

Mealtime Inspirations provides new ideas to save time and money

AT A GLANCE

Cooking at home is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. Mealtime Inspirations provides new inspiration for cooking at home.

The Situation

Meals that are prepared at home, instead of eating out or having preprepared meals, tend to be more nutritious and can lead to an overall healthier lifestyle. These home cooked meals typically have more nutritious ingredients (such as olive oil, whole grains, fruits and vegetables). Home cooked meals also tend to have fewer calories, fat and added sugar.

Despite the health benefits of home cooked meals, the proportion of meals made at home is declining, with lack of time as one of the main deterrents to home cooking. Individuals need new ways to save time in the kitchen while still reaping the benefits of a home-cooked meal.

Our Response

Mealtime Inspirations is a program where educators present various ideas for meals, including using new cooking gadgets and new recipes. In November 2019, this presentation was given in Jefferson and Franklin counties. The program included the following presentations:

- Using an electric pressure cooker
- Making salad/salad dressing



Laura Sant teaching how to make a Mediterranean-style chicken dish. Photo credit by Julie Buck.

- Mediterranean style food/recipe
- Making parmesan vegetables
- Making pear crisp

Participants were asked questions throughout the presentation, including questions before and after the presentations, to assess changes in knowledge and potential behavior changes.

Program Outcomes

Jefferson County had 13 participants and Franklin county had 11 participants. Participants were asked both knowledge-based and behavior-based questions. The tables show changes in behavior and knowledge, using questions before and after each presentation.

Table 1. Change in knowledge. Percentage that answered questions correctly before and after the presentation.

Knowledge Question	Before	After
What type of fat is used in a Mediterranean diet? (before n=21, after n=19)	86%	100%
How much water is added to inner pot of electric pressure cooker? (before n=10, after n=9)	40%	100%
What does natural release mean? (n=9)	56%	89%
What nutrient are oats an excellent source of? (n=12)	33%	92%

Participants increased their knowledge in various topics including:

- Type of healthy fat used in a Mediterranean type diet
- How to safely and properly use an electric pressure cooker
- Nutritional benefits of oats

Participants also indicated intentions to make behavior changes by:

- Making salad dressing at home
- Eating healthier foods from a Mediterranean diet

Overall, the goal of Mealtime Inspirations is to help families cook more, have better organization and improve financial planning. At the end of the presentation all participants agreed that they would be using

ideas and recipes from the presentation. Participants indicated that these ideas would help them save time and money. Since time is one of the main factors preventing people from cooking at home, meal ideas that can help save time are important.

Table 2. Change in intended behavior. Scores based on a five-point Likert scale, with one being strongly disagree and five being strongly agree.

Behavior Question	Before	After	Percentage who agree or strongly agree
Will use one or more of the recipes to save time in the future (n=19)	N/A	4.84	100%
Will use one or more of the recipes to save money in the future (n=19)	N/A	4.58	100%
Will make (have made) own salad dressing (n=20)	2.28	4.22	95%
Will eat (have eaten) more foods that fit into a Mediterranean diet (n=20)	2.31	4.21	90%

The Future

This program is successful in helping participants gain knowledge and plan to change behaviors. We will continue to provide this as an exciting and educational opportunity to help members of the community live a healthier life.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Laura Foist, Extension Educator • University of Idaho Extension, Bannock County • 208-236-7310 • laurafoist@uidaho.edu
Leslee Blanch, Associate Extension Educator • University of Idaho Extension, Bonneville County • 208-529-1390 • lblanch@uidaho.edu
Julie Buck, Extension Educator • University of Idaho Extension, Bingham County • 208-785-8060 • jhbuck@uidaho.edu
Lorie Dye, Extension Educator • University of Idaho Extension, Jefferson County • 208-745-6685 • ldye@uidaho.edu
Lance Hansen, Extension Educator • University of Idaho Extension, Madison County • 208-356-3191 • lancehansen@uidaho.edu
Katie Hoffman, Extension Educator • University of Idaho Extension, Lemhi County • 208-756-2815 • khoffman@uidaho.edu
Laura Sant, Extension Educator • University of Idaho Extension, Franklin County • 208-852-1097 • lsant@uidaho.edu

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