

Healthy beef meals learned through hands-on preparation

AT A GLANCE

Young people learn how to cook a healthy beef meal on a budget through hands-on preparation.

The Situation

Many young college students don't realize the opportunity to prepare and eat a healthy beef meal while staying on a budget is possible. The health benefits of eating beef are not made readily available. In fact, much of the information that is shared doesn't promote beef as an affordable way to eat healthily.

Our Response

To teach youth, a healthy eating grant was written to the Idaho Beef Council. Funding was provided to purchase beef for youth to learn about healthy eating by preparing a healthy beef meal while on a budget. Workshops were scheduled and promoted to youth groups in Blackfoot, Pocatello and American Falls.

Young people and the adult volunteers from those communities that attended were taught 8 sessions. The participants were able to learn about beef and the 29 cuts of beef that are lean. They were able to learn the protein value compared to chicken, and that lean beef cuts are leaner than a skinless chicken thigh. They were taught that one serving of beef has more protein and fewer calories than one serving of peanut butter. Participants were also taught the nutritional value beef provides because of the advantage it has in essential vitamins and minerals.

Petite top sirloin steaks were purchased at a Pocatello grocery store that offered only Certified Angus Beef product for \$8.99 per pound. This provided for a



Students and adults learning to prepare beef as a healthy meal option.

quality eating experience at the conclusion of the class. The steaks were cut into a four ounce serving size allowing for 4 servings of beef from each pound (the nutritional information comparing beef and chicken is based on a 3 ounce serving). The steaks were used to prepare a beef fajita meal.

As everyone arrived, they completed a 10 question pre-test. An informational lecture was presented followed by a cooking demonstration. All the youth were then given the chance to prepare the meal. The same test was given at the conclusion of the cooking experience.

Program Outcomes

All youth were able to cook and eat a healthy beef fajita meal. All 139 participants from the 8 sessions completed a pre and post-test survey. Results of the survey indicated the average test score was 50 percent on the pre-test and the average test score on the post-test was 90 percent. The biggest improvement in

knowledge gained was on question 3; “Which cut was not meant for broiling?” 19 percent answered correctly on the pre-test while 88 percent answered correctly on the post-test. Question 2 asked about meat cuts and cooking method. Only 36 percent answered correctly on the pre-test question but 96 percent answered correctly on the post-test. Question 7 asked about protein amounts from a serving of beef vs. peanut butter. On the pre-test 36 percent answered correctly while on the post-test 95 percent answered correctly.

These results indicate the youth and volunteers had an increase in knowledge from the opportunity to prepare a healthy beef meal on a budget.

The Future

University of Idaho Extension will continue to provide education for youth and volunteers on a continuous basis. The topics will be based on 4-H mission trends and participant needs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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