



Dinner Tonight!

dinnertonight.tamu.edu

Helping Texans Better Their Lives

Relevance

The percentage of the food budget spent on away-from-home food has increased steadily since the 1970s. Consequently, the proportion of calories provided by away-from-home food has also increased. When dining out, there is a tendency to choose foods higher in calories and larger portions are increasingly common. Many people become overwhelmed when they think of menu planning and trying to prepare healthy, cost effective meals for their families.

Fortunately, county AgriLife Extension agents have the knowledge and expertise to provide resources that will help encourage at-home family mealtime.

Response

The *Dinner Tonight!* program encourages family mealtime by providing quick, nutritious and cost-effective recipes to consumers through weekly video webcasts and other web-based methods — such as blogs and Facebook. Every Monday, a new video demonstration is released by a member of the *Dinner Tonight!* team. Many agents across the state use the *Dinner Tonight!* program as an educational strategy within their county, as well as for visibility.

The *Dinner Tonight! Healthy Cooking Schools* were also added as a new initiative in 2012. These cooking schools provide an opportunity to bring people together in a fun environment to further our mission of teaching families about healthy meal planning and food preparation.

Online Results

- There were 20,336 unique visitors to the *Dinner Tonight!* Website, with more than 126,556 page visits.
- These unique visitors were from more than 50 different countries/territories.
- There are 2,605 people following *Dinner Tonight!* on Facebook.
- More than 45 videos were created based on nutrition, food safety, family mealtime, and highlighting our agricultural partners.
 - o More than 402 new contacts with 113,869 views on the *Dinner Tonight!* YouTube channel, resulting in a 60% increase of total viewership.
 - o Additionally, new social media platforms were reached through the *Dinner Tonight!*, resulting in a combined average 168% improved visibility of the program.



**DINNER
TONIGHT**
HEALTHY COOKING SCHOOL

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

Healthy Cooking Schools Results:

- Forty-four *Dinner Tonight! Healthy Cooking Schools* were conducted in 2016, reaching more than 3,127 people.
- Evaluation data was collected from 1,964 individuals, which resulted in a response rate of 62%. The evaluations indicate the events were highly successful in impacting family nutrition. Some of the event outcomes noted at the conclusion of the event include:
 - Approximately 96% of participants attending the various healthy cooking schools across the state were completely satisfied with the delivery of the program.
 - More than 98% of participants view the information provided at the healthy cooking schools to be accurate information from a reliable source.
 - More than 89% of the participants intend to make the healthy meals demonstrated in the healthy cooking schools at home.
 - The healthy cooking schools provide an opportunity to reach and engage first time Extension participants.
 - During the 2016 year, 71% of attendee had never been to an Extension activity before their exposure to the healthy cooking schools, which reached more than 1,278 new participants.
 - Participants reported complete satisfaction with the structure an instructors' knowledge of the healthy cooking schools at 98%.

Success Stories

- *“The most important thing that I learned today is how healthy does not mean bad tasting or difficult.”*
- *“The Dinner Tonight! program was entertaining; all of the ladies were pleasant and interesting.”*



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