



## Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
FOND DU LAC COUNTY



# Healthy Choices, Healthy Lives



FoodWise is federally funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). We advance healthy eating habits, active lifestyles and healthy community environments for Wisconsin residents with limited incomes through nutrition education at the individual, community and systems levels.

## The Challenge

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the food security of Fond du Lac County residents due to income and job loss, as well as significant changes in local, regional, and national food systems. Based on increases in Fond du Lac County residents participating in FoodShare and federal Pandemic EBT benefits, we see a greater need for members of our community in accessing food that is healthy, safe, and affordable. FoodWise educators support our community by providing education on how families can stretch their food dollars in these difficult times and continue to put healthy meals on the table in their homes.

**Fond du Lac County** has seen a **17% increase in Food Share participation** (including adults and children) from prior to the pandemic.



*Based on comparison of FoodShare participation in February, 2020 and September, 2020. Data from Wisconsin Department of Health & Human Services.*

## Community IMPACTS

- Developed a social media series called “Tasty Tuesdays.” This series includes a weekly video featuring a local Nutrition Educator and a healthy recipe.
- Created a food resource hub to efficiently share local food pantry and hot meal program updates during COVID-19.  
<https://fonddulac.extension.wisc.edu/fond-du-lac-county-food-resources-during-covid-19/>
- Developed a newsletter series called “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” to share resources with senior populations during COVID-19.
- Developed virtual classes on food safety, food budgeting, and MyPlate/nutrition, for both youth and adults, to teach at a variety of partner agency sites during COVID-19.
- The Food Providers Group, led by Miller, shared weekly national and state updates and resources with local food pantries and farmers markets to help support staff during changes related to COVID-19. Miller coordinated the county’s first drive-thru food distribution event.



## ACHIEVING MORE TOGETHER

UW-Madison Division of Extension works alongside the people of Wisconsin to deliver practical educational programs where people live and work – on the farm, in schools and throughout urban and rural communities. In Fond du Lac County, FoodWise partners with 25 community agencies, such as ADVOCAP Head Start, elementary schools, senior housing sites, Boys and Girls Club, Bright Futures of Wisconsin, ARC Community Services, etc. to help make the healthy choice the easy choice in our communities.



# Cooking Matters Pilot Project

Fond du Lac/Sheboygan FoodWise was selected to pilot test Cooking Matters, a national curriculum developed to increase access to nutrition and food skills education for low-income families and contains shorter, more flexible, and family friendly lessons. Each lesson provides the opportunity to participate in hands-on cooking activities with parents and children.



**“Thank you for the food to feed my family. I can now make this at home. I never thought about making a healthy version of this recipe.” - Youth for Christ Participant**

FoodWise partnered with Head Start and Youth for Christ Campus Life to deliver cooking classes. During the lessons, parents learned about meal planning, how to make healthy, homemade snacks, and how to save time preparing in the kitchen. Parents and children cooked a healthy snack and one meal or side dish. At the end of each lesson, families were able to take home the needed groceries to prepare the recipes at home.

69% of participants stated they will use a skill they learned in the class. The class was expanded to be at the Fondy Food Pantry.

# Supporting Virtual Learners

The Fond du Lac/Sheboygan FoodWise team developed a variety of health and nutrition resources to support Head Start and elementary school teachers during in-classroom and/or at-home virtual education during the pandemic. This includes:

- Color Me Healthy Teacher’s Toolkit: each toolkit includes an interactive video lesson featuring local staff, as well as parent-take home materials and taste test activities to complement the video topic.
- Read for Health Take-Home Lessons: each lesson includes an online book read, discussion questions, activity ideas, a healthy recipe, and parent take home materials.
- Bitmoji Classroom: an interactive resource with clickable sections for students to learn more about the topic. There are 8 Bitmojis, each with 6 sections based on health and nutrition topics (physical activity, healthy beverages, etc.)



Melanie Phillips, Nutrition Educator, in a Bitmoji Classroom



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