

www.agls.uidaho.edu/fcs

October 2008

Interim Director

- Galaxy III Awardees 1
- Chae Receives Cotton, Inc. Grant 1
 - October Events 1
 - John Foltz in India 2

Food Safety

- Foodborne Botulism in Ohio 3
- Regulation of Genetically Engineered Animals 3

Family Development

- Deportation and the Children Left Behind: A Challenge for Families and Communities
 - Health Issues for Idaho's Hispanic Youth 6

Family Economics

- Navigating the Economic Crisis 7
 - You Can Cut Food Costs 8
 - Save for Retirement 9
 - Family Economics Calendar 10

1004

University of Idaho

Greetings—After such a cold spring and snow in June, Moscow is enjoying glorious autumn weather. The leaves are just starting to turn and the sun is warm and golden. It will be beautiful weather for Ag Days, Dad's Weekend, and the FCS Children's Carnival.

Galaxy III Awardees

UI Extension Faculty Were Recognized at Recent Galaxy III Conference Held in Indianapolis, Indiana from September 15-19, 2008. Congratulations to the following award recipients:

National Association of County Agricultural Agents—Western Region:

- Distinguished Service Award—Kenneth Hart
- Achievement Award—K. Scott Jensen

National Association of Extension 4-H Agents—Western Region:

- Meritorious Service Award—Mary Jean Craig
- Distinguished Service Award—Joey Peutz
- Achievement in Service Award—Laura Sant
- 25 Years of Service Award—Jim Wilson

National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences—Western Region National:

- Distinguished Service Award—Marsha Lockard
- Program Excellence Through Research
 Award—Harriet Shaklee, Barbara Abo, Diane
 Demarest, Lorie Dye, Carol Hampton, Janica
 Hardin, Cindy Kinder, Valdasue Steele, Kathee Tifft, and Susan Traver

Thanks to all the attendees for doing Idaho proud.

Chae Receives Cotton, Inc. Grant

Clothing, Textiles, and Design Assistant Professor May Chae is starting her career out with a bang. Last spring she applied for a grant from Cotton, Inc. The mission of Cotton, Inc. is to promote the use of cotton and the purpose of the grant is to encourage educators to incorporate the unique qualities of cotton into their curriculum in innovative ways. Dr. Chae's proposal is to redesign the FCS 424 Aesthetics for the Apparel Professional course around



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



a real-world design project, in this case, golf-wear for the over-50 female golfer. Her proposal focused on the fact that female golfers over 50 have physical characteristics that many manufacturers do not address. In addition, this demographic has a preference for natural fibers, such as cotton.

Students will meet with focus groups of golfers, take measurements, draft patterns, and fit prototype garments to these live fit models. A panel of expert judges will identify the most marketable ensemble, which will be submitted to the International Textile and Apparel Association design competition.

Originally, Dr. Chae asked for \$7,000, but the Cotton, Inc. board awarded her \$10,000, the difference to be used for student scholarships.

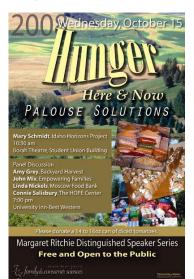
This kind of design project is what students have been asking for. The products will boost their resumes and portfolios, by giving students the skills manufacturers are looking for. Well done, May!

October Events

October is one of our busiest months here in FCS. As I mentioned in the last newsletter, October 3-5 is Ag Days. There have been suggestions to change it to CALS Days, because FCS is so much a part of the weekend. This year Debra Rumford created a **new 3' X 5' poster** to use as an appealing general backdrop to promote FCS programs and career options. I'll staff the booth this year, in the Biotech

Interaction Court from 11am to 1pm. If you are in town for Ag Days or Dad's Weekend, stop by, say hello, and snag a piece of chocolate.

On Saturday, October 4th, the FCS Alumni Board holds its annual Alumni Brunch. The program this year is "Adventures in Honduras" presented by Alverna Thomas, Laura Miller, Betty Lea Trout, and Michele Dirks. They will be describing their medical mission trip to Honduras. Much of their work and service on this trip was facilitated by their knowledge of Family and Consumer Sciences content. It is an inspiration to see our alums and emeritus faculty in action.



October 15, 2008; We are doing something a little different with the **Margaret Ritchie Dis**tinguished Speaker Series this year. Instead of bringing in one nationally recognized speaker, we are bringing together several well-known local speakers on the subject of poverty and hunger on the Palouse. This coincides with World Food Day

on October 16th. The university presentation, which is open to all, will feature **Mary Schmidt** speaking on "The Horizon's Story: How Northern Idaho Residents are Building Community to End Poverty." This presentation is at 10:30am in the Borah Theatre of the Student Union Building (SUB).

October 15, 2008: In the evening, at 7:00 at the University Inn-Best Western, we will present a panel discussion on the theme, "Hunger Here and Now: Palouse Solutions." Panelists include Amy Grey (President, Backyard Harvest), John Mix (President, Empowering Families), Linda Nickels (Director, Moscow Food Bank), and Connie Salisbury (Executive Director, The HOPE Center). After the panelists describe their work, there will be time for questions and discussion with audience members. Refreshments will be served. Biographies of each of the speakers are on the FCS website at http://www.uidaho.edu/fcs.

On Thursday, October 16th, *Smart Women, Smart Money* Conference. 7:30-4:30pm. Boise Centre on the Grove Convention Center. Extension FCS and UI Boise will sponsor an exhibit at this conference sponsored by Idaho's State Treasurer. For a list of speakers and topics or to register go to http://www.smartwomensmartmoney.com.

On Friday, October 17th, students from the FCS clubs will work together with the Margaret Ritchie Distinguished Speaker committee on a food bagging project. At each of the presentations on the 15th, audience members have been invited to bring a can of tomatoes. The students will use the tomatoes to bag up the ingredients for a one-pot lentil chile recipe that a 12-year old could make. We will aim for 100 bags, distributed locally.

As if October 15th isn't exciting enough, we will also be hosting our **Advisory Board!** We will meet in the afternoon of the 15th and morning of the 16th. We have many questions for them this year, so it should be a rousing meeting.



John Foltz in India

College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Associate Dean of Academic Programs John Foltz and his wife Barbara are on their way home from two weeks in India. The first week of their journey was visiting all the great

sites in Delhi, Agra, and Jaipur. The second week, Dean Foltz joined up with Agricultural Economics professor Stephen Devadoss to attend a conference in Bangalore and visit universities in South India to scope out study abroad opportunities for our students. One visit will be to Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women in Coimbatore. FCS content areas are often referred to as Home Science or Home Economics in India. Coimbatore and its surrounding area is known for cotton spinning and textile production. Bangalore, better known for its software industry, is also the home of one of India's largest apparel manufacturers, Gokaldas Exports. I look forward to hearing Dean Foltz's report on his meetings with university representatives on opportunities for our students.

Foodborne Botulism in Ohio

Foodborne botulism is very rare, fortunately. However, it occurs occasionally and is a reminder that home canning practices must be done correctly. A recent news article reports that a man is in critical condition and his grandson in serious condition at hospitals in Ohio after becoming sick from eating home-canned green beans. Two granddaughters were treated for botulism and released from the hospital.

The news article does not specify how the green beans were improperly prepared and it contains an error about the nature of the intoxication (referring to organisms, rather than to the toxin). However, it does correctly point out that the effects of botulism are severe and can affect individuals for years.

Source: Kinton, J. "Home canning leads to botulism in

Crestline," *Mansfield News Journal*, September 18, 2008, http://www.mansfieldnews

FDA Releases Draft Guidance

on Regulation of Genetically

Engineered Animals To

journal.com.

Keywords: food preservation, food safety.

Regulation of Genetically Engineered Animals

Last month, on September 18, 2008, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) released a draft guidance that discusses FDA's approach to regulating genetically engineered (GE) animals. Interested persons may comment on the draft guidance through November 18, 2008.

Although the guidance is aimed at industry, FDA has provided information for the general public to gain a

better understanding of GE animals. The 2-page brochure pictured above (downloadable as a PDF from FDA's website) and an extensive questionand-answer webpage (29 questions) are available.

Some consumer groups have expressed concern that the review process may not be stringent



enough and the environmental consequences may not be adequately addressed, such as GE animals mating with native populations. (For example, some states have prohibited transgenic fish.)

Genetically engineered food animals are not expected to be available in the market for several years. Some of the information on genetically engineered animals from FDA is reproduced below.

What is genetic engineering? Genetic engineering is a process in which recombinant DNA (rDNA) technology is used to introduce new characteristics or traits into organisms. When scientists splice together pieces of DNA and introduce a spliced DNA segment into an organism to give the organism new properties, it's called rDNA technology. The spliced piece of DNA is called the rDNA construct. The rDNA construct can either come from another existing organism, or be synthesized in a laboratory. Although conventional breeding methods have been used for a long time to select for desirable traits in animals, genetic engineering is a much more targeted and powerful method of actually introducing specific desirable traits into animals.

Genetic engineering has been widely used in agriculture to make crops resistant to certain pests or herbicides, in medicine to develop microbes that can produce pharmaceuticals for human or animal use, and in food to produce microorganisms that aid in baking, brewing, and cheese-making. What is a genetically engineered animal? A genetically engineered animal is one that contains an rDNA construct that's intended to give the animal a new trait or characteristic.

What kinds of GE animals are being developed? Many kinds of GE animals are in development, although none have yet been approved for commercial use.

- <u>Biopharm</u> animals are those that have undergone genetic engineering to produce particular substances, such as human insulin, for pharmaceutical use.
- Research animals may be engineered to make them more susceptible to particular diseases, such as cancer, in order to gain a better basic understanding of the disease for the development of new therapies or in order to evaluate new medical therapies.
- Xenotransplant animals are being engineered so they can be used as sources for cells, tissues or organs that can be used for transplantation into humans.
- <u>Companion</u> animals that are modified to enrich or enhance their interaction with humans (i.e., hypoallergenic pets).
- <u>Disease resistant</u> animals may be used either for food use or biopharm applications. These animals have received modifications that make them resistant to common diseases, such as mastitis (a very painful infection of the udder) in dairy cows, or particularly deadly diseases, such as bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE).
- <u>Food use</u> animals have been engineered to provide healthier meat, such as pigs that contain healthy omega-3 fatty acids at levels comparable to those in fish.

How will GE animals be regulated? FDA regulates GE animals under the new animal drug provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA) and the agency must approve them before they are allowed on the market. Food and animal feed from GE animals will undergo FDA review before the food or feed can be marketed. The FFDCA defines a drug as "an article (other than food) intended to affect the structure or any function of the body of man or other animals." Therefore, the rDNA construct intended to change the struc-

ture or function of the body of the GE animal is a drug.

FDA may exercise "enforcement discretion" over some GE animals, based on their potential risk and on a case-by-case basis. This means that the agency may not require premarket approval for a low-risk animal. For example, the agency is not requiring premarket approval for GE lab animals used for research, and did not require approval of a GE aquarium fish that glows in the dark. FDA does not expect to exercise enforcement discretion for animal species traditionally consumed as food.

What's the difference between animal clones and GE animals? The animal clones that were the subject of FDA's risk assessment on animal cloning (released in January of 2008) are "just clones"—that is, they are copies of individual conventionally-bred animals, and do not contain any rDNA constructs. What can be confusing is that an animal clone can be genetically engineered (i.e., have an rDNA construct introduced into it), and a GE animal can be reproduced by cloning. Our draft guidance covers GE animals, irrespective of whether they were reproduced by cloning. It does not cover animal clones that do not contain an rDNA construct ("just clones").

Why is FDA regulating GE animals differently from animal clones? Clones are really just genetic copies of the animals from which they are produced. The purpose of the FDA risk assessment was to determine whether cloning posed any new risks to the health of animals and whether animal clones posed new food safety risks. The conclusion of that risk assessment was that there are no new risks associated with those animals, that food from cattle, swine, and goat clones, and the progeny of the clone of any species traditionally consumed as food was as safe to eat as that from conventionally bred animals, and that no new regulatory requirements are required beyond those that apply to other, conventionally-bred animals.

Source: Gustin, G. "Genetically altered meat won't be

labeled," *Spokesman Review*, September 19, 2008; "FDA Releases Draft Guidance on Regulation of Genetically Engineered Ani-

mals," September 18, 2008,

http://www.fda.gov/cvm/GEAnimals.htm.

Keywords: biotechnology, government.

Deportation and the Children Left Behind: A Challenge for Families and Communities

Recent years have brought increasingly aggressive enforcement of immigration law through worksite raids. Arrests of undocumented workers in the workplace increased from 500 in 2002 to 3,600 in 2006. These workers are often parents, who are deported while their children are left in the US.

The Urban Institute joined with La Raza to evaluate the effects of worksite immigration enforcement on the children of undocumented parents, studying three communities extensively targeted for worksite raids over the past year: Greeley, CO, Grand Island, NE, and New Bedford, MA. In each community, investigators met with employers, lawyers, religious leaders, social service providers, community leaders, and others to assess the immediate and long term impact of this abrupt separation from parents for the children of workers who are detained and/or deported.

The study showed that more than half of arrested adults had children in the US, most of whom were US citizens (born in the United States) under 10 years of age. Many arrestees had to leave the country before they could communicate with family members or with lawyers who could help them make arrangements for their children. Many arrested parents feared the children would be taken into custody if they divulged that they had children. Some primary caregivers were released at the end of the day, but many were held overnight or for several days.

The impact of a workplace raid extended throughout the community. Informal family and community networks stepped in to care for children in the wake of the arrests. Family incomes dropped when the working family member was arrested. Family members feared that if they went to state or private agencies for help, they and other family members may be arrested. Many hid in their homes for days or weeks.

School districts ensured that children were not dropped off to empty homes, but some children walked to homes with no adult. Some young children remained with a babysitter for weeks or months



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



and in some cases adolescents lived with other youth for extended time periods.

Families faced extended economic hardship when they had to pay substantial bonds to free family members from jail, or when they had to wait for weeks before they could appear before an immigration judge to establish their immigration status. Those caring for extra children whose parents were incarcerated were strained by the added stress and responsibility.

Children experienced feelings of abandonment, trauma, and mental health problems. Inconsistent child care and supervision made it even harder for the children to adjust. Family fears led to isolation from potential support networks.

Religious institutions were often sought out as "safe" havens to seek services, though church resources could not meet all of the demand. Despite outreach efforts by social service agencies, few families sought public assistance in any of the three sites.

Investigators concluded that the current system for immigration enforcement places undue hardship on children, most of whom are US citizens. Current procedures and programs are ineffective at providing support for these children, leaving overly stretched informal family and community networks to meet the need. The investigators recommend several ways for partners throughout the community to better protect children at this time of traumatic separation from parents:

- Enforcement officials should understand that many children are affected when immigrant adults are arrested. Detainees need access to counsel, telephones, and means to provide care for their children.
- **Schools** can be an important partner in providing a safe place to go and to ensure there is an adult for the children when they get home.
- Social service agencies should work with families on an ongoing basis to help them understand their rights to social services.
- Social services may be needed over several months as cases work their way through the legal system.
- Immigrant family members need an emergency plan, including care of children and ready access to documents that can secure the release of a family member.
- An information clearinghouse about immigration enforcement and its aftermath could establish a data base which can inform best practice in service delivery.

Source: Paying the Price: The impact of immigration

raids on America's children, 2007, www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=411566.

Keywords: children at risk, immigrants.

Health Issues for Idaho's Hispanic Youth

The recently released *Hispanic Profile Data Book* for Idaho 2007 shows significant health concerns for Idaho's Hispanic population, including a lower life expectancy. By the 15-19 year age span only 2.4 percent of non-Hispanic youth have died, compared to 16.8 percent of Hispanic young people.

Greater health risks to Idaho Hispanics start prenatally, with only 69 percent of Hispanic women receiving prenatal care, compared with 84 percent of non-Hispanic white women. Hispanic pregnant women are considerably less likely to have health insurance prior to the pregnancy (27.4% vs. 65.8%), contributing to this pattern.

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey is given to high school students in grades 9-12. Responses to this survey show behaviors that increase risk of injury at higher rates among Hispanic youth, including non-use of seat belts (17.1% for Hispanic vs. 8.4% for

non-Hispanic white youth) and driving under the influence of alcohol (21.4% for Hispanic vs.11.8% for non-Hispanic white youth). In addition, Hispanic youth are more likely to be victims of violence, including being in a physical fight (43.2% for Hispanic vs. 30.8% for non-Hispanic white youth), and being threatened with a weapon on school property (15.7% for Hispanic vs. 7.2% for non-Hispanic white youth).

Declining smoking rates are good news for the health of Hispanic youth which will have positive impacts for years to come. Marijuana use has also declined since 2003, but Hispanic youth report cocaine use at rates higher than their non-Hispanic white peers (12.8% vs. 7.6%).

Also of concern for long term health are findings that more Hispanic youth are overweight (12.6% versus 6.1% for non-Hispanic white youth). Perhaps contributing to the pattern, Hispanic youth report less milk consumption—12.5 percent of Hispanic versus 24.5 percent of non-Hispanic white youth drink three or more glasses of milk per day—rates with plenty of room for improvement for non-Hispanic and Hispanic young people alike. Hispanic youth also report more TV viewing—38 versus 19.7 percent watch three or more hours per school day—another indicator associated with inactivity and weight gain.

Thus, data for Idahoans show some substantial disparities in health outcomes and behaviors for Hispanic and non-Hispanic youth. Better access to health insurance for all is an important first step for equity in wellbeing for Idahoans—33.1 percent of Hispanic adults have no health care coverage, compared to 14.7 percent of non-Hispanic adults, compromising access to health care for themselves and their children.

However, changes in youth behaviors can also improve health outcomes. Positive youth development programs such as 4-H, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, and the YMCA have an excellent track record at improving health behaviors and lowering risk taking for youth. Extending access of such programs to Hispanic youth can help provide the supports youth and their families need to assure a healthy future.

Source: The Hispanic Profile Data Book for Idaho

2007, http://www2.state.id.us/icha.

Keywords: health, Hispanic.

Navigating the Economic Crisis

The current economic turmoil is frustrating and depressing. But anger, fear, and panic never pay when it comes to money. The key is to remain calm. So let's step back for a moment from headlines screaming "collapse" and "apocalypse" and assess what this crisis means to us.

Housing. Credit is going to be tight until banks can relax a bit. Only buyers with gilt-edged credit ratings and reliable income will have easy access to mortgages. So this is not the greatest time put your house on the market. On the other hand, if you have money stashed away and can come up with a hefty down payment, be on the lookout for a bargain that makes sense as an affordable home for the long term.

Your job. You should anticipate that the boss will get bad news about her budget. That means your pay raise will likely be postponed. Therefore, think twice about resources you manage. Start thinking about what expenses you could reduce.

Home Equity. If you've been thinking that equity in your home is your cushion against financial setbacks, think again. Don't count on a home-equity loan for extra cash to cushion you. Banks are nervous.

Save for a rainy day. The likelihood of a rainy day has increased. The outlook for the economy is not great. Next year may bring additional bad news, including further weakness and more layoffs. Try to add to your rainy-day fund. If you don't have one, start one. A third of Americans have no emergency savings, according to the National Foundation for Credit Counseling, and 57 percent of those who have a fund don't have enough in it. It takes an average 4.5 months to find a job. So a good rule of thumb is that you should have three to six months of living expenses in the bank.

Household expenses. Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson remarked that this is a "humbling time" for Americans. The American way of life is under pressure. Be practical and efficient with your personal and household expenses.



Family Economics

Marilyn Bischoff
Extension Family Economics Specialist
Family and Consumer Sciences
University of Idaho—Boise
322 E Front St., Suite 180
Boise, ID 83702-7364
mbischof@uidaho.edu



This is not a good time to waste money and fuel on a gas guzzler or a house bigger than you need. Things will probably get better, but they could get worse first.

Perspective. Let's keep all this in perspective. The Great Depression was far worse than today's situation. Then, unemployment ranged as high as 40 percent, compared with 6 percent now. Interest rates are still low today. The economy is experiencing weak growth but not the full-blown contraction witnessed during the Depression. If today's crisis is well-managed, the damage can be contained.

After years of a wild, anything-goes free-market ride, new regulatory and financial models will emerge from the wreckage. Americans may use the crisis as an opportunity to set up a better financial system. Some tough love would be a good thing.

Source: Adapted: Beck, E., September 25, 2008.

Surviving a Financial Panic. *MSN Money*, retrieved 9/29/08 http://articles.moneycentral.msn.com/Investing/StockInvestingTrading/7-tips-surviving-a-financial-panic.aspx.

Keywords: financial management, savings.



You Can Cut Food Costs

According to a June 2008 poll by AARP, almost half of respondents aged 45+ believe that food prices are negatively impacting their budget. Over half said they have started using discount coupons at grocery stores and started buying generic grocery brand items, and one in five has started eating fewer meals.

Amid rising prices, there *are* ways consumers can trim food costs, yet eat well. Eating out occasionally, rather than regularly, can cut food costs and also yield health benefits. Food prepared at home is generally healthier, because the consumer can choose the foods and decide how it is prepared.

To save on groceries, shop regularly and with a list to reduce the need for extra trips to the store. Shop less frequently and use perishable foods within a few days. Beyond that, shoppers can fill in with canned or frozen foods prior to the next shopping trip. Shoppers who return to the store for one or two items rarely leave with just one or two items; extra items add extra costs. Making a shopping list that follows the general layout of the store can reduce the amount of time a shopper will spend retracing his or her steps and the temptation to pick up extra items along the way. Using a list that follows the store layout also can save time.

Whether a supermarket or grocery section, the least expensive items—seasonal fruits and vegetables, dairy products, grain products, and lean meats, poultry and fish—often are arranged

around the outer edges, or perimeter, of the store. Promotional items may be placed at the end of the aisles, but don't assume that such items are sale priced. More expensive processed foods are typically displayed in center aisles.

Processing adds to food cost and consumers often can realize a savings if they are willing to do some of the preparation themselves. For example, the cost for a block of cheese is typically less than the cost for the same amount of grated cheese. Investing in an inexpensive box grater can yield savings.

Packaging also will add to the cost. Breakfast cereal packaged in a waxed paper or cellophane bag often will be less expensive than similar products offered in a gimmicky box. Shelf placement can be an indicator of price. The most expensive items often will be within easy reach, in the shoulder-to-knee range. Less expensive items often are placed on a higher shelf that can be more difficult to reach or on a lower shelf where such products may be overlooked.

Checking the cost-per-serving or unit price posted on the edge of the store shelf where the product is displayed is recommended. To save money, choose the lowest cost per serving. For a single or small family, buying a supersized package of a seldom-used item may not yield a savings, though. Buy realistic quantities so as not to waste food, time, and money.

Additional shopping and money-saving tips:

- Choose seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables offered at a lower price when supplies are abundant; also, shop at a local farmers' market for locally grown foods that are fresh, and comparable in price—or less expensive.
- Use perishable foods within two to three days, or freeze for future meals.
- Check use-by dates before buying to ensure fresh products and flavor and curb waste.
- Plan leftovers. When cooking, make a larger recipe that will yield extra servings that can be frozen for future meals when time is short.

- Compare costs for national brand products with the cost for a generic or store brand that may be produced at the same facility.
- Choose frozen fruit juice concentrates and reconstitute them as needed, rather than buying bottled versions that typically cost more.
- Keep a running list of prices for favorite items, and stock up during sales.
- Buy often-used items in bulk to save on packaging costs. If desired, measure out single servings of snacks and place them in reusable containers, rather than purchase more costly pre-packaged single servings or relying on vending machines.
- Look for reduced-price foods that will work for upcoming meals. Ground beef may, for example, be reduced in price, but will need to be cooked the same or next day or frozen for future meals.
- Ask for a rain check to buy sale items (that are sold out) later at the same low price.
- Use coupons to save—only after comparing prices. Coupons do not always guarantee a savings.
- Marinate and/or slow-cook in moist heat less tender (and usually less costly) cuts of meat for a savings—and a flavorful meal.
- Buy foods that provide the most grams of protein per dollar, such as bagged dried beans, lentils and peas, dry milk powder, canned dry beans, canned tuna, frozen dry beans, and peanut butter. These currently cost less than 10 cents for 6-8 grams of protein.
- Check recommended portions versus serving size. Trimming overly-generous portions can help reduce excess body weight—and food costs.
- Eat before shopping to reduce impulse purchases.

Over 28 million people used food stamps in April 2008—1.75 million more than the same time last year, according to the Food Research and Action Center. Although the participation is increasing, one

in three eligible individuals are still not receiving the benefit.

People of all ages with limited resources may be eligible for food assistance. Call a toll-free national number 800-221-5689. The United States Department of Agriculture Food Stamp Information line can link consumers with resources to buy foods for a healthy diet.

Source: Hid

Higgins, M., May 8, 2008. Kansas State Food Professional Offers Tips to Trim Food Costs, Kansas State University Press Release, retrieved 8/27/08 http://www.extension.org/pages/Kansas State Food Professional Offers Tips to Trim Food Costs; National Council on Aging Public Policy email update, July 25, 2008. Volume 2, Issue #14; Choi-Allum, L., June 2008. AARP Bulletin Survey on Rising Food Costs: Executive Summary, retrieved 8/27/08 http://www.aarp.org/research/economy/trends/bulletin_foodcosts. html.

Keywords: food costs, savings.

Save for Retirement

National Save for Retirement Week is scheduled from October 19-25, 2008. Research has shown that more than half of all workers in the US have less than \$25,000 in total savings. Even more startling is the fact that 41 percent of workers between the ages of 45 and 54 report the same amount. With longer life expectancies and rising costs, it's critical that Americans understand the importance of saving—now. In good economic times and bad, the advice below has proven sound.

Develop a retirement savings/investment plan; it makes weathering financial storms easier. From the outset, develop a savings/investment framework to guide future decisions. A well-planned strategy takes into account several important factors including goals, time horizon, tolerance for risk, amount of investable assets, and planned future contributions. An investment plan conceived in normal market conditions provides critical guidance in severe market conditions.

Know your risk tolerance. There is no such thing as risk-free investing, but knowing how much risk you are both willing and able to accept is a necessary step to build the portfolio that is right for you. It makes the difference between sensible investment decisions that provide long-term benefits and spur-of-the moment choices that can bring poor results. A risk tolerance test is available on a Rutgers University Extension website, http://njaes.rutgers.edu/Money/riskquiz.

Determining your appetite for risk involves measuring the potential impact of a real dollar loss on both your financial condition and psyche. In general, individuals planning for long-term goals should be willing to assume more risk in exchange for the possibility of greater rewards. However, their psychological makeup may not allow them to do so. It's unwise to wait until a drop in the value of your assets to determine your level of tolerance for risk.

Invest in a diversified portfolio of insured CDs, Treasuries, and Mutual Funds rather than individual stocks to mitigate risk. Investors should incorporate different asset classes and investment styles in their portfolio that do not tend to move together so that market swings in one part of their portfolio are offset in another part. Failing to diversify leaves individuals vulnerable to fluctuations in a particular security or sector, such as financial services. Also, investors should be mindful of not confusing mutual fund diversification with portfolio diversification. You may own multiple funds but find, on closer examination, that they are invested in similar industries and even the same individual securities.

The fundamental principle of investing is buy low and sell high. So why do so many investors get that backwards? The main reason is "performance chasing." People tend to invest in the asset class or investment style that has recently performed well. For example, funds flowing into mutual funds peaked just before the technology bubble burst in 2000 and reached a low point just before the market turned around in 2003. Someone who has a long-term investment strategy, but doesn't have the tenacity to stick with it has a tendency to buy high and sell low. They throw their strategy out the window in response to short-term changes in the market, investing tactically instead of strategically.

Admit mistakes. When investing in individual stocks, many professional and novice investors alike have difficulty admitting they have made a mistake by selling a stock at loss. Many want to hang on until they break even. Smart investors realize when they may never recoup their losses. Not every investment will increase in value. Sometimes, it is far better to take the loss and redeploy the assets toward a more promising investment.

Frequent trading can be costly. Trading too often cuts into investment returns more than anything else. A study by two professors at the University of California at Davis examined the stock portfolios of 64,615 individual investors at a large discount brokerage firm. They found that transaction costs decreased investor returns by 2.4 percent per year and that these investors underperformed the market by 1.8 percent per year. Again, the solution is a long-term buy-and-hold strategy, rather than an active trading approach.

Learn investing principles. Ignorance is costly. Enroll in the University of Idaho Extension *Retire Well* course (will be offered in Eastern Idaho and the Boise area during 2009). Attend the free *Smart Women, Smart Money* conference, http://www.smartwomensmartmoney.com. Review free financial advice on Morningstar.com and Bankrate.com. Use your library or bookstore to acquire investing books. Contact Marilyn for resources recommended by the UI *Retire Well* team.

Source:

Adapted: Chartered Financial Analyst Institute, September 25, 2008. CFA Institute Offers Top Five Facts When Investing in Turbulent Markets. Retrieved 9/26/08 http://www.cfainstitute.org/aboutus/press/rele

http://www.cfainstitute.org/aboutus/press/release/08releases/20080925_01.html; National

Save for Retirement website,

http://www.retirementweek.org/xp/plans/retire

mentweek/press.

Keywords: retirement, investing.

Family Economics Calendar

Calendar items listed on this website: www.agls.uidaho.edu/fcs/calendar.htm.