FP1 Results from the Montana Harvest of the Month Pilot and Future for Statewide Program Launch

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Objective: Evaluate its effectiveness and determine components for the future statewide program. Increase the exposure to and acceptance of locally grown and raised foods of Montana school-aged children through education in classrooms and cafeterias. Increase schools procurement of local, fresh foods.

Description: The Montana Harvest of the Month (HOM) program was created in partnership by Montana Team Nutrition Program, Office of Public Instruction, National Center for Appropriate Technology, Montana FoodCorps, Montana State University Extension, and Gallatin Valley Farm to School. Each month, participating K-12 schools and afterschool programs featured a different Montana food each month in at least one meal or snack, taste test, and an educational activity. This allowed students opportunities to explore Montana foods through engaging learning experiences. HOM materials for 10 foods were developed including classroom, cafeteria, and home handouts, posters, logos, and newsletters. The 10-month pilot was conducted with 12 districts (30 schools), during spring and fall 2015.

Evaluation: The evaluation method included monthly reporting, pre and post student food preference surveys, mid-pilot surveys of site teams, and mid- and post-pilot interviews with team leads. Amount or dollar value of foods purchased was also collected.

Conclusions and Implications: The pilot was largely successful. Program materials were widely accepted and the process worked well in achieving the objectives. Taste test results indicated a majority of the students “liked” or “loved” the HOM foods and the taste test method was well received. The pilot discovered lessons learned for determining the materials and evaluation processes for the statewide launch. Challenges included procurement of locally grown items and completing reports or tracking meals and activities.

Funding: USDA Team Nutrition Training Grant, 2014-USDA-TNT-Montana 2014

FP2 Nebraska Team Nutrition (NE TN) Supports Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Providers’ In Implementing CACFP New Meal Pattern

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Objective: Expand and enhance Nebraska online training programs that incorporate and implement the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and CACFP new meal pattern requirements at the childcare facilities. Improve Nebraska childcare provider’s nutrition knowledge needed to incorporate CACFP meal pattern changes in 2017.

Description: Childcare providers play an important role in shaping the health of the nation’s children. Childcare facilities are in a unique position to support and facilitate healthful eating and promote physical activity for young children, but guidance from food and nutrition professionals is paramount to effectively achieving these outcomes. Four NE TN works with childcare facilities participating in CACFP to provide education and support through innovative training and professional development opportunities. NE TN developed online modules aimed at improving basic nutrition knowledge essential for implementing CACFP new meal pattern changes. Module topics include whole grains, fruit and vegetables, nutrition facts label, meat and meat alternates, dairy, breakfast, snack, infant feeding, and farm to preschool.

Evaluation: A quantitative method was used to assess the nutrition knowledge of child care providers regarding CACFP new meal pattern. A baseline survey was distributed at the annual CACFP regional trainings. A post survey will be completed following the completion of online training modules.

Conclusions and Implications: These online trainings will enable Nebraska Department of Education/Nutrition Services to disseminate training and technical assistance to childcare providers across the state. USDA/Team Nutrition Grants can make a profound difference in addressing the best practices of nutrition and physical activity in early childhood.

Funding: USDA Team Nutrition Training Grant, CNTN-16-NE

FP3 Increasing Scratch Cooking in Wisconsin Schools Through Culinary Training

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Objective: Increase the number of school nutrition professionals incorporating scratch-cooking recipes into menus by providing culinary skills trainings.

Description: In an effort to increase the number of schools utilizing scratch cooking, Wisconsin Team Nutrition developed and offered culinary skills training programs. Throughout the summers of 2013 and 2014, eight regional trainings were hosted. Participants were trained on knife skills, use of seasonings, and time management. Participants learned how to prepare 12 recipes utilizing the newly acquired skills. The Chop! Chop! Culinary Skills training video series was released in 2015. Each video of the six-part series introduces viewers to a specific culinary skill needed for cooking with fresh produce or whole grains. Additionally, viewers are introduced to one or two standardized recipes featuring the introduced culinary skill.

Evaluation: Projects were evaluated through surveys administered upon completion of training and approximately

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six months after training. Surveys revealed participants increased their culinary knowledge and skills, comfort level in preparing menu items from scratch, and amount of scratch cooking done at their school. Additionally, participants increased the variety of menu items offered by incorporating the recipes used in the trainings into the school menus.

Conclusions and Implications: In-person and web-based trainings are effective ways to teach culinary skills, introduce new foods, and increase the amount of scratch cooking done at schools. Scratch cooking can be a way to expand the variety of healthy school lunch offerings. This may assist schools in meeting the USDA Target 2 sodium guidelines by reducing the number of high sodium processed foods served in school meals.

Funding: USDA Team Nutrition Training Grant, CNTN-14-WI, CNTN-12-WI

FP4 Michigan School Nutrition Programs Team Nutrition Smarter Lunchroom Initiative

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Objective: To increase the number of Michigan schools implementing Smarter Lunchroom strategies.

Description: A Michigan Smarter Lunchroom (SL) partnership with Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) and other state level partners was formed to pilot a coaching model and increase the number of schools implementing SLs. The initiative included: funding 50 schools \$350 each to implement SL strategies; training food service professionals in SL techniques; creating and distributing YouTube videos; and promoting successes through social networking websites.

Evaluation: A total of 46 schools completed all sub-grant requirements. All food service professionals and MSUE staff (100%) responding to the end of year survey reported feeling that they increased either their own or their staffs' knowledge of smarter lunchrooms. Twenty-one of the 46 pre- and post-smart cards were analyzed and showed that all ten subcategories increased in average scores, with the greatest increases in scores occurring in the Focus on Fruit, Moving More White Milk, and Creating School Synergies subcategories. Thirty-two success stories were compiled in a compendium for ease of sharing. Team Nutrition (TN) social media efforts resulted in the best practice videos being viewed more than 1,150 times. Total views of all Michigan Team Nutrition videos to date exceed 48,000 views. The estimated number of school children reached through the effort was 19,248 students, with an average percentage eligibility for free or reduced lunch among the schools being 50%.

Conclusions and Implications: Increasing statewide smarter lunchroom participation requires a long term, multi-pronged, collaborative effort. Other states should consider modifying MTN's intervention materials to promote participation in SL.

Funding: USDA Team Nutrition Training Grant, TN2014

FP5 Integrated Culinary Skills and School Food Environment Intervention Training and Plate Waste in School Lunchrooms - A Review of Preliminary Results from South Carolina's Team Nutrition Efforts

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Objective: South Carolina's Team Nutrition efforts aim to increase the knowledge, skills, and capacity of school food-service staff through culinary and Smarter Lunchrooms training and technical assistance.

Description: Throughout the 2016 school year approximately 500 school foodservice staff from across 27 strikeforce counties were trained in behavioral economics techniques and culinary skills. Technical assistance and tool-kits were provided to participant schools with the goal of enhancing the school food environment while increasing the taking and consumption of healthful foods by students.

Evaluation: A trained graduate student completed plate waste and the Smarter Lunchrooms Self-Assessment score-card at 36 randomly selected school sites throughout the strikeforce area to establish a baseline measure of waste and serving sizes. To date, plate waste measurements and score-cards have been repeated at 15 of the previously measured sites. Descriptive statistics and paired t-tests were completed to determine if change in plate waste was significant.

Conclusions and Implications: A total of n=7593 trays were observed from 36 school sites with approximately 210 lunch trays observed per site visit. All food items were divided into the following categories for analysis: entree, starchy side, 1% white milk, skim flavored milk, salad, hot vegetables and canned fruit. Preliminary analysis indicates an ~69% decrease in total waste per serving between the pre- and post-plate waste measurement. Serving sizes also decreased by an average of 7% for entrees and increased by an average of 10.93% for fresh fruit, hot vegetables, and canned fruit. Further analysis is needed to determine the nature of these decreases and the true impact of these training programs on overall child dietary patterns.

Funding: USDA Team Nutrition Training Grant, # CNTN-15- SC

FP6 California's Smarter Lunchrooms + Nutrition Education = Increased Youth Connection with School Cafeterias

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