



# 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 **Iron County** residents due to income and job loss, as well as significant changes in local, regional, and national food systems. Based on increases in **Iron 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.

**Iron County** has seen a **13% 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

### In response to COVID-19, we have:

- Created a monthly FoodWise newsletter that we distribute to our partners. Each month we highlight a different local food resource story, provide some new recipes, share tips on different health and wellness topics, and include the Harvest of the Month flier that is put together by the Chequamegon Food Co-op.
- During the summer we shared weekly recipes that were healthy, budget-friendly, and seasonal on our Extension County Facebook pages.
- Published an article in local newspapers on food security and what local entities are doing to help.
- Maintained strong partnerships within our community through regular communications and resource sharing.
- Transitioned direct education programming to virtual lessons!



## 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 Iron County, FoodWise partners with schools, Head Start, a mobile food pantry, and senior meal programs to help make the healthy choice the easy choice in our communities.

# Recipe Videos with Ms. Deb!

Like many programs and partners during COVID-19, we have had to make changes to our programs. One of those changes includes shifting our direct education programming to a mostly virtual format.

We have had a number of successful virtual events. One example of this in **Iron County** was with the **Hurley Head Start**.

Our Educator, Deb Leonard, put together a recipe video to share with Hurley Head Start families on how to make a simple healthy oven pancake.

The video was then distributed to families where they could make the recipe at home with low-cost ingredients. This video gave parents another idea on a low-cost, healthy, and quick recipe they could use to feed their families.



*Deb made an oven pancake recipe video to share with Hurley Head Start families when COVID-19 first started.*

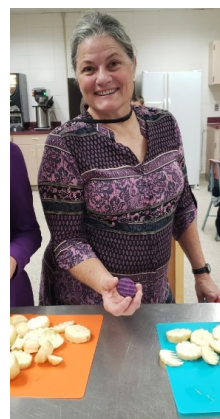


# Iron County Schools

For many years, Deb Leonard has taught nutrition education at **Mercer and Hurley Schools**. She was able to do a series of six lessons with Hurley 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classrooms, Mercer kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades, and a lesson with Hurley 5<sup>th</sup> grade before COVID-19 hit.

Through our school education, students learn about a different set of nutrition topics each year, participate in nutritional activities, and have a chance to sample healthy foods. Some topics include hand washing, being active, learning about the five food groups, gardens, and “sometimes” foods.

One of the goals for FoodWise is to connect students to their school gardens. This past year, Deb made a boiled dinner for the 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms out of produce from that garden. From this lesson, students were able to learn more about their school garden, what foods they can harvest from a garden, and sample a healthy recipe.



*Deb showcasing a vibrant purple potato from the Hurley School garden.*



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