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Weston County Food Safety and Nutrition Educator receives UW Extension's highest honor

Whether handing out recipes and food samples at farmers markets, teaching menu planning and how to read a nutrition label or team teaching food safety practices with the local health inspector, Vicki Hayman, Weston County nutrition and food safety educator for the northeast area of the state, engages with people to help them improve their lives.

Hayman was awarded the Jim DeBree Excellence in Extension Award – UW Extension's highest honor – during extension's annual conference in Laramie in December.

As a member of extension's Healthy Eating Focus team, Hayman teaches food preparation skills; Dining with Diabetes and other Chronic Diseases; and the Real Food program, all with hands-on learning and resources to ensure healthy changes last after the end of class.

"Vicki includes innovative approaches and multiple teaching styles to expand her audience and increase program impacts," said nominator Denise Smith, nutrition and food safety educator in Niobrara County.

Audiences can open a newspaper, turn on the radio or catch a podcast, blog or Pinterest post for new ideas and Hayman's take on eating for health, fitness and enjoyment.

She prepares a biweekly column for the Weston County Gazette (Upton), The Sundance Times (Sundance) and the High Plains Sentinel (Wright). She submits a monthly column for the Newsletter Journal in Newcastle and articles for the quarterly Backyards and Barnyards magazine for small-acreage landowners.

Publications and curricula co-developed or authored by Hayman include Cooking It Up! Diabetes-Healthy Recipes Everyone Will Love, Cooking It Up! Friendly One-Pot Meals from Your Pressure Cooker, the Real Food curriculum, Calcium Science Investigation (CSI) curriculum, and the Wyoming 4-H Fabric and Fashion Manual.

Hayman promotes interaction and cooperation among agencies and organizations through a variety of roles, said Smith. These include adviser, coalition member, facilitator and liaison.

The Jim DeBree Award is named in honor of the retired Wyoming extension administrator and given each year to an extension employee who demonstrates a high level of professionalism, performance and leadership within their program areas and communities.

Hayman joined UW Extension in 1997 and is based in Newcastle.

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