



# IMPACT 2021

Through Extension programs across the nation, Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Educators provide a multitude of Educational opportunities to meet the needs of diverse audiences.

## Disaster Preparedness

Natural and man-made disasters affect many Americans each year. Major adverse events as a result of disasters can cause mass loss of life and physical destruction. According to the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI), in 2020, there were 22 weather/climate disaster events with losses exceeding \$1 billion each to affect the United States. These events included 1 drought event, 13 severe storm events, 7 tropical cyclone events, and 1 wildfire event. Together, these events resulted in the deaths of 262 people and had substantial economic effects on the areas impacted. Disaster preparedness among individuals and communities can help reduce these losses. However, further education is needed to prompt individuals and communities to adequately prepare for a potential disaster(s).

In 2020, the United States Federal Emergency and Management Agency (FEMA) conducted National Household Surveys (NHS) to assess the development of a culture of personal disaster preparedness and resilience in the American public. The survey specifically measured and explored individual preparedness attitudes and behaviors and what factors influence individuals to begin preparing for a future hazard. Results from 5,000 respondents representing a national-level sample and a series of smaller hazard-specific samples concluded that 68% of adults have pursued three or more of the six basic preparedness actions and 68% of adults have set aside some money for an emergency.

Extension has played an active role in educating individuals on the importance and process of preparing for a disaster through programs for adults and youth.

*"The course was very good and so informative! It has sparked some valuable discussions among my friends and family, I'm hoping we can all be a little more prepared now." - Program Participant*

## Disaster Preparedness Education Prompts Awareness and Action

In the wake of the pandemic, **Alaska** Cooperative Extension quickly provided *Preparedness from Food to Health* workshops through Zoom and Facebook Live. Topics varied from tapping birch trees to using a generator, food preservation to healthy living techniques. In collaboration with 6 community partners, the use of digital platforms allowed 1,286 people to be reached throughout the state with 30 workshops.



Raising kids. Eating right. Spending smart



*"The series has encouraged me to lend my expertise to help my community in any way possible during disasters." - Military Family Service Provider*

*"I have gathered emergency supplies and developed a communication plan. I carry a go bag in my car, have supplies for over a week at work, home supplies for at least a month. Our office is watching Cascadia videos." - Extension Professional*

**Oklahoma** ranks third for federally declared disasters. Program evaluation data from *Youth Safety Day*, held in conjunction with 2 community partners, showed that 64% of youth now have a family meeting place in case of emergency and an additional 30% will talk to their family about finding one.

**Oregon** citizens and Extension Professionals learn about the "Really Big One" and take steps to be ready by participating in the *Preparing for the Cascadia Subduction Zone Event* online learning program. 405 participants began creating a culture of preparedness by viewing 4 modules of the program. Before completion, 23.8% said they had secured heavy furniture to the wall and 20% regularly scouted and walked tsunami evacuation routes when at the coast (n = 21). After completing the professional requirements, Extension professionals made statistically significant changes in knowledge, feeling prepared to provide Cascadia information to Extension audiences and the importance of preparing for it. Participants (77%) completed preparation steps for themselves and family (n = 13).



**Minnesota's 2020 Military Family Readiness Academy: Disaster and Hazard Readiness Foundations**, a 3-series collaborative project between the U.S. Department of Defense and Cooperative Extension program, reached 764 Military Family Service Providers. 84% of survey respondents indicated they intend to collaborate more with colleagues during blue skies so they can provide better services and outcomes when disasters strike. Providers are now better prepared to assist military families with disaster preparedness.

In **Utah**, the *Disaster Preparedness and Response* program was taught 19 times and reached 1,347 participants with the help of 17 community partners. As a result, participants reported a greater understanding of content, will use information in personal and professional life and make positive changes.



*"Love you for doing this! I just made 3 batches yesterday! 2 shallot/garlic and 1 pesto (basil/garlic). All thanks to your class! It's my quarantine vitamin C prep!" - Program Participant in a Facebook Live class on fermenting*

This report was compiled by Candace Tucker MS, University of Georgia Extension, and Mary Liz Wright, MS University of Illinois Extension Service, Vice President for Public Affairs. For more information, email [maryliz@illinois.edu](mailto:maryliz@illinois.edu).

**National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS)** provides professional development for Extension professionals who improve the quality of life for individuals, families, and communities and provide education in the areas of: Childhood Obesity Prevention; Community Health and Wellness; Diabetes Prevention and Management; Financial Management; Food and Nutrition; Food Safety; Healthy Homes and the Environment; Improving Children's Lives; and Protecting our Resources – Family Life. NEAFCS is an equal opportunity/affirmative action association. NEAFCS values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of race, color, gender, age, religion, national origin, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation. Membership is not by invitation. (Strategic Plan 1993-97)