



Success and Impact Report

2024



WHO WE ARE

Eat Smart Idaho is a statewide University of Idaho Extension program. We work with federal, state, and local community partners to make positive lifestyle changes accessible to all. Eat Smart Idaho interventions include the following:

Direct Education: Through hands-on series and one-time classes, Eat Smart Idaho Nutrition Instructors assist individuals, families, and youth with limited resources to acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes to improve diet and physical activity behaviors.

Policy, Systems, Environment: Community Nutrition Advisors facilitate interventions where people eat, live, learn, work, shop, and play to make healthy choices more accessible, easier and the default choice.

Social Marketing: Through social marketing and media outreach, Eat Smart Idaho promotes healthy eating habits and physically active lifestyles.

SUPPORT

Eat Smart Idaho is supported by two USDA grants: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed), in partnership with the Idaho Department of Health & Welfare and the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service, and Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), in partnership with the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Eat Smart Idaho receives valuable support from University of Idaho Extension and several community partners. This collaboration strengthens our efforts to promote nutrition and physical activity education across the state.



University
of Idaho



Community partners made it possible to deliver Eat Smart Idaho programming

HEALTH IN IDAHO

67.4% OF ADULTS ARE OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE

13% OF YOUTH ARE OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE

11.4% OF IDAHOANS EXPERIENCE FOOD INSECURITY

14.5% OF YOUTH EXPERIENCE FOOD INSECURITY

21.1% OF ADULTS DO NOT ENGAGE IN ANY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

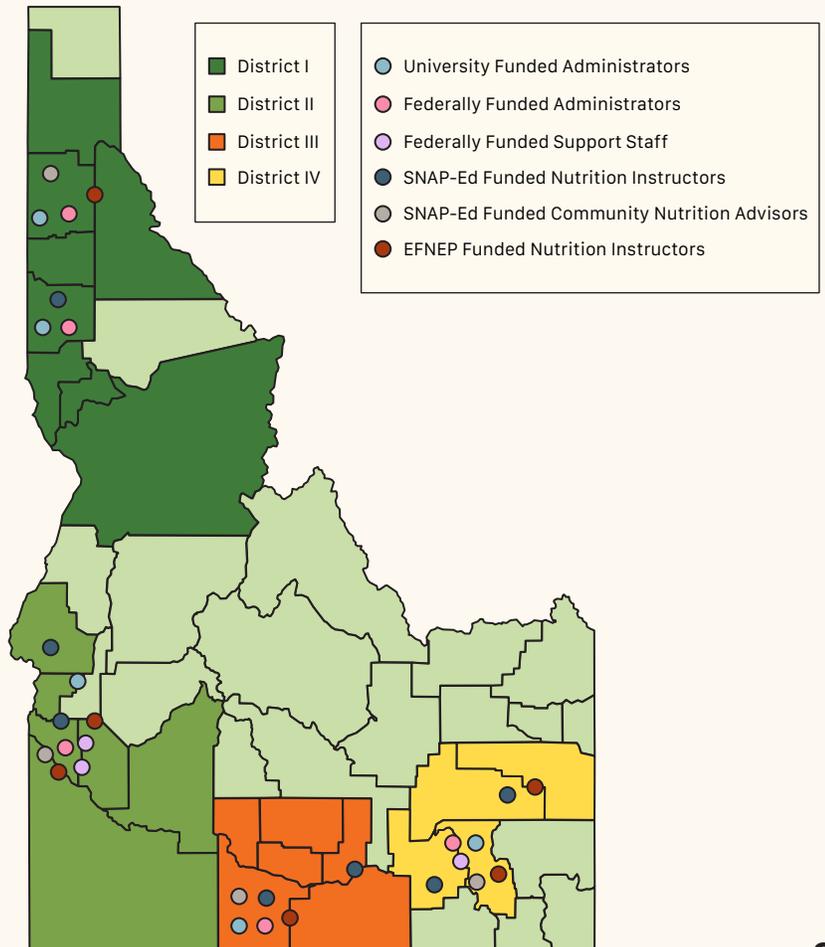
24% OF YOUTH ENGAGE IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

EAT SMART IDAHO

Eat Smart Idaho provides educational outreach to assist individuals, families, and youth with limited resources to acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes to improve diet and physical activity behaviors. Outcomes achieved through Eat Smart Idaho contribute to personal development and improvement of total family and individual health. Policy, systems, and environmental change interventions developed and implemented by Eat Smart Idaho, help to facilitate and sustain these positive behavior changes.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Diet Quality
- 2 Physical Activity
- 3 Food Safety
- 4 Food Resource Management
- 5 Food Security



EAT SMART IDAHO INTERVENTIONS

Eat Smart Idaho provides classes throughout the state to teach adults and youth with low-income about healthy eating, cooking for less, planning meals, saving money at the grocery store, keeping food safe, and being active. We also work with community partners to implement environmental changes to help make the healthy choice the easy choice.



Direct Nutrition Education and Physical Activity

Eat Smart Idaho provides hands-on nutrition and physical activity education through series and one-time lessons using evidence-based curricula.



Healthy Pantry and Healthy Food Drive

The Healthy Pantry and Food Drive interventions focus on improving food quality in pantries and encouraging SNAP-eligible patrons to choose and prepare nutritious foods through education and tools.



Healthy Mealtimes

Implemented in school cafeterias and early childcare sites, this intervention is all about changing the environment to nudge youth towards making more nutritious food choices when provided with the full spectrum of choice.



SNAP-Ed at the Market

SNAP-Ed at the Market offers nutrition and physical activity education to SNAP-eligible adults and youth at Farmers' Markets accepting EBT, along with new recipes and opportunities to join Eat Smart Idaho programs.



Long Live Idaho

The Long Live Idaho social marketing campaign promotes healthy food and physical activity behaviors through use of print and electronic media as well as physical items to aid in behavior change.



Small Spaces Gardening

This intervention engages youth in gardening and teaches them the science of growing their own food. It aims to increase knowledge of healthy eating and promotes healthy behaviors. This intervention also focuses on improving fruit and vegetable consumption and encourages a greater willingness to try new foods.



HOW STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS BOOSTED NUTRITION EDUCATION WITH AIR FRYERS

Eat Smart Idaho successfully formed strategic partnerships that led to increased participation and retention in adult direct nutrition education classes. Through a key partnership with St. Luke's Community Health Program Manager, a connection was made with the Idaho INBRE Program at the College of Southern Idaho. INBRE made a significant impact by donating forty air fryers to be used with Eat Smart Idaho programming. Additionally, the non-profit "Everybody House" contributed another ten air fryers. These valuable donations were offered to SNAP-eligible participants who completed 6-8 Eat Smart Idaho lessons.

The classes, held in both Twin Falls and Jerome, were taught in Spanish and English to accommodate a diverse audience. Participants were thrilled at the opportunity to receive an air fryer, and the Nutrition Instructors made sure to incorporate the air fryer into every lesson, using it to demonstrate healthy recipes and cooking methods with less oil. Each class also included recipe samples and recipe cards for participants to try at home. The instructors gave detailed guidance on how to use and care for the air fryers, and by the final class, participants were able to take their new air fryer home with them.

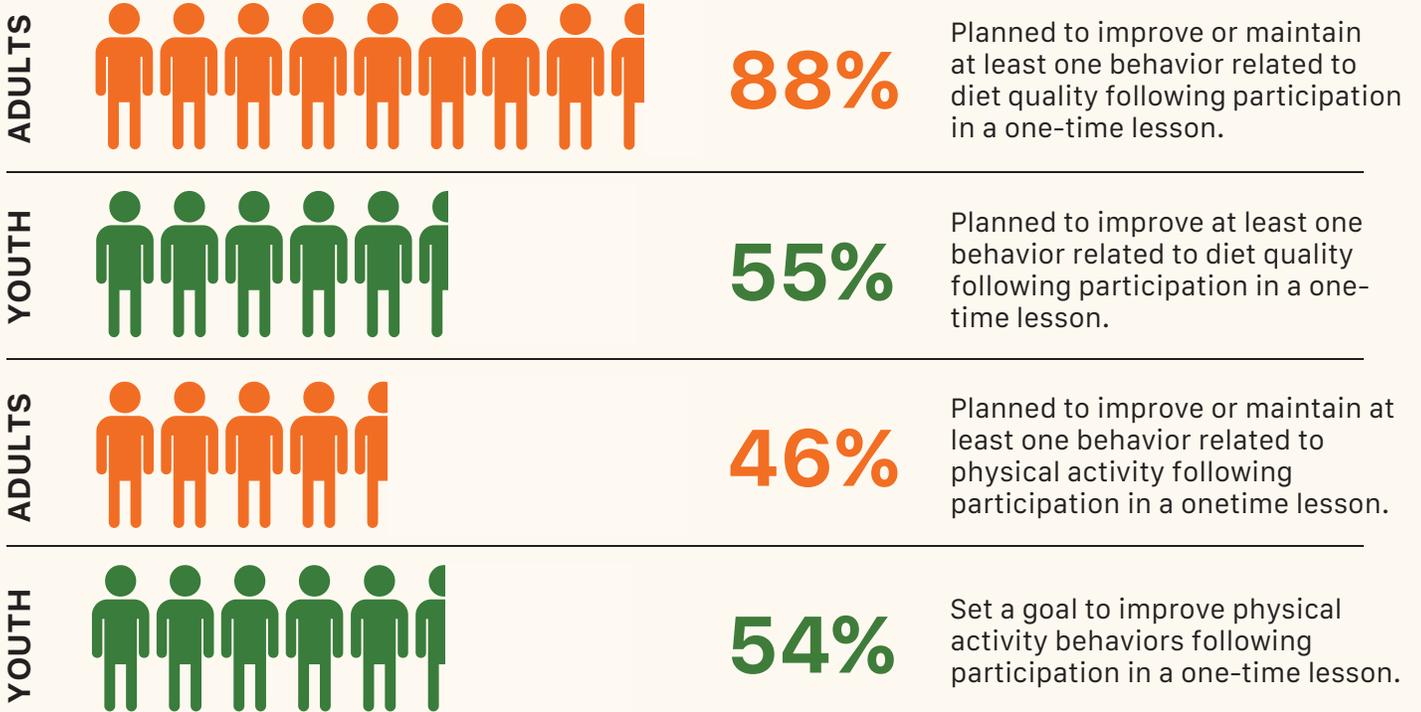
One participant shared their excitement, saying, "I am excited to cook the sweet potato fries with my children, I think they are going to love them!" Follow-up calls were made to check in on how air fryers were being used. When asked about their experience, participants responded with praise for the air fryers. Several mentioned, "I use less oil when cooking and my food cooks evenly." Another mother shared, "I prep healthy food for my children to cook when they get home from school. I trust my kids to use the air fryer more than the stove or oven."

Receiving an air fryer at the end of the series of nutrition education classes significantly contributed to higher engagement in the lessons, encouraging participants to sign up and complete the series. These results would not have been possible without the support of key community partners. Our sincere thanks go to Idaho INBRE, Everybody House, and other partners who helped recruit participants and provide teaching sites. This collaborative effort enabled us to reach fifty participants, creating lasting impacts on their health and cooking habits.



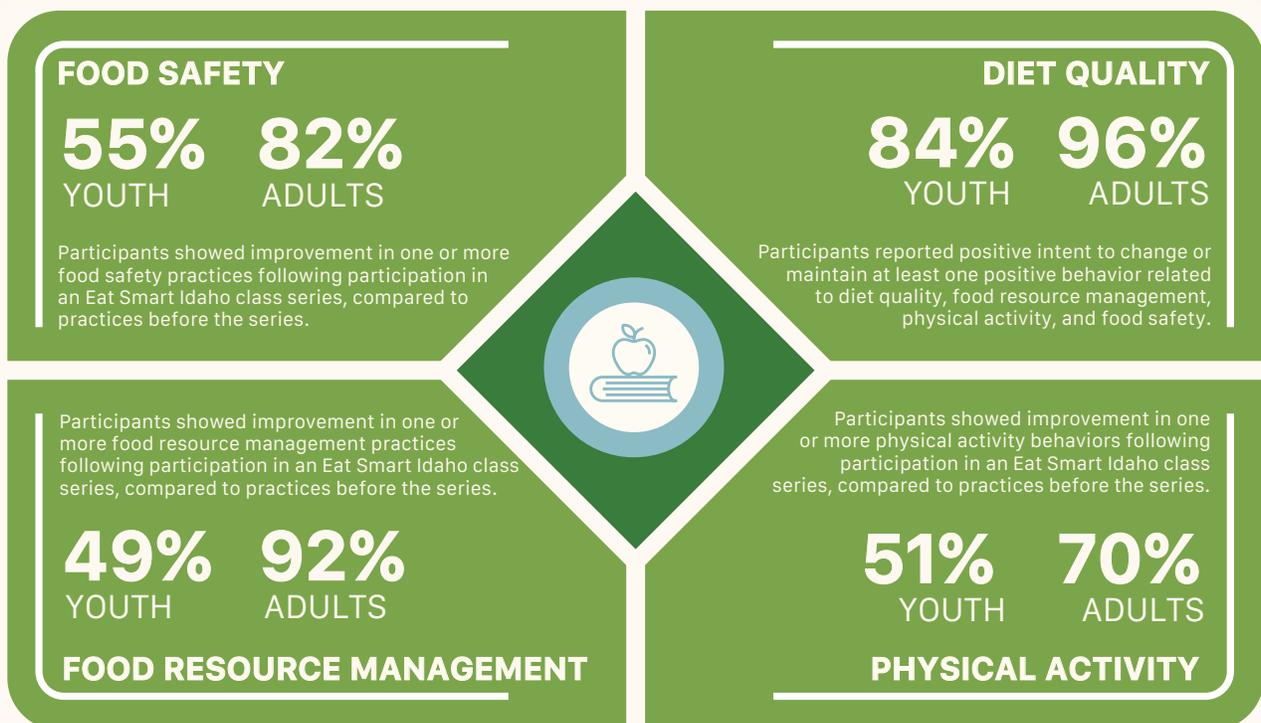
"Eat Smart Idaho taught me how to properly take care of myself through healthy food and portions."

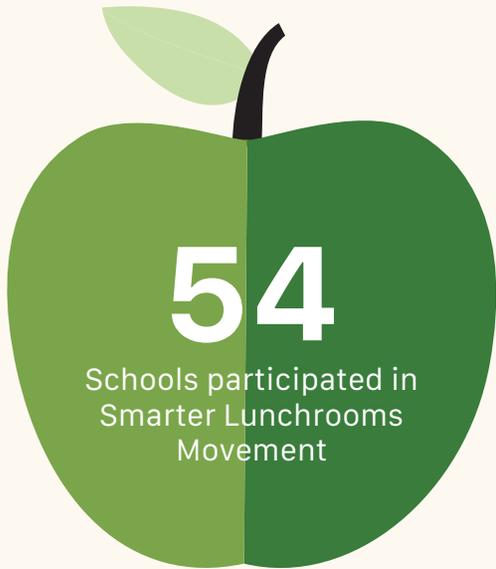
Statewide number of one-time lesson surveys: **1,211**



"I make all the recipes we learned in class. If I didn't learn all this, I don't know what I would be eating at home. Definitely not healthy stuff."

Statewide number of matched pre-post surveys from class series: **2,761**





54
Schools participated in
Smarter Lunchrooms
Movement



\$11.62

For every dollar invested in Eat Smart Idaho, the state gains \$11.62 in economic benefits by reducing chronic disease medical expenses and preventing lost earnings.

TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK: VENTURE HIGH SCHOOL AND EAT SMART IDAHO



Cooking skills are increasingly recognized as an important strategy for preventing and reducing chronic diet-related diseases and obesity. Adolescents involved in cooking education programs report significantly higher confidence in their cooking abilities, improved food skills and practices, more positive attitudes toward cooking, and higher overall diet quality.

Venture Alternative High School in the Coeur d'Alene School District lost its Family & Consumer Sciences position last year due to a vacancy, which previously provided students with hands-on cooking skills. The Eat Smart Idaho program, known for its long-standing partnership with the alternative high school and collaboration with the FCS teacher on nutrition education, was asked to step in and continue providing these essential life skills to support student's health. The Eat Smart Idaho's administrator in the Northern District collaborated with the alternative high school's health teacher and nutrition services contact to ensure nutrition education and life skills remained accessible to students.

Together, they designed a 3-week program using Eat Smart Idaho approved curricula each trimester during the 2023-2024 school year that included both nutrition education and hands-on cooking skills. Each 3-week session concluded with a well-organized Exhibit Night, where Venture students showcased their scratch-made recipes, sharing them with parents and peers at a well-attended event.





A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT TO PROVIDE FRESH PRODUCE

Eat Smart Idaho partnered with St. Vincent de Paul in Pocatello to implement a small spaces gardening intervention, bringing fresh produce to the community. The project was made possible through generous donations from local businesses and dedicated volunteers.

Franklin Building Supply provided materials to build the garden boxes, while McKee's Feed and Garden and Pet Center contributed plants and seeds. Additional support came from Changing Seasons, who donated soil, and Westwood Growers, who provided mulch. Pinehurst Nursery, Walmart, Lowe's, Fred Meyer, and Pocatello Greenhouse also donated plants and seeds. Service missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints dedicated their time and effort to building the garden boxes.

St. Vincent de Paul has been a long-standing partner of Eat Smart Idaho. The Healthy Pantry intervention has been implemented, including a recipe pillar and monthly recipe tastings. As a result of this strong partnership, their site was selected to host a small spaces garden. The planning process began with outreach to secure donations, where great success came from local retailers. Despite delays pushing the project's completion to summer, there was still ample time for plants to grow and produce much-needed vegetables for those in need in the community. St. Vincent de Paul's staff, patrons, and volunteers eagerly harvested the fresh produce, which was met with enthusiasm and appreciation. Eat Smart Idaho's Community Nutrition Advisor shared, "This project had proven to very successful because the patrons love the produce."



321

Youth groups participated in Eat Smart Idaho classes statewide



Small Spaces Gardens were implemented in classrooms and communities



BOISE FARMERS MOBILE MARKET: FRESH FLAVORS & COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS!

At the Boise Farmers Mobile Market, the Eat Smart Idaho team brought fresh flavors and fun to the community with an herb sensory station featuring rosemary, basil, sage, and mint. Visitors sampled a delicious herb vinaigrette (chive or rosemary) with local ACME bread and mixed greens, making healthy eating a flavorful experience.

Community Reactions:

"You brightened my day!"

"I just ate it, that was amazing! Can I grab another recipe card for my coworkers?"

The market also provided a "free bin" of fresh local donated produce, ensuring more families had access to nutritious foods. Along with tasty samples, visitors received Eat Smart Idaho pens with healthy lifestyles messaging, nutrition education and physical activity brochures, notepads, SNAP Double Up Food Bucks information, and USDA food safety brochures to support healthier living.

Boise Farmers Mobile Market continues to make healthy food accessible, interactive, and fun! We are looking forward to more fresh flavors and meaningful community connections in the weeks ahead.



Adults and youth participated in Eat Smart Idaho direct education classes across the state



61 pantries were Eat Smart Idaho Healthy Pantries and 15 Healthy Food Drives were held throughout the state

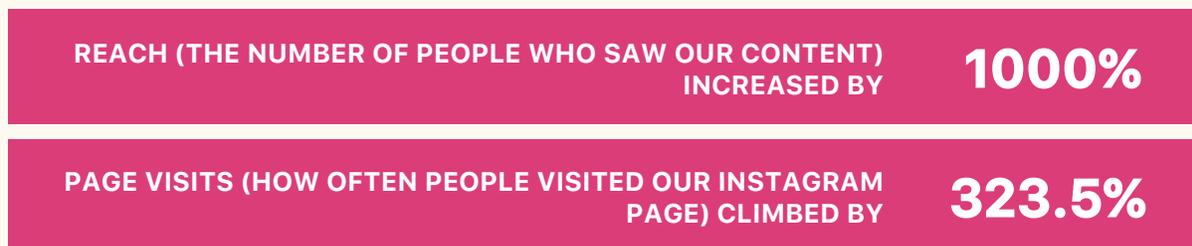
SOCIAL MEDIA OUTCOMES

In FY24, Eat Smart Idaho made major strides in expanding our social media presence and engagement. By developing a more intentional content strategy, including engaging infographics, short video recipe reels, original recipe photography, and highlights of our on-the-ground work, we achieved outstanding results.

FACEBOOK

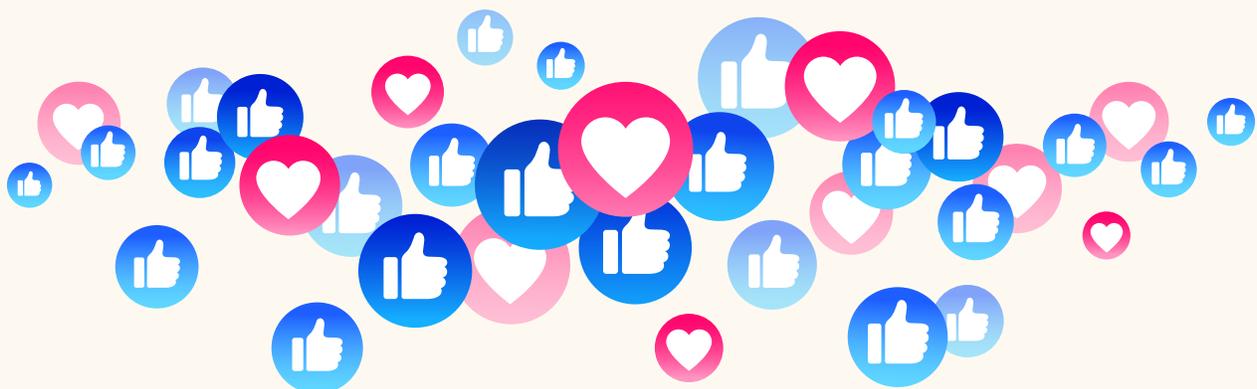


INSTAGRAM



What Drove This Success:

This year, we focused heavily on creating engaging visual content, such as colorful infographics and original recipe photography. We also produced short video reels that showcased easy, healthy recipes and worked to highlight real-world Eat Smart Idaho efforts across the state. By building a more dynamic and relatable social media presence, we strengthened our connection with the community and expanded the reach of our educational mission.



THE IMPORTANCE OF SNAP-ED

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) plays a critical role in helping individuals eligible for SNAP lead healthier lives on a limited budget. SNAP-Ed teaches people how to make their SNAP dollars stretch, shop for and cook healthy meals, and stay physically active. Programs are delivered by professional and/or paraprofessional staff and include direct nutrition education in communities across the country and social marketing campaigns. Since the passage of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, the program also supports policy, systems, and environmental change strategies that promote healthy eating to advance food and nutrition security, reduce diet-related chronic disease, and promote equity.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EFNEP

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) successfully addresses critical societal concerns by employing paraprofessional staff and influencing nutrition and physical activity behaviors of low-income families, particularly those with young children. Through a community-based, relationship-driven, hands-on educational approach, EFNEP directly impacts economic, obesity, and food insecurity challenges that hinder the nutritional health and well-being of this nation. The EFNEP partnership between the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and Land-grant Universities/Cooperative Extension produces measurable evidence annually and shows how limited-resource families experience success.

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**Thank you to our
community partners
for your support in
helping Idaho
families make
healthy choices.**

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