrounds, trails, and community recreation centers.
- 2. Create an environment where healthy food and beverage options are the routine, easy choice. They recommended that fast food and chain restaurants revise their menus to more closely align with the dietary guidelines and make these healthy choices more affordable and easily identifiable. In addition, have businesses, governments, and others reduce availability of sugar-sweetened beverages and make drinking water more accessible in public places, work sites, and recreation areas.
- Tailor messages about physical activity and nutrition to a youthful audience. The most frequently marketed foods and beverages are higher in added fats and sugars. Industry should adopt nutritionally based standards for marketing aimed at children and adolescents, ages 2-17.
- 4. Expand the role of health care providers, insurers, and employers in obesity prevention. This includes having employers providing access to healthy foods at work and opportunities to be physically active. Health care providers should diagnose and treat overweight and obese individuals.
- 5. Make schools a national focal point for obesity prevention. Provide nutrition education in schools and make physical education available for 60 minutes a day during every school day, from Kindergarten through grade 12. The 60 minutes of physical activity daily could come from recess, a physical education class, walking and biking to school, classroom activities, and after-school sports.

Source: <a href="http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2012/">http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2012/</a>

Accelerating-Progress-in-Obesity-

Prevention.aspx.

Keywords: obesity.