HEALTH/NUTRITION—Healthy Diabetes Plate Web site makes meal-planning easy

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IDAHOANS AT RISK FOR DIABETES or the estimated 88,000 Idaho adults already diagnosed with it can use a new University of Idaho Extension Web site, to plan meals that will help them keep their blood sugar in line—www.extension.uidaho.edu/diabetesplate.

Developed by UI Extension Nutrition Specialist Martha Raidl, Boise, the graphic- and video-rich Healthy Diabetes Plate Web site advises users on which foods to select from five basic groups when dining in or out. It also compares appropriate portion sizes to familiar objects, like a fist, checkbook, computer mouse, or deck of cards. Next, it shows users how to plan their own meals by clicking on recommended food items and watching graphics of properly sized portions pop onto the image of a 9-inch plate. Shopping tips videotaped in an Idaho store offer more help.

“It’s so accessible,” says Marjorie Rich, Boise-based coordinator of Central District Health Department’s Diabetes Prevention and Control Program and a site contributor. “You can read it, you can hear it, and you can interact with it.”

A visual approach to meal planning. Based on the Idaho Plate Method—a visual approach to diabetes meal-planning that originated in Sweden and was modified in the 1990s by a group of Idaho dietitians—the method works so well that 85 to 99% of Raidl’s adult students were able to use it correctly . . . and that was before she put it online.

Accustomed to teaching 30-person classes, Raidl says the Web site allows worldwide impact. Indeed, after she presented it in concept form at International Diabetes Conferences in Prague and Berlin, excited participants told her it was “so easy” they would adapt it. And when she rolled it out at the Diabetes Alliance of Idaho’s spring 2009 meeting in Boise, medical professionals offered to bring it to their patients’ attention.

St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center in Boise and Holy Rosary Medical Center in Ontario, Ore., are already using components of the Web site in their diabetes classes. “It’s the basic principles of how to eat correctly when you have diabetes—and, actually, it’s the way we should all eat,” says Catherine Prinzling, St. Al’s clinical nurse specialist.

Raidl anticipates a Spanish-language version by 2011.

Food-preservation calls light up phone lines

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UI EXTENSION EDUCATORS, staff, and volunteers taught 149 food-safety workshops and fielded more than 7,500 food-safety calls from consumers during federal fiscal year 2009. “I don’t remember a year with so many people preserving food,” says Beverly Healy, Ada County Extension educator. Some clients were novices, unfamiliar with the canner they’d bought at a yard sale or inherited from Grandma.

With financial pressures heating up interest in home gardening, 63 UI Extension clients were hungry enough for up-to-date food-preservation techniques that they signed up for a six-session online course, called Preserve@Home, led by UI Extension Educator Carol Hampton of Boundary County.

Another 111 UI Extension clients statewide completed certification, or recertification, as volunteer Food Safety Advisors.

In Ada County alone, Healy and Program Assistant Alexis Woodbury reported 1,726 food safety telephone consultations. A survey of callers found that 97% planned to use the advice they had received, and a survey of workshop participants revealed that the percentage using up-to-date, tested recipes had climbed from 28% to 98%.
EFNEP helps limited-resource families stretch food dollars

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IN 2009, UI Extension’s Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), which has reached more than 15,000 southeastern and southwestern Idahoans, celebrated its 40th anniversary of federal funding.

Known for “reaching the hard to reach and teaching the hard to teach,” EFNEP helps limited-resource families acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and changed behavior necessary to improve their diets.

In homes or group settings, EFNEP nutrition advisors teach low-income families with children how to plan and prepare easy, nutritious, and low-cost meals; save money at the grocery store; and store food safely. They’ve even delivered their instruction to 1,382 Idaho prisoners.

Veteran EFNEP nutrition advisor Emma Kramer says families she visits are adopting healthier eating and exercise habits and saving $15 to $30 a week doing it.

Among this year’s graduates alone, UI Extension Educator Linda Gossett says 97% showed improvement in nutrition practices and 55% increased their exercise levels.

EXPLORE CALS WEBS

www.extension.uidaho.edu/youthfamilyhealth.asp

FROM THE URL ABOVE, FOLLOW THE FAMILY & CONSUMER ISSUES/FOOD AND NUTRITION LINKS TO LOTS OF HELP WITH CANNING, NUTRITION, AND FOOD SAFETY.

IN DEVELOPING AND DELIVERING innovative research and extension programs, University of Idaho scientists in Twin Falls address locally identified needs and seek collaborative relationships with agencies, groups, and individuals.

MAJOR PROGRAMS

Agricultural economics and agribusiness—Farm mgmt.; livestock marketing; management-intensive grazing; Beginning Farmer-Rancher

Beef—Beef cattle production, management; breeding, genetics, reproduction; Beef Quality Assurance

Dairy—Milk quality and milking management; Spanish and English worker training; dairy production management

Entomology—Insect behavior, ecology; identification; integrated pest management; encouraging beneficial insects

Forages—Forage management/utilization; alfalfa and grass forage quality; intensive pasture grazing systems; nutrient management planning; grazing’s environmental effect

Natural resources—Range, pasture, and riparian management; public rangeland issues; coordinated resource management; range improvements and restoration

Plant diseases—Field crops: Alfalfa, dry beans, barley, and corn; chemical, biological, and integrated disease management; disease diagnosis. Sugar beets: Production and disease control; Rhizomania, Rhizoctonia, powdery mildew, curly top, and seedling diseases; chemical, biological, and integrated disease management; variety testing

Potatoes—Potato storage management; seed potato quality and performance; potato production management

Soils—Nutrient movement through soil, water, and plants; animal waste applications to potatoes, sugar beets, corn; biofuel byproducts as nutrient sources; managing nutrients in certified organic systems

Water management—Surface, sprinkler, drip, and precision irrigation systems; water use by crops; impacts of irrigation management on water quality; irrigation management with limited water; canal seepage losses; automated irrigated systems for precision farming

Weeds—Integrated weed management, competition, and weed biology in small-grain cereals and sugar beets; chemical and non-chemical weed management; identification

COLLABORATORS

Federal—USDA Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center

State—Idaho’s Department of Agriculture; barley Commission; Beef Council; Cattle Association; Hay and Forage Assn.; Farm Bureau; Sugar Beet Growers Assn.; Potato Commission; Wheat Commission

Also—Livestock Marketing Information Center; Center for Farm Financial Management; Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides; Boise State University; College of Southern Idaho; Idaho State University; private industry

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