

IMPACT

University of Idaho
Extension

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A Recipe For Success

The Situation

Blend together County 4-H Program Coordinators and Extension Educators from District III Cooperative Extension. Then stir in youth and adults, for a mixture of education about healthy eating and 4-H curriculum. This recipe for 4-H Cooking Camp included plenty of cooking, eating, crafts and fun and was developed to provide more education about 4-H Family and Consumer Sciences foods projects curriculum.



Three generations of cooks show off their decorated aprons after participating in the Blaine County 4-H Cooking Camp.

Our Response

4-H Cooking Camps were held in the spring of 2007 in Blaine and Gooding Counties. These activities were designed by Extension Educators Donna R. Gillespie and Rhea Lanting, Blaine County 4-H Program Coordinator Kathi Kimball, and Gooding County 4-H Program Coordinator Marie Baucum, to introduce 4-H cooking curriculum in their counties, and to encourage more participation in foods projects.

The 4-H Cooking Camp consisted of an introduction to “MyPyramid” and the importance of healthy eating and exercise. Basic baking terms, equipment, and food safety were discussed, and then a morning snack was prepared. Five different foods projects were reviewed, lunch was prepared and then for exercise after eating everyone went for a walk. After the walk, participants learned how to measure ingredients and bake and evaluate cookies. Frozen bread dough sculptures were the last item prepared. Participants also scrap booked folders full of informational handouts, and decorated aprons or chef hats.

The foods curriculum and activities completed included Mexican layered dip and fruit kabobs from “Tricks For Treats,” microwave pizza from “Microwave Magic Level A,” chocolate chip cookies from “North Dakota State University Baking 1,” and frozen bread dough bears from “Fun With Frozen Bread Dough.”



Educator Lanting helps participants assemble their fruit kabobs for a quick and healthy morning snack.

Program Outcomes

The majority of the participants attending each camp was from 9-11 years of age and included 4-H and non-4-H members. Most had not completed foods 4-H projects before and had limited knowledge of the curricula available. After reviewing the four curriculum used at the camp, everyone agreed that the variety of activities available was much more than they first thought.

Evaluations indicated that all the youth and adults learned about healthy eating, developed new cooking skills, and would be more careful about safely handling food. Non-4-H members from Blaine County decided to enroll in a 4-H foods project, and most of the youth also indicated they would encourage their family to enjoy healthier meals.

Other comments from the young cooks included, "I loved seeing my friends and making new ones." "It was very fun, hopefully I may enroll for a 4-H project." and "I loved how we went on a walk and learned to cook a few things!" It was also apparent that the youth really enjoyed decorating an apron or hat to take home and assembling a scrapbook of completed activities and recipes.

Other important information gathered from evaluations showed hands on activities were the favorites. When asked what they liked most about the camp they responded:

- Mixing and eating the cookies
- Cooking and eating
- Making the dough bears
- Planning meals
- Exercising
- Decorating hats and folders

Future Plans: Future Cooking Camps will be offered during the fall of 2007 in District III. One goal for future 4-H Cooking Camps is to encourage an increase in the number of Family and Consumer Sciences and miscellaneous projects completed at local fairs. Another important goal is to educate youth and their families about healthy eating, exercise, and avoiding childhood obesity.



Gooding County 4-H Cooking Camp participants learned about healthy eating, exercise and decorated their own chef's hats.

For More Information

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