

# Helping Every Time People Eat!

Two messages are emphasized in all of UNL Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County's food programs — the importance of **nutrition** as well as **food safety**.

## The Great Taste of Good Nutrition

Eating a healthy diet helps promote good health and reduces risk for chronic diseases such as heart disease, certain types of cancer, diabetes, stroke and osteoporosis — the leading causes of death and disability among Americans.

Extension Educator Alice Henneman helps people select and prepare healthy, enjoyable foods. One of her programs this year was "Eat Smart: How to Fill Up, Not Out."



Alice Henneman presenting a free class "Healthy Cooking with Spices & Herbs" at BryanLGH Medical Center.



Displays at health fairs include food safety quizzes.

## Handling Food Safely

An estimated 76 million cases of foodborne disease occur each

year in the United States according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). On a yearly basis, foodborne diseases are related to an estimated: 325,000 hospitalizations, 5,000 deaths, \$3

**"Oh my gosh what a wonderful web site! You have no idea how much I NEEDED this information."**

—"Cook It Quick" e-newsletter subscriber

billion cost of hospitalizations, \$20–40 billion cost of lost productivity.

Extension is the lead agency in Lancaster County for educating consumers about food safety. Many consumers call the extension office with home food safety concerns.

Henneman, in partnership with the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, has developed several educational materials to promote food safety, including articles, posters, flyers and table tents.

## Blending It All Together

In food preparation, nutrition decisions and food safety proce-

dures go hand in hand. Extension blends nutrition, food safety and food preparation information in user-friendly ways.

Extension's Food Web site, [lancaster.unl.edu/food](http://lancaster.unl.edu/food), offers a variety of materials to help people select and prepare healthy food. The site received more than 650,000 hits last year.

"Food Reflections," an e-mail newsletter, is sent to more than 8,500 health professionals, educators and consumers. Articles are also archived on the Web site.

"Cook It Quick" is a section of the Web site with a monthly e-newsletter which has more than 6,600 subscribers.

**"You provide the most practical and easy-to-understand information I have found online. Thank you!"**

—"Food Reflections" e-newsletter subscriber

## Spotlight on Extending Program Outreach: Cooking with Spices & Herbs

By using multiple media formats and distribution channels, extension is able to extend the outreach of programs from hundreds of people to thousands.

Extension Educator Alice Henneman presented a free class "Healthy Cooking with Spices & Herbs" as part of BryanLGH Medical Center's Wellness series. 350 people attended the program. A radio program was also done on the topic.

The Lancaster County Nutrition Education Program incorporated materials into their lessons.

Program handouts were posted on extension's Food Web

site and have received a total of 12,297 hits. One Web user responded, "My husband is recuperating from triple bypass cardiac surgery. I am always looking for ideas to keep him on track nutritionally. Thank you for this series."

The PowerPoint slideshow was posted online for other nutrition educators to use in their programming. It has been downloaded 2,540 times.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) saw the materials and included them on a "Resource CD" sent to all 5 A Day coordinators nationwide.

## Limited-Income Residents Stay Healthy Through Nutrition Education Program

Lancaster County Nutrition Education Program (NEP) helps limited resource families learn to prepare nutritious and safe foods while stretching their food dollars.

In NEP, qualifying adults learn through small groups at agency or community sites, or individually through home visits, mail lessons or phone consultations.

This past year, the Lancaster County NEP staff taught 2,014 nutrition education lessons to 1,844 people who care for 6,845 family members.

NEP partners with more than 165 agencies, classrooms and coalitions and receives funding from the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) through USDA, the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program



Participants in a Nutrition Education Program class learn about the Food Guide Pyramid.

fants and Children (WIC) continues to be a primary partner.

New this year, NEP was able to provide classes in Arabic and Persian.

Program evaluations show graduates made positive changes in nutrition practices, food resource management and food safety.

"I've eaten a veggie at every meal and have added fruit to breakfast," one

participant reported. She almost always plans meals ahead of time as a result of the program and saves money by eating most meals at home.

**Research shows for every dollar invested in NEP programs, there is a projected health care cost savings of \$8.82.**

## Promoting Healthy and Safe Homes

In the past year, Extension Educator Lorene Bartos has disseminated information on home maintenance, indoor air quality, lead paint hazards, safety in the home, shopping smart and recycling through THE NEBLINE, extension's Web site, her weekly column in the "Lincoln Journal Star" and other outreach methods.

Bartos is a member of the advisory board for WasteCap of Lincoln. WasteCap promotes waste reduction and recycling by

providing local businesses technical assistance and recycling services. The training and education committee (of which Bartos is also part of) developed a technical guide, "Recycling 101: Train and Maintain."

More than 220 child care providers gain inservice hours by participating in three day-long Child Care Conferences organized by extension and other Lincoln agencies. The conferences help increase participants' knowledge and skills in the areas of child development and age related activities.



Extension Educator Lorene Bartos modeled a dress made from highway department scrap during WasteCap's Business R&R Event.

## Extension Builds Strong Families, Communities

Extension partners with a variety of community agencies to strengthen families and communities.

This year, Parents Forever classes, part of the Lancaster County Coalition to assist Children of Parents Experiencing Divorce (COPEd), taught 75 divorcing parents how children might be affected by divorce. According to one participant, "These programs have taught us some positive techniques to strengthen our family, thank you."

Through Real Colors Matrixx workshops conducted by extension staff, more than 270 people gained a better understanding of people and personalities, and how to communicate better.

Extension promotes character education of youth and adults with Character Counts! and other character education programs.

The Neighbors Working Together (NWT) Project — one of four projects in the Community Outreach Partnership Center's (COPC) program — collaborates with other partners such as the Community Learning Centers (CLC) and Neighborhoods, Inc. to help develop leadership through trainings and other methods.

## Family and Community Education Clubs



FCE members collected 160 pounds of food for the Food Bank at this year's Achievement Night.

Family and Community Education (FCE) clubs are an educational, social and community-oriented program designed to meet the needs and interests of Nebraska homemakers. FCE members help strengthen communities and families through education, leadership and action. Community service continues to be a major emphasis. FCE awards an annual scholarship to a student majoring in Family & Consumer Science or a health occupation.

To become involved in FCE, contact a current member or the extension office at 441-7180.



A Community Outreach Partnership Center meeting for community leaders.