



IMPACT 2025

Through Extension programs across the nation, Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Educators provide a multitude of Educational opportunities to meet the needs of diverse audiences.

Food Safety

Food safety and preservation programs have had a widespread impact, educating thousands of people through both in-person and virtual initiatives.

In **Arkansas**, 174 food preservation classes reached 1,331 participants, with 97% of 1,082 surveyed reporting they learned about processing techniques, headspace, and verified recipes. Meanwhile, in **Colorado**, food producers are required to complete a health department or CSU Extension food safety course under the Colorado Cottage Food Act. This program has already benefited over 2,100 people.

Georgia's Laurens County FACS Agent led seven food preservation seminars, educating a diverse group of 4-H high school students, farmers, extension program assistants, and adults, totaling 184 participants. In **Illinois**, food preservation education reached approximately 2,000 people through 203 courses focused on canning, freezing, dehydrating, and fermenting. Survey results showed that 87.7% of participants gained valuable information, and 94.4% planned to share what they learned.

In **Idaho**, the *Meaningful Marketplace Podcast*, hosted by the University of Idaho, showcased nine Idaho-based food entrepreneurs in 2024, connecting them to the USDA's Northwest and Rocky Mountain Regional Food Business Center. The podcast saw a total virtual participation of 1,100 listeners. **Indiana** focused on *ServSafe* training, with 1,497 adult and adolescent participants. Following training, 60% expressed interest in management or food handler certification, and 75% of managers passed their certification exams.



Iowa's Preserve the Taste of Summer

At **Iowa** State University, the *Preserve the Taste of Summer* program strengthened food safety and canning knowledge for 538 participants in 2024, achieving an impressive 98% satisfaction rate. In **Kentucky**, two food safety initiatives helped 26 people learn to cook with cast iron through hands-on workshops. The Kentucky Family & Consumer Science Extension also trained 9,513 participants in home-based microprocessing and food preservation workshops, ensuring they had the knowledge and skills needed for safe food handling.

Michigan saw success with the *Safe Food, Healthy Kids* initiative, which trained childcare workers in food safety and helped prevent foodborne illness among children. Over 10,500 children were impacted, with 84% learning about proper timing and temperature management. The state also saw a rise in cottage food entrepreneurs, supported by a specialized food safety program that reached 1,724 people.



It is so easy making freezer jam - I will definitely be doing this at home! - Georgia Participant



In **Mississippi**, food safety is a priority for both public health and businesses. Of the 326 people who completed food safety training, the average passing score was 80%. MSU Extension aims to be a trusted food safety resource, offering the *Tummy Safe* program to meet Mississippi Department of Health Food Safety Manager requirements. Online enrollment reached 479, with two in-person courses offered. Additionally, 154 providers used the training for contact hours, and 325 participants completed the certification exam.

Montana's Park County ensured food safety in the service industry by training 24 food workers through a 4-hour *ServSafe Food Handler* course in 2024. Meanwhile, in **New Hampshire**, the *SAFE for Food Pantries* program trained 231 participants in food donation safety, expiration date guidelines, and allergy cross-contact. As a result, 34% of participating pantries improved their food handling practices.

New Mexico focused on food preservation education, reaching 600 people with a series on local food products and processes. A remarkable 100% of survey respondents reported increased confidence in their food preservation skills. In **North Dakota**, healthy food safety habits have the potential to save millions in healthcare costs. Among participants, 53% reported following safe canning guidelines, 47% increased their fruit and vegetable intake, and 56% taught someone else about gardening.

In **Ohio**, three major food safety initiatives helped 4,043 participants improve their knowledge, with a 94% increase from pre-test to post-test. *ServSafe* management training covered food temperature, cleaning, and sanitization, with 98% of participants reporting they learned something new, 96% planning to apply their knowledge, and 92% feeling confident they could implement recommended changes.

Oklahoma had 1,756 participants in home food preservation programs, with surveys showing that 36% more adults and 33% more children planned to use safe and effective food preservation methods. In **Oregon**, Extension specialists at the *Indigenous Food Fair* assessed traditional food preservation submissions, helping exhibitors improve food quality and safety by incorporating tested recipes.

Raising kids, Eating right, Spending smart



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My class of high school boys meticulously followed every step. When checking the headspace, they knelt down commenting, 'just a bit more,' or 'oh man you went over, ask how to fix it.'
They were proud to learn something new. - Oklahoma Home Food Preservation



In **Texas**, *AgriLife Extension's Food Safety Education Program* provided training for approximately 8,000 food service managers and staff, supporting a food industry generating \$213 million annually. **Utah** focused on hands-on food preservation education, hosting two sessions with 110 culinary students. Of those who participated, 96% reported feeling more confident in-home food preservation. Additionally, eight Master Food Preservers participated in pre- and post-tests, improving their average scores from 57% to 87% through hands-on lessons.

Finally, **Virginia** reached 1,638 people through food safety programs and technical support while also conducting 214 pressure canner dial gauge checks to ensure safe food preservation practices.

Across the country, these programs—both in-person and virtual—are equipping individuals, families, and businesses with the skills needed to preserve food safely, prevent foodborne illnesses, and support local food systems. From podcasts to hands-on workshops and online certification programs, food safety education continues to make a meaningful impact in communities nationwide.

This report was compiled by Joni Phelps, University of Kentucky, Extension, Public Affairs Committee members, Dylan Gentry, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension and Christine Zellers, NEAFCS Vice President Public Affairs. For more information, email zellers@njaes.rutgers.edu.