2021 Impact

Eat Smart Idaho provides nutrition and physical activity education for low-income Idahoans helping adults and families learn the basics of healthy eating, smart shopping, food safety, quick meal preparation, management of limited grocery dollars and increased levels of physical activity. In 2021, 95% of adult participants showed improvement in one or more diet quality indicators (eating fruits, vegetables, red and orange vegetables, dark green vegetables, drinking less regular soda, drinking less fruit punch, fruit drinks, sweet tea, or sports drinks, and cooking dinner at home) following participation in an Eat Smart Idaho class series, compared to practices before the series. A survey of adults participating in Eat Smart Idaho one-time classes found that 85% had positive intent to change or maintain positive behaviors related to diet quality and food resource management.

Well Connected Communities is a national well-being initiative of the Extension system in partnership with National 4-H Council and support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The goal is to ensure that lifelong health and well-being are within everyone’s reach. Since 2017, the program has been working to build healthy communities, listening and serving locally, combining the power of youth-adult voice and action, and addressing systemic health inequities.

Preserve@Home is an online course teaching food safety and food preservation. Twenty-six Preserve@Home participants reported intention to follow nine identified research-based safe food preservation practices.

The Extension Collaborative on Immunization Teaching and Engagement team engaged 1,547 Idahoans across 14 counties during a COVID-19 educational campaign. Although that includes indirect contacts, many of those interactions included one-on-one conversations. The project ended with many positive stories and meaningful, impactful interactions. The greatest success was everyone who felt comfortable asking questions and left with accurate information. UI Extension provided a safe, nonjudgmental space for people to address their concerns.

4-H in Payette County

The UI Extension, Payette County 4-H Youth Development program has continued to build a strong partnership with the Payette Public Library. Youth are being reached through 4-H Fridays; Outside the Box 4-H kits to deliver programming in expressive arts, Junior Master Gardener, and Skillet Creations (cooking); and the U and I Together family focus series. A mini grant from the Idaho Space Grant Consortium allowed a small group of youth to experiment with using Martian soil to grow produce while also learning more about technology and space exploration.

On the Horizon

A new peer-reviewed publication, Market Fresh in a SNAP, is in the process of being published and will include fresh, healthy recipes and resources to be used at farmers markets.