2021 Impact

To address persons with diabetes during the second year of the pandemic, Educator Julie Buck was part of a five-faculty university team of Family and Consumer Science educators who developed the Dining with Diabetes email challenge. This national program was piloted in May 2020 to 228 participants, then offered nationally in November 2020 to 380 participants. The program received the National Extension Association Family and Consumer Sciences Western Region Excellence in Multi State Collaboration Award, and a poster was presented at the National Health Outreach Conference in May 2022.

Educator Reed Findlay continued his work studying the thrips insect pest in alfalfa crops. He extended his research by studying the effects thrips feeding has on alfalfa quality. This will enable him to modify the economic threshold for this pest to include the possible effects on crude protein. He has presented preliminary results of this work at UI Forage Schools and at the regional Hay Symposium. This study is part of a team of field men, growers, specialists and educators in Blackfoot and Mud Lake. Findlay is also assisting UI agronomist Jared Spackman in studying the effects of liming on cereal crops. He also continues to assist in the study of forage cereal production. This study will investigate use of the various grains such as teff, wheat, barley and oats as forage crops and how best to grow them. Findlay has again partnered with other educators and specialists to determine how teff grass responds to herbicides. This data will eventually be used to develop a herbicide label for the crop. In the area of horticulture, Findlay has initiated apple grafting research to study the effect of bud placement on graft viability.

4-H in Bingham County

The Cooking Under Pressure class teaches participants how to safely use an electric pressure cooker and prepare a meal to enjoy. This program continues to be popular and was taught in-person at Skyline High School and screen-to-screen for Idaho State University Workforce Training. The class reached 125 youth and 13 adult participants.

The school pantry cook-off taught participants about food insecurity and pantry foods to prepare a meal from foods found in a pantry. This program was taught at Blackfoot High School and is their final project for each semester, reaching 117 youth in 2021.

On the Horizon

The UI Extension 4-H Think, Make, Create Lab trailer will be at the Bingham County Fair in August 2022. The opportunity to share STEM related activities to youth will broaden their 4-H experience. The trailer will also be taken to schools to share with youth during the 2022-23 school year.

Findlay will continue studying the viability and agronomics of forage crops as well as teff grass in Idaho. Future plans include working with area community gardens and horticultural demonstrations. UI Extension commodity schools such as forage, potato and cereal schools will be a priority as the main vehicle for educational efforts directed to agricultural producers. Farm management and succession planning educational activities are also planned for the coming year.