

Master Family & Consumer Sciences Volunteer Program Summary

Institution: Oregon State University Extension
Program: Master Food Preserver
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With many hours of volunteer assistance, the OSU Extension Service has disseminated research-based information on safe food handling to thousands of Oregonians for 25 years. This has averted food-borne illness (and medical bills) and prevented the expense of food waste.

The Family Food Education (FFE) volunteer program (previously known as Master Food Preservers) was launched in 1980 to support county food safety/preservation programming. The program has now been enhanced to include nutrition education. FFE Volunteers assist OSU Extension efforts at emergency food sites (food pantries) and in schools.

In 2011, 277 new and veteran Master Food Preserver/Family Food Education Volunteers contributed over 21,630 hours of time in these counties: Central Oregon (Crook, Deschutes, Jefferson), Clackamas, Coos/Curry, Douglas, Jackson/Josephine, Klamath, Lane, Linn/Benton, and Wasco/Hood River. They educated the public about safe food handling and preservation over the phone, at workshops, and at exhibits and demonstrations at sites such as farmers' markets and county fairs. Over 24,530 contacts were made. Of these, over 2,500 callers received assistance from the Food Safety/Preservation Hotline.