

# Nutrition Education & Tools Project



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## **Executive Summary**

WAFER has been providing food to the hungry for 30 years, changing to meet emerging needs and addressing underserved populations through the ongoing creative effort of many. Research demonstrates the ever decreasing health of our nation's poorest while food insecurity is increasing.

In a country where food is plentiful and every advantage is at our fingertips, people are still falling between the cracks. As an organization that collaborates with many other organizations to ensure food access through recovery and distribution, it is apparent that two key components are missing. First, many clients lack the skills and tools necessary for food preparation and preservation. Second, related to the first key component is good nutrition and wellness which can contribute to a healthy lifestyle. These shortfalls are strategically address with education programming which will ultimately lead to greater food security and self-independence for the low-income populations throughout La Crosse County.

## **Organization Background**

Responding to God's love, WAFER provides food and works to eliminate hunger.

WAFER Food Pantry has a 30+ year history in the greater La Crosse area, continually evolving and growing to keep up with the food needs of local communities. Originally known as The Emergency Food Basket, the food pantry was located near the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. The Emergency Food Basket was serviced by the Lutheran Campus Ministry and Roncalli Newman Center. Food, resources, and volunteers were provided by local churches. In 1985, a task force formed the Board of Directors and just one year later W.A.F.E.R. (West Avenue Food Emergency Resource) hired an Executive Director and moved to the basement of St. Paul's Lutheran Church on West Avenue. During the first year of operation, client households were allowed one emergency food package and just over 3300 food packages were provided.

In 2002, a different location was sought in order to improve safety and accessibility to client families, those with physical limitations, and volunteers in addition to safe food storage. After moving to the current location, the WAFER acronym remained, but the lengthy name was dropped. During this year, WAFER became a TEFAP (The Emergency Food Assistance Program) outlet, participating in the government commodities program. With the addition of TEFAP, visits were increased to a minimum of one time per month and nearly 9500 food packages were distributed to families.

Today, WAFER is La Crosse County's largest food pantry, serving approximately 1500 families each month. In total, more than 18,000 food packages feed 40,000 people. Each food package provides 4-5 days worth of food person. Communities which utilize WAFER services include:

La Crosse, Holmen, Onalaska, West Salem, Mindoro, Bangor, and Rockland. Services are extended to residents in La Crescent, MN, as well because of limited transportation options in that area and distance from the nearest government commodities outlet.

Each individual or family served by WAFER is at a different place in life: homeless, looking for work, having a job that doesn't adequately provide support, chronically ill, newly diagnosed, living in a rural area, lack of transportation, physical disability, mental disability, or elderly. The WAFER staff and board regularly assess needs and address them with expanded or altered programming to ensure that basic needs are being met, as much as possible.

Poverty and hunger are not discriminatory - they know no age, race, gender, or any class. Thousands of individuals and families rely on the food package provided by WAFER, containing a variety of non-perishable foods such as canned fruits and vegetables, cereal, pasta, side dishes, canned meat, soup, and peanut butter. Frozen meat, extra items (like salad dressing, muffin mixes, seasonings, and condiments), a large assortment of produce, dairy and plenty of bakery items increases the amount of food in each package to feed each person in the family for 4-5 days.

Despite honorable intentions to eliminate hunger completely in our community, state, or nation, there will always be chronically impoverished people. While that statement is somewhat pessimistic, it is realistic to assume that there will always be people who will rely on “charity” just to survive, based on the cards life has dealt (severe mental or physical disability, physical deformities, life-altering accidents, etc). As a result of the varying needs presented in our local communities, WAFER has established, implemented, and collaborated with multiple partners to address those needs.

For example, located in a relatively high poverty area, WAFER collaborates with Channel One Foodbank (a Feeding America agency) to offer an additional food package each month to every family. Channel One brings roughly 15-25,000 pounds of food to our location early on a Saturday morning. The pallets of food are set up in the street (or the warehouse behind our building during the winter months) and as households walk through the line volunteers hand them the items available. The food varies based on what is available in the Channel One warehouse, but generally includes canned vegetables and beans, cereal, crackers, fresh produce, bakery, and side dishes. Between the La Crosse and West Salem location, ~500 families come to receive their additional food package during the two hour time frame.

While addressing the food needs of seniors we must take into account possible physical limitations and transportation barriers. As a result, Senior Share, a food package delivery program, was created several years ago through collaboration with the La County Aging Unit and the Housing Authority of La Crosse. Each participant’s food package is individually packaged, taking into account preference and dietary restrictions when possible. The food packages are delivered to a variety of low-income or senior housing complexes, meal sites, community halls, and individual residences throughout La Crosse County. Staff and volunteers from WAFER in coordination with volunteers from the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) help with deliveries. In September 2013, the communities of Rockland and Bangor were the final communities to be added, making this program available throughout all of La Crosse County. The Rockland/Bangor Fire Department Auxiliary partners with WAFER to deliver food in this new area.

As a staff and board we assessed our reach into the various communities that make up La Crosse County. Meeting with various community leaders, Auxiliary members, school district staff, and residents caused staff and board members of WAFER to really look at the rural communities and come up with a plan to address the expressed needs. As a result, in September 2013 Senior Share was expanded to the Bangor and Rockland areas, making this program available throughout La Crosse County. Equally as important are two new programs were implemented in those areas.

First, Feeding Today’s Youth, already serving students at La Crosse area Boys and Girls Clubs, was expanded to serve students in the Bangor School District. With a 33% free and reduced lunch rate, their location in a food desert (an area that lacks healthy, affordable food), and no after-school intervention programs, this seemed like the obvious and most critical place to start. Feeding Today’s Youth in the Bangor Schools will provide children with meals to eat on weekends or school breaks. The children who participate in the program will be chosen by their teacher if they display signs of

not having enough to eat on weekends (such as returning to school on Monday with stomach pains, fatigue, and headaches) or if they know that the family situation necessitates program participation. Children will receive a variety of ready-made meals, cereal bowls, canned fruit, pudding, shelf-stable milk, and snacks like granola bars or crackers. This program was piloted in the spring of 2013 and officially started in September 2013.

Secondly, a Mobile Drop program was implemented for families in the Bangor/Rockland area. Despite a mere twenty minute drive for most Bangor residents, the trip into La Crosse taps into precious gas money. Much like the Senior Share program, the Mobile Drop consists of volunteers (presently Bangor High School FFA students) packing food packages for individual families, taking into account food preferences when possible. The quantity of food items vary based on the number of people in each family. The food package is delivered by the Bangor Fire Department Auxiliary along with a Food Fair box, essentially providing them two food packages at once.

In addition to our more “age specific” programs, it is important to recognize the diverse ethnic populations in our community. Approximately 10% of all the families WAFER serves each month are Hmong. More than 13 years ago WAFER began ordering basic staples found in the Hmong diet. Typically, Hmong families decline about 50% of the “traditional” food package that is offered to all families because they are not foods consumed by the Hmong population. By offering two varieties of rice noodles, rice, fish sauce, and bamboo shoots, Hmong families receive a more complete food package while maintaining cultural preferences. Working with the Hmong Mutual Assistance Association (HMAA) has allowed us to assess this program for relevance, quantity, and importance for the Hmong population. In addition, HMAA’s involvement with WAFER has allowed our staff to gain important Hmong history and cultural values education as well as needed assistance when deciding how best to provide services.

### **Needs Statement**

The COMPASS NOW 2012 report, compiled by The Great Rivers United Way, identifies current and emerging needs and/or issues in our region. The report sites obesity, food insecurity, increased child poverty rate, increased FoodShare usage, and transportation among the relevant issues. These findings indicate the wide range of needs present among those living in poverty and those struggling to secure even basic necessities. As WAFER works towards addressing food insecurity issues through general food pantry programming, WAFER and collaborating partners seek to address issues of obesity, nutrition, and food insecurity through education.

Nutrition knowledge, food preparation skills, and basic cooking tools are a few of the essential foundations for adequate intake and the opportunity for healthful living. Low-income, food insecure individuals and families are at a disproportionate risk for obesity and chronic health conditions because of limitations in all three of these areas. The American Diabetes Association presents a strong case linking “obesity, inactivity, and poverty (which) may be too costly to ignore because

obesity-associated chronic disease already accounts for 70% of U.S. health costs.” An obesity rate of 33% with an additional 33% who are overweight and a forewarning of the situation getting worse as childhood obesity rates rise, indicates a need to take preventative steps to strengthen the people and the health of our community.

While working one-on-one with the clients our staff notes many lack basic food preparation skills or food knowledge. Compounded by poverty and the cyclical nature of it, there are few options for change. We believe that by developing strategic education we can help people make better food choices and decrease the negative health consequences that result from inadequate nutrition. Based on the population served by WAFER, there is demonstrated need for such programming.

WAFER staff and board members have noted that in addition to a lack of skills and/or knowledge, a shift in the attitude towards food has occurred. The focus has shifted from the nutrient and health-filled properties of food to one that solely focuses on just satisfying the pangs of hunger. Possibly this shift is the cause of increased obesity rates and increased health conditions plaguing our society today. Sources such as The Journal of Nutrition, FRAC (Food Research and Action Center), and many more, cite a correlation between poverty and obesity. Factors such as limited resources and limited access to healthy, affordable foods contribute to the growing issues among this at-risk population. Those who struggle with food insecurity may at times function at a crisis level. Cheap, energy-dense foods are chosen solely to prevent the feeling of hunger despite low nutrition properties. Additionally, chronic overeating when food is available causes a shift in the metabolism contributing to weight gain.

However, through combined effort between WAFER and collaborating partners, a multi-faceted approach to food and nutrition education will educate, train, and equip those who have never had access to such crucial skills. This educational programming will attempt to break the cyclical nature of poverty, give families the opportunity for success and growth, and reverse the increased weight issues and their consequences more prevalent in recent years.

Tara Pascual, author of *Cooking Up Community: Nutrition Education in Emergency Food Programs*, in coordination with WhyHunger, discusses at length the benefits of such education programs by highlighting organizations that have had or continue to offer various education programs. Found in the introduction, Pascual states “systematic and sustained action is needed to achieve food and nutrition security for all in the United States. To eliminate food insecurity, interventions are needed, including adequate funding for increased utilization of food and nutrition assistance programs, inclusion of food and nutrition education in such programs, and innovative programs to promote and support individuals and household economic self-sufficiency.”

Food and nutrition education interventions can create innovative change within communities and food pantries can provide a “non-traditional setting” for such education. According to the April 2010 UW Extension report, *The Public Value of Nutrition Education*, “in a tight economic time, it is

important to point out that nutrition education pays off economically – not only for the learners, but also for taxpayers.” Relying on data reported from the USDA, this report concluded that consumers did “modify their food choices after participating in well-designed nutrition education programs that teach how a good diet can benefit long-term health.” With a strong focus on the health and economic benefits to the participants it is equally important to recognize that encouraging “Americans to improve their diets may prevent tens of thousands of cases of heart disease and save between \$4 billion and \$12 billion in health care expenditures and lost earnings over 10 years.” In the end, obesity and its health consequences put an enormous “financial burden on the health care system.”

In 2010 survey by the Department of Health Services, 13% of Wisconsin residences had income below the federal poverty line; La Crosse County was no different. Locally and nationally, one in five children is at risk for food insecurity according to hunger statistics reported by Feeding America (the nation’s foodbank). However, assessing the population served by WAFER and breaking down all participants by age results in one startling finding; one in three of WAFER’s clients are under the age of 18.

“One of the most powerful things a food bank can do is to work to assist the ability of the millions of people we work with to improve their own ability to look after their nutritional health, by improving their food literacy (understanding their nutritional needs and empowering them to meet them by teaching them how to stretch dollars by shopping smart, how to cook real nutrient dense meals for their families, eating and growing more produce, and making the connection with exercise and lifestyle). This is not a window dressing, it truly helps people take control of their own situation and health.” Erik Talkin, C.E.O., Foodbank of Santa Barbara County.

### **Program Description**

WAFER and collaborating partners have developed a multi-faceted *Nutrition Education Program* with varying approaches to specifically target low-income, food insecure populations. Together we strive to achieve a collective impact. Each collaborating partner has a shared vision regarding the issues we address, the approach needed for success, and the flexibility to make adjustments as needed in response to successes or demonstrated needs.

Karie Johnson and Mary Hoeft-Leithold, from UW Extension Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP), currently offer brief food tasting and informational sessions covering a wide range of topics and foods. For some sessions the goal is to simply educate the client on a new food available in the food pantry. This includes the varying ways to prepare the item, how to incorporate it into a meal, recipes, nutrient content, and a sample of it prepared. Other sessions are basic nutrition sessions designed to increase intake in a particular nutrient area such as whole grains. This session also includes a sample of a finished recipe as well as additional recipes and verbal instructions on how to accomplish the goal of the session. To date, these sessions are very much appreciated by the clients who participate. However, the educators required to make WAFER one of many education

sites throughout the county. It is agreed that increased frequency and duration could impact more people.

Due to years of trials and successes from the UW Extension educators and collaborative partners, a variety of programming has been developed to meet the needs of the low-income, food insecure population throughout La Crosse County, specifically those served by WAFER. In addition to programming designed to “meet the needs”, collaborative partners agree that nutrition intervention must occur to provide low-income persons with skill sets that will not only increase personal nutrition and health, but allow them to begin on a road to self-sufficiency and less reliance on emergency food services. Each partner is proposing to provide varying degrees of participation and locations; education, information materials creation, evaluation, advisory role, and more.

The UW Extension office will continue to offer established education sessions, but contribute to this initiative by offering Nutrition Education Sessions multiple times during the year.

Viterbo University and the Dietetics Department provide overwhelming interest and participation in this education program because of the benefit to those who are food insecure. However, the benefit is two-fold as this provides an invaluable experience for the student educators. Viterbo instructors provide enrolled undergraduate and graduate dietetic students to deliver education sessions multiple times during the school year.

The UW-Extension Nutrition Educators and Viterbo University were among the original partners to implement the Nutrition Education and Tools Project. During the past three years of operation three new education partners have joined the effort.

First, Chartwell Chefs have begun offering education sessions in the last year. Due to training and education, the chefs are able to provide nutrition education, food preparation skills, and fresh ideas to make implementation at home successful for program participants. The chefs typically provide one education session per calendar year.

Second, Gundersen Health System Dietetic Educators joined the project during year two. Offering education sessions one to two times per year, program evaluations typically contain outstanding reviews for both the content and the educators.

Third, Mayo Clinic Health System enthusiastically joined the list of educators and collaborators during year two. Mayo Clinic Health System Dietetic Educators typically provide education one to two times per year. The educators’ adaptability and flexibility contribute to the success of the project.

WAFER, La Crosse County’s largest food pantry, serves the largest constituency of people in need of education. It is the vision of the board to address the root issues of hunger, obesity, and chronic diseases compounded by insufficient diet, by facilitating effects achievable by a group of

collaborative partners invested in La Crosse County residents. WAFER staff, volunteers, and board of directors continue to provide:

- Valuable insight into the varying populations, specific needs and barriers within each community, provisions, effective approach based on previous experience, and the capacity to reach a large number of people.
- Fiscal management and tracking of award funds such as reimbursement for program expenses.
- Outreach to additional collaborators as needed for program expansions, to reach pre-established goals, or as feedback and evaluation indicate areas of additional need.
- A multi-purpose space within the WAFER building to be used for longer educational sessions, demonstrations, etc.
- A dedicated space near client registration for educators to provide “walk by” demonstrations and samples.

WAFER’s in-house education center provides a permanent place for demonstrations and skill set development in a comfortable and familiar location.

### **Goals and Objectives**

The intended goals and outcomes for this program are more subjective. The outcomes are difficult to measure and may not necessarily be achieved within the initial grant period. They include:

1. Increased self-esteem for participants.
2. Successful home implementation.
3. Skill development to encourage greater self-sufficiency.
4. Decreased food insecurity.

Additionally, objectives have been established to provide more concrete outcomes which can be measurable.

1. Increased nutrition knowledge to obtain healthy and affordable food choices.
2. Increased incorporation of fresh produce into daily meals.
3. Increased nutrition knowledge to utilize the large variety of fresh produce offered at food pantries.
4. Increased ability to maximize limited resources.
5. Food preparation skill development for individuals and families.
6. Food preservation skill development for individuals and families.

Goals and objectives are measured through participate program evaluations. At the close of each session, participants are asked to complete a short evaluation regarding the usefulness of the topic, the

likelihood of implementing new skills at home, the likelihood of increasing produce consumption, and suggestions for future education sessions.

As a part of United Way program evaluation, three specific measurements are recorded for impact. They are:

1. 80% of session participants will indicate the intention of increasing produce intake.
2. 80% of participants will indicate that they found the education session presentation useful.
3. 80% of education session participants will indicate at least one new skill, tip, recipe, or more that they learned.

Additionally, the educators provide a session summary which may include activities, feedback for program improvement, helpful tips for future presenters, and more. Examples of completed session summaries, compiled by WAFER's Executive Director, is available in the appendix.

### **Program Visions**

A collectively shared vision among each of the partners is the creation of a "*Farmer's Market Education Program*" to utilize locally grown fresh produce. The education program will occur at local farmer's market and Senior Meal Site locations to cover such topics as the varying types of foods available, how to select them and when they are in season, preparation, uses, recipes, buying in bulk when quantities are unlimited, preservation, the nutrient properties of farm to table, and much more. This vision will be achieved through the incorporation of additional community partners as needed.

Staff and board members for WAFER believe that potential exists to create specific educational programming to encourage capacity building within smaller food pantries throughout local counties. It is our joint goal to be a resource for new or growing organizations to enable them to capitalize on their surrounding resources, to increase the nutrition content of their food packages, and encourage the incorporation and increased use of fresh produce daily. In addition to capacity building we will provide direction for safe food handling, financial and product resource development, and outreach.

Recalling that one in three of WAFER's clients are under the age of eighteen, HTF and WAFER would like to design a *proactive education program targeting school-aged children*. With an emphasis on the schools which traditionally serve a higher percentage of impoverished children, this specific program would provide information about growing, eating, preparing, and cooking garden produce available locally. These children would gain skills that would allow them to recognize a variety of vegetables and the skill to help with preparation at home alongside their parents. Proactively educating children and giving them access to much needed vegetables will provide them with foods essential for proper development, set them up for the possibility of healthy decision making for life, and give parents the incentive to support this program and the interest of their children.

In addition to the programming and capacity offered by each collaborative partner there is the desire to form a *test group* of participants to evaluate impact over the course of a year or series of education sessions. Ideally the test group would be a cross section of clients currently utilizing WAFER services. The test group would be completely voluntary and participants would be rewarded at the end of the designated time frame for participation throughout the entire process. Collaborative partners would prefer to recruit a wide-range of participants - people who have chronic diseases, disabilities, family units, varying age categories, gender, ethnicity groups, and education level.

The test group would undergo an initial assessment to gather general health history, quality of life, current medications, current dietary choices, and general mental health status. The test group would be required to report in regularly throughout the award year. Upon program completion, the test group would undergo a final assessment to compare the results to the initial assessment.

Collaborative partners would rely on the feedback and realized effects of the participants in order to modify future programming for greater success. Specifically we are looking for an increase in the quality of life, decreased medications, increased wellness, increased produce consumption, educated choices when shopping or meal planning, weight loss associated with program participation, increased activity, increased energy, and a change of habits to decrease future health consequences.

Program implementation and the organization of each collaborative partner, thorough evaluation, and final compilation of data would ideally be administered by a “*Program Coordinator*”. This position will be funded through a portion of the grant award, not to exceed 10% of the award amount.

Collaborating partners collectively agree that this position should be filled by a college/graduate student from one of the local schools of higher education. Not only would this position provide the student with a valuable learning experience, but it will allow us to take advantage of the latest tools available in program evaluation. The “Coordinator” will be responsible for:

- Tracking all programs/sessions with regards to when, where, target population, participant incentives, etc to avoid duplication or overextension.
- Determining the capacity of each collaborative partner, identifying their strengths, and determining outreach site placement.
- Routine reporting to collaborative partners regarding the efforts of each partner.
- Keeping current on any changes to programming, needs, or successes which would impact each of the other partner’s area of experience.
- All aspects of the “test group”, including regular contact, measuring parameters, participant selection, initial and final screenings, and more.
- Developing the evaluation template to be used by all partners for specific programs based on the areas of interest or data sets needed as identified by each partner.
- Assisting collaborative partners with marketing, recruiting, and scheduling for educational sessions.
- Year-end final report, compilation of data, etc.

In order to provide a comprehensive County-wide education program, dual effort (within the WAFER building and outreach to many communities) is necessary for success. It is a vision of the program to offer *educational programming outside of the WAFER* “Nutrition Education Center” such as community centers, senior cites, churches, and gardens. Offering classes in various locations, communities, neighborhoods, and more would decrease attendance issues by eliminating transportation barriers. Education and facility partners are needed to move forward with this program vision.

### **Current Funding**

Current funding for the “Nutrition Education and Tool Project” is provided by Great Rivers United Way community investment grants. Individuals in the community can also support this project through private donations.

### **Current Food System Collaborative Efforts**

In addition to the program collaborations stated in the “Organizational Background” section, WAFER has active collaborations with several additional organizations for effective service to families throughout La Crosse County.

To begin with, the Board of Directors has been working to expand services to include a “Nutrition Education Center” located within the food pantry. The Board believes that the key to increasing nutrition and decreasing food insecurity is to provide education in a location the clientele feel comfortable in. Therefore, the UW-Extension office currently provides several education sessions each month. These sessions encourage the use of products typically available in the food pantry, how to use large quantities of product we have received and do not normally have, as well as how to incorporate more whole foods and healthy options. The scale of this current programming is small in nature, but offers our clientele a source of education not previously available. Increased frequency of the programming as well as food preparation demonstrations could yield greater results from these efforts.

In addition to more food related collaborations, WAFER also works in collaboration with the La Crosse County Health and Human Services Department to offer application assistance for County programs. The Health Department provided equipment and training in order for WAFER staff to assist individuals during the application processes. WAFER staff assists applicants with FoodShare (or the Food Stamp program) application, troubleshoots issues with an existing account, or getting the appropriate the supplemental paperwork to County staff. The purpose of offering an application site at WAFER is to eliminate the transportation barriers to and around the County buildings, decrease wait time typically experienced at the County site, personalized one-on-one assistance, and the

convenience of the “one stop shop” to get their food package at the same time. Application and acceptance to the FoodShare program decreases food insecurity and alleviates pressure on “emergency” food pantries. WAFER also offers space to a variety of community resource departments to educate clientele about resources that may be available for them and their family.

Supporting the efforts of food pantries throughout our county is achieved through collaboration with The Onalaska Food Basket and the West Salem Food Pantry. With a “give and take” relationship each food pantry supports the others to the best of their abilities. For example, each week WAFER drivers deliver a variety of product (produce, dairy, meat, bread) to the other two food pantries to supplement their food package. To support WAFER’s efforts these two food pantries provide canned goods when they receive more than they can handle before spoiling. Each food pantry serves as a resource for the other two in whatever capacity they can. The relationship that has developed between these three food pantries is one that cultivates collaboration, provides collective impact, and has mutual goals and objectives.

## **Conclusion**

There is nothing more empowering or encouraging than to sit at a table with all of the collaborators enthusiastically supporting and invested in this initiative. There is heartbreak associated with the interpersonal relationships each of us have with the impoverished people we serve. We are blessed with good health, a solid education, and the resources to achieve in the areas we deem important. In a world where there is sadness and pain for the many we serve, our choice is to be the light of hope, the voice of reassurance, and the support of a friend to suggest that life can be different.

Food insecurity and insufficient education are issues that will require years of effort to change. Collectively we are confident that our education, drive, and compassion will be only the beginning of something too big to comprehend for thousands of people living in poverty. As Gandhi so eloquently stated, “*You must be the change you want to see in the world.*” We are ready, we are that change.

"Recipe Rehab" – making over comfort foods. Thursday, April 20 from 9:30-10:30, Verbo Dietetic Students

Participants – 13 had signed up, 2 cancelled, 8 attended

Participants survey results:

Question 2: 1 (very little) to 5 (a lot), how useful was the presentation?

100% - 5

Question 3: 1 (very little) to 5 (a lot), how likely do you think you will be to use what you learned at home?

100% - 5

Question 4: 1 (very little) to 5 (a lot), how likely are you to incorporate more fresh produce daily?

87% - 5

13% - 3

Educator reported – "Overall, we believe the demo went great, we had the audience engaged while welcoming questions while creating an environment of informal discussion and they were freely ask questions about what we were doing. Length of time was good, we may have gone over or was very close to an hour. We liked the incentives at the end, and how they were a part of a recipe we included on a handout. The audience seemed to really enjoy talking with us, and seemed to be willing and left with the skills we aimed at providing.

The audience was very open to asking us questions and add comments for things we were doing. There may have been one chatty individual that was mildly disruptive but we didn't let that take away from the interactions we were having with the other individuals for the class. They were engaged and seemed like they were really learning some skills and tips for their everyday lives. It makes the demos flow so much easier when people are actually interested in what you are presenting. They had great questions that challenged us in different ways. Loved the crowd, and majority of them were very polite!

What went well? We think the overall flow of the demo was good, especially with answering the audience's questions and comments. Every topic and movement we had, definitely had a flow to it. I love the demo cart with the mirror, I think it makes it so easy for the audience to follow along with without having us needing to tip bowls or dishes to people's eye levels.

What could be improved? We believe we could have been more familiar with the kitchen layout, with the sink across the way, and think more about what that would mean for us with so many canned items we had to drain. We learned that we should always take the opportunity to see the layout of the kitchen when presented to do so."

Participant reaction - Participants indicated on their survey that they learned about how to use ramen soups differently, how to make a ramen omelet, using ramen noodles as a base, ramen goes with anything, microwave ramen noodles, what leeks are and cooking with ramen (never thought to add as a base), and the time limit on veggies before they are no good and ramen noodles are not only soup. Participants gave examples of the ways that they can incorporate fruits and veggies into meals such as with eggs or ramen soup, ramen pizza shell, smoothie, use leeks and in eggs, leeks cut them up, make omelet in microwave and taco salad. What the participants liked best about the presentation were the different dishes that were made, "the girls enthusiasm", leeks being used instead of onions, the menus, flavorful variety, learning new things, how to use ramen and using ramen because it is economical. Participants offered suggestions for things to change noting "to try to keep that one woman quieter", substitute beef, wear gloves, add more vegetables and use more spices, onions and cheese. Suggestions, comments and topic/tools for future presentations offered by participants were low carb for diabetics, kitchen tools (want to try ice cream machine and pressure cooker/canner), ideas for summer salads with fruits and veggies, more fast and easy menus, how to use plain yogurt, low sodium, how long canned goods are good after "expiration" date and tips on produce expiration and "anything would be great, I learn a lot from these classes to keep food costs low and good tasting."



Thursday, March 30 from 12-1, Viterbo Dietetic Students – “Carb Counting”

Participants – 15 had signed up, 12 attended (no notification from the 3 that didn’t attend)

Incentive – Cutting board, non-skid pad, knife, and \$10 grocery card for Woodman’s

Participant survey results:

Question 2. 1 (very little) to 5 (a lot), how useful was the presentation?

92% - 5

8% - 4

Question 3. 1 (very little) to 5 (a lot), how likely do you think you will be to use what you learned at home?

67% - 5

25% - 4

8% - 3

Question 4. 1 (very little) to 5 (a lot), how likely are you to incorporate more fresh produce daily?

84% - 5

8% - 4

8% - 3

Educator reported – The cooking demonstration went well and seemed to have all members engaged. About half of the 12 that showed up were diabetic and the other half came to learn about carbs in general. All seemed to appreciate the class and asked lots of relevant information. Together, we made low-carb Southwest Salad, and a chicken and rice soup and we shared information on how to increase and decrease the amount of carbs present in each. Participants also shared lots of information they had learned from other diabetic classes or from their own personal experience with diabetes. With the use of the pamphlet cheat sheet, all should be able to count the carbs present in a whole foods meal.

Participant reaction – Participants indicated on their survey that they learned about “rinsing to get rid of salt”, “a lot”, 1 carb=15g carbs, counting carbs, carb counting with exchanges, what carbs are good and bad for, carb serving per amount, “carbs give you energy”. Examples of the new ways to increase fruits and veggies in snacks, participants said “in soups”, fruit bar, “I eat a lot of fruits and vegetables”, in snacks, salads. The “bests” from today’s presentation was “everything”, socializing, “learning something”, “the way carbs were explained”, recipes, “learning more about carbs”, soup and salad, “very informative”, importance of carbs and sugars. Suggestions for changes included “no corn”, “add nuts or raisins to salad”, “more salads”. Suggestions for future classes/incentives were garlic press, burritos, electric roaster, sandwich cooker, “Thank You”. WAFER staff received many comments regarding the relevancy of the program, the thoroughness of the presentation, and just general overall gratitude for the opportunity.



## Education Session Participant Evaluation

1. What is one (or more) new thing you learned today?
2. How useful was today's presentation? 1 (very little) – 5 (very likely)
3. How likely do you think you will use what you learned today at home? 1 (very little) – 5 (very likely)
4. How likely are you to incorporate more fresh produce daily? 1 (very little) – 5 (very likely)
5. What is one new example of how you can increase fruits or vegetables into meals/snacks?
6. What did you like best about today's presentation?
7. Do you have other comments or suggestions? Topics/kitchen tools for future presentations?