



EDUCATING THE PUBLIC ON SAFE FOOD PRACTICES

13,217

Michigan adults and youth participated in Michigan State University (MSU) Extension food safety education programming.

8,811

consumers attended online Home Food Preservation sessions.

21,477

children were served meals or snacks by childcare providers trained by the Safe Food = Healthy Kids curriculum.

PRIORITY

A R E A S

- Encouraging safe food practices
- Reducing the risk of foodborne illness
- Teaching vendors, handlers and consumers about food safety
- Educating consumers on proper, evidence-based home food preservation methods
- Creating safer practices at food pantries with proper storage methods for bulk food distribution

To support MSU Extension's food safety and preservation programming, contact Cheryl Eschbach at cheryl@msu.edu.

IMPACTS

As a result of MSU Extension's food safety and food preservation programming, adults learned how to reduce their risk of illness when preparing food and to preserve food safely, childcare providers learned how to reduce foodborne illnesses in the children they care for, and food service managers, workers and volunteers across the state learned how to protect their customers' health and sell food products safely and legally. After participating in MSU Extension's food safety programming:



86%

of consumers who attended Home Food Preservation classes reported feeling confident or very confident in their ability to find research-based recipes.



69%

of childcare providers attending Safe Food = Healthy Kids classes now plan to check food temperature with a calibrated food thermometer.



85%

of food pantry volunteers who attended Pantry Food Safety: It's Your Job! programming reported they are very confident in their handwashing and personal hygiene knowledge, as a result of the class.

“It has helped me get through this pandemic by being able to connect with others that love canning.”

• Participant in MSU Extension's home food preservation programming

canr.msu.edu/safe_food_water
canr.msu.edu/food_preservation

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SAFELY PRESERVING FOOD AT HOME

Home food preservation continues to grow in popularity across the nation as evidenced by the lack of canning equipment and supplies available for purchase in 2020. But improperly preserved foods – whether canned, frozen or dehydrated – can potentially be contaminated. Through online programming, MSU Extension provides evidence-based information on proper food preservation methods and approved recipes to people across Michigan.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, MSU Extension professionals pivoted quickly to shift all programming to a virtual space. Interest in online food preservation courses exploded, and more than 10,000 people registered for these online classes between June and December 2020. Home Food Preservation programming was offered in a live, online format as well as an online, self-paced course in the Desire2Learn platform. Overall, MSU Extension educated 8,811 consumers in the live weekly classes and 302 via the self-paced online course. Participants included residents of all 83 Michigan counties, as well as people across the United States and internationally. Community partners have been an integral piece of the program’s success in outreach.



KEEPING FOOD SAFE TO KEEP KIDS HEALTHY

MSU Extension delivers Safe Food = Healthy Kids (SFHK), an interactive food safety workshop for childcare providers. Educational topics include cleaning and sanitizing; cooking, cooling and storing food; identifying common allergens and maintaining good personal hygiene. SFHK counts toward annual required training hours for licensed childcare providers and has been approved by the Michigan Great Start to Quality rating and improvement

system for providers. In 2020, SFHK educated 958 childcare providers, who reported preparing and serving meals for over 21,000 Michigan children.

ENCOURAGING ENTREPRENEURS THROUGH THE COTTAGE FOOD LAW



Social media graphics from the Think Food Safety campaign.

MSU Extension offers an online workshop educating entrepreneurs on the Michigan Cottage Food Law. The workshop combines the business and food safety aspects of preparing and selling cottage foods safely and successfully. Cottage Food Law workshops are taught jointly by MSU Extension food safety and MSU Product Center educators. In 2020, MSU Extension delivered online Cottage Food Law training to 605 entrepreneurs.

Throughout 2020, MSU Extension food safety educators also worked on the “Think Food Safety” marketing campaign, funded through a Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) grant. The campaign’s goal is to educate the public on unlicensed, illegal food sales, which can put the community at risk of foodborne illness. The Think Food Safety campaign, which initially ran from April to September 2020, used social media outreach to share food safety messages on Facebook and Instagram. The campaign resulted in 815,228 impressions, 10,394 engagements and 108 posts. Additional Think Food Safety efforts will continue in 2021 through a new MDARD grant that focuses on food sales at farmers markets.

To learn more, follow Think Food Safety on Facebook at facebook.com/thinkfoodsafetyymi and Instagram at instagram.com/thinkfoodsafetyymi.



PROMOTING FOOD SAFETY: FROM FOOD SERVICE WORKERS TO PANTRY VOLUNTEERS

Food safety education is important for everyone to keep our communities safe. Pantry Food Safety: It's Your Job! is a new program designed to teach safe food practices to volunteers at food pantries or food banks who provide food to a high-risk population. Through online education, 416 volunteers were trained in pantry food safety in 2020.

Also available online for consumers in 2020 were food safety Q&A sessions hosted by MSU Extension experts, and programs such as Investigating Food With Science. Overall, this programming reached almost 1,000 adult and youth participants. Beyond virtual offerings, MSU Extension food safety experts also answered over 200 consumer calls in 2020 via its Food Safety Hotline on issues ranging from preserving food correctly to safe food handling after grocery shopping.

MSU Extension also offers ServSafe Manager Certification training. ServSafe is a nationally accredited certificate course that teaches food service workers how to prevent foodborne illness as well as how to clean and sanitize correctly. Currently, ServSafe is unavailable virtually; however, in the first few months of 2020, prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, MSU Extension certified 266 food service managers via in-person trainings.

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