

Maine Extension Homemakers

September, 2024



Presidential Ponderings

At the Annual Meeting in June, Vice President Judy Mann gave the State Report for 2023. We decided to print the whole message here.



The State of The State of the Maine Extension Homemakers

"The Maine Extension Homemakers have been in existence in the State of Maine for 74 years. While once a prominent fixture in all 16 of Maine's Counties, in 2023, Extension Homemakers were present in Androscoggin, Aroostook, Cumberland, Franklin, Hancock, Penobscot, Somerset, and York Counties. Within these counties, there are approximately 20 clubs. When reviewing the yearly reports, a few things stand out that homemakers do across the state.

#1 Homemakers serve

Volunteer efforts across the state benefitted over one hundred community organizations within the State of Maine, from Aroostook to York Counties.

#2 Homemakers donate

Whether it is time, or goods or outright cash, Maine Extension Homemakers are generous with their donations. Scholarships, camperships, supplies for shelter bags, sewing pajamas, making comfort pillows, holding community baby showers, dressing a child, supplying school supplies, collecting tissues, outfitting a Rotary Tree, baking cupcakes, dollars to K9s on the Front Lines, and to supporting so many people in need, and so many more examples, homemakers have been generous.

#3 Homemakers like to eat

Part of being a homemaker is spending time with friends who are also homemakers. Every club in every county listed going out to eat as part of their yearly activities, and that's a good thing! Eating meals alone can be a bore, but eating out with friends always lifts one's spirits. Studies have shown that eating with friends increases appetites and improves moods, so go out for coffee and dessert!

extension.umaine.edu/homemakers/

The University of Maine is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.

Mark Your Calendars

September is packed with opportunities for small celebrations, such as national whole grains month, national square dance month, national hat month and national sewing month. And you can feast your way through the month, as September is also National Chicken, Mushroom, Rice and Potato Month!

September 11-14: Oxford Fair

September 13: MEHC
President Marie Temm's
Birthday

September 13-15: New
Portland Lions Fair

September 15-21:
Farmington Fair

September 20-22: Common
Ground Fair

September 22-28:
Cumberland Fair

September 29-October 6:
Freyburg Fair

October 14: Indigenous
People's Day

Save the date

May 12-13, 2025: Annual
Homemakers Meeting hosted
by Hancock County, Eastport
Hall, Bangor

#4 Homemakers care for one another

With a focus on mental health in 2023, more and more homemakers experienced the joy and satisfaction of receiving cards and notes from fellow homemakers. Reaching out to tell someone you're thinking of them has benefits for both the sender and receiver. Some clubs regularly make meals and deliver them to members who need a little help preparing food for themselves. Sometimes, we drive a fellow homemaker to an appointment when they need a little help. Sometimes, we support each other in times of need.

#5 Homemakers educate

Across the state, all clubs in all counties held educational programs for their members. Learning about birds and butterflies, edible wild foods, electric pressure cookers, canning techniques, gardening, soil quality, the Food and Nutrition Education Program at Cooperative Extension or travel destinations near and far, homemakers prove time and time again that they are lifelong learners, and incorporate education into their yearly programming

#6 Homemakers are crafty

Homemakers enjoy learning new crafts and making crafts almost as much as they like going out to eat! Jewelry making, wreath making, floral arrangement, needle crafts, sewing projects, quilting projects, felting, soap and candle making, card making, and on and on and on... the creativity is astounding.

#7 Homemakers are becoming fewer

With all the wonderful things homemakers do, there are fewer clubs and fewer members than ever in our 74-year history. Homemakers have evolved over the past seven decades, and the terminology of young families today does not necessarily reflect the terminology of young families in 2024. However, what we learned during the COVID shut downs was that the skills that were important in the 50s and 60s and 70s are still important to families and individuals today—things like growing your own food, preserving that food, recycling food scraps into compost, raising healthy families, sewing, learning how to maintain a home, learning how to repair basic things around the house, budgeting, communicating, and staying safe are all skills that young people today recognize as important skills to learn and know. These are skills we, as homemakers, know...many of them were learned through our involvement with homemakers.

We have a role to play, still, in helping shape a new generation of people. They may not define themselves as Homemakers, but they need and want to learn what we know.

Our challenge is how do we make that connection with them? Do we offer workshops through adult education? Through our churches? Do we offer classes through Cooperative Extension? Or training opportunities at county-wide events like trade shows or fairs, or at multi-county events like the Freyburg Fair or the Common Ground Country Fair? Perhaps a state event like the Agriculture Trade Show?

For the remainder of 2024 our focus will be to bring our skills to the people in our communities who need them, brainstorm ways to pass our knowledge on to others, work within your county clubs to identify at least one event you can host to teach a skill to someone. Perhaps not a lot of people show interest. That's ok, offer it again. Advertise a different way, put bulletins out at church, work with your local library, or adult ed, or maybe teach a skill at a summer camp or through your local recreation department. Reach out in any way you can to connect to people to teach them a life skill, and educate them about homemakers. Keep trying-don't give up.

We must grow our groups if we are to continue to be able to educate and serve the members of our communities.

Thank you for all you do, and will continue to do, as Maine Extension Homemakers.

- Best wishes to you all, your MEHC President, Marie Temm

Around the State

Aroostook County

Aroostook County held their Annual Spring Tea on May 2nd with the theme of Butterflies. A guest speaker from the Maine Butterfly Survey spoke about the various butterflies that are in Aroostook County and their host foods, etc. Former President Carolyn Kelley was remembered during the meeting with a donation going toward a bench at the House of Comfort in Presque Isle.

Cumberland County

Cumberland County-President Marie Temm is recovering following an accidental fall, resulting in a broken hip. She is healing and is grateful for the many cards she has received from members.

Franklin County

Franklin County hosted the Annual Meeting in Jay from June 14-15. It was a well-organized and planned event and there were lots of raffles, and food, and good hospitality! As a Community Service Project, members of the 5 groups sewed shelter bags in support of the 4-H Days Service Project slated for July 20. Franklin takes July and August "off", but will return to their regular monthly board meetings in September.



Aroostook County Extension Homemakers. Rose Harris and Diane Parent take in items at the fair.



Aroostook County Extension Homemakers. L-R Marianne Thomas, Janie Schaefer and Betty Ryder, Spragueville, new aprons at the fair.



Hancock County Homemakers held a Community Baby Shower

Hancock County

Hancock County hosted a community baby shower with all gifts to go to Bucksport Community Concern, who provides layettes to needy mothers for their newborns. They recently toured the Page Farm and Museum at the University of Maine.

Somerset County

Somerset County held their annual meeting on April 22nd with an Earth Day theme. They collected 9 boxes and 3 tote bags of supplies for the Shelter Bag initiative. They held a BIG SURPRISE Baby Shower for support staff Emily Bofia. She never saw it coming, so it was even more special to be able to have such a fun surprise. It felt wonderful to buy baby items!



Cake for Baby Bofia, Somerset County

Waldo County

Waldo County has begun the work of re-forming their group! They will meet at the Burnham Town Office and will be reaching out to nearby groups for some inspiration for projects. Welcome back!!

York County

York County has a very active online face book homemaker group that has 492 followers and 26 dues-paying members. They have held in-person workshops for paid members and have shared information via their face book page. They post almost daily and share ideas, tips, news and photos.



Emily Bofia and a quilt made by Lauree Swift, Somerset County.

Recapping the Annual Meeting in Jay

What's In the box? Franklin County Extension Homemaker groups asked us to think outside the box when preparing for the first Annual Meeting of the Maine Extension Homemakers Council, held on June 14 and 15. Attendees came from Androscoggin, Aroostook, Cumberland, Franklin, Hancock, Somerset, and Waldo Counties.



Somerset County Homemakers prepare to surprise Administrative Specialist Emily Bofia for a surprise baby shower

The Annual Business Meeting included a presentation of Coins for *Caring to K9s on the Front Lines* in the amount of \$1,254.00. Our 2025 recipient for Coins for Caring is the Ronald McDonald House.

Train the Trainer offerings included “Preserving Photos and Documents”, “Coffee in the Garden” and the Geographic Area of Study was “The St. John Valley”. One training packet per county was provided, and should be available for borrowing at your County Extension Office.

A heart-felt “thank you” to all those in Franklin County who made centerpieces, sold raffle tickets, cooked, made sweets, set tables, washed dishes, and just pitched in wherever that was help needed. Great job!

Maine 4-H Days-Service Project

The 4-H Days Service Project was held on Saturday, July 20th. What a fantastic outpouring of support from our Homemaker Extension groups across the state! Nine long cafeteria-style tables were filled with shampoo, conditioner, body wash, soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, razors, shaving cream, socks, puzzle books, hairbrushes, and tissues. Special thanks to Andrea Mahoney, with Hancock County 4-H, for spearheading the filling of the bags. 145 bags were filled, with most of the bags being distributed through the Maine Families Home Visitation Program, with offices throughout the State of Maine.



Janet’s Jammies

New, larger patterns have been mailed out to all counties wishing to participate in the 2024 Janet’s Jammies project. Pajamas should be completed by the end of October, and finished pajamas should be brought to the MEHC Board Meeting on November 4, 2024, for packaging and distribution. Please contact Lisa if you need some



Andrea Mahoney and volunteers arrange Shelter Bag items collected by Maine Extension Homemakers during 4-H Days at Windsor Fairgrounds

extension.umaine.edu/homemakers/

The University of Maine is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.

Staff News

In August, we said goodbye to **Heidi Palmer**, Advisor in Androscoggin, Cumberland and York Counties. Heidi has retired from Cooperative Extension, and will take on the role of Director of the Maine Farm Bureau, and we thank her for her work with the Maine Extension Homemakers, and wish her well in her new role.

Janet's Jammies labels and hearts. No size tags are available for the new larger sized pajamas. It would be great if one person in each county could serve as the "Pajama Coordinator".

Horticulture and Gardening Tips for September

By Abigail Griffith, Horticulture Assistant, UMaine Cooperative Extension

Dealing with a bumper crop of something? Donate surplus produce to your local food pantry. Call ahead to be sure they can handle it (some don't have cold storage) and find out when you can drop it off.

Don't let weeds go to seed! Even if your garden is cranking along, any weeds left to go to seed will leave an enormous amount of seed and future weeds for you to contend with next season. Even one weed left to go to seed can deposit thousands of seeds in your "seed bank" for next year.

Lawn care. Early September is an optimal time to seed your lawn. The late summer's warm days and cool nights are ideal for strong seedling growth, and there is less weed competition in late summer than in spring. University of Maine Cooperative Extension has several fact sheets about lawn care:

- Bulletin #2367, Establishing a Home Lawn in Maine extension.umaine.edu/publications/2367e/
- Bulletin #2243, Maintaining a Home Lawn in Maine extension.umaine.edu/publications/2243e/
- Bulletin #2166, Steps to a Low-Input, Healthy Lawn extension.umaine.edu/publications/2166e/

Perhaps you want to start getting rid of the areas of your lawn that are hard to care for and plant native groundcovers, shrubs, or wildflowers. Contact your local Cooperative Extension Office or check out Wild Seed Project for more inspiration!

Keep an eye out for invasive plant species. Keep educating yourself about what to look for and make

knocking them back part of your gardening chores. Don't let that bittersweet go to seed—even just lopping the vines at the ground, so it doesn't set seeds, is better than nothing. More information about invasive species can be found on the UMaine Cooperative Extension website:



extension.umaine.edu/homemakers/

The University of Maine is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.

extension.umaine.edu/invasivespecies/what-where/

Have you seen any hornworms on your tomatoes? As you scout your garden for pests, keep an eye out for hornworms on your tomatoes, and pick them off. They are well camouflaged so look for defoliated areas on your tomatoes or their distinct droppings, which resemble small grenades! Check out the Extension's Insect, Tick, and Plant Diseases resources to educate yourself on what you may be encountering in your garden. extension.umaine.edu/ipm/

September is also a great time to order your spring-flowering bulbs.

Maybe try something new or prepare an area for some early spring color! You can even tuck them under deciduous trees, as they will bloom before the leaves come on. This is the time to get your orders in for a fall planting! Check out Cornell Cooperative Extension "The Culture of Spring Flowering Bulbs" for more information.

chemung.cce.cornell.edu/resources/culture-of-spring-flowering-bulbs

Visit UMaine Cooperative Extension's Food Preservation website for instructional videos, workshops, and more!

extension.umaine.edu/food-health/food-preservation/

Recipes

The National Center for Home Food Preservation has recipes for all your canning pleasures. All recipes are tested for optimum safety and flavor. With so many cucumbers in the garden, check out this recipe for a tasty relish.

Visit the National Center for Home Food Preservation website for access to their pickle relish recipe.

nchfp.uga.edu/how/pickle/relishes-salads/pickle-relish/



Asiatic Bittersweet

Cabbage with Herb Butter

Servings: 12 | Serving Size: 1 piece

Ingredients

- 1 medium head green cabbage, cut into wedges
- 1/2 cup butter or butter substitute, melted
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced green onions
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, minced
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 1/2 teaspoons minced fresh thyme or 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/4 cup shredded cheddar cheese



Directions

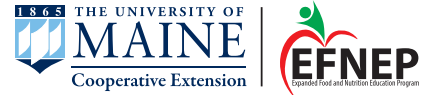
1. Place cabbage in a large saucepan and cover with water.
2. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and cover, and cook for 8–10 minutes or until tender.
3. Combine the butter, green onions, parsley, lemon juice, and thyme.
4. Drain the cabbage and transfer to a serving plate.
5. Drizzle with the herb butter and sprinkle with cheese.

12 servings per container	
Serving size	1 piece (94g)
<hr/>	
Amount per serving	
Calories	90
<hr/>	
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 5g	25%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 20mg	7%
Sodium 35mg	2%
Total Carbohydrate 5g	2%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 3g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 2g	
<hr/>	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 47mg	4%
Iron 1mg	6%
Potassium 147mg	4%



Chicken, Corn, and Rice Casserole

To celebrate National Chicken Month, and National Rice Month, give this quick casserole from our EFNEP friends a try.



Servings: 6 | Serving Size: 1 cup

Ingredients

- 1 cup instant brown rice, cooked according to package
- 2 cups frozen corn, thawed
- 1 can (12.5 ounces) chicken breast
- 1 can (4 ounces) diced green chili peppers
- 1 container (5.3 ounces) plain Greek yogurt
- 1 cup shredded cheese
- Optional: 6 tablespoons salsa, divided

Directions

1. Cook instant brown rice according to package directions.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a casserole dish or 8×8-inch pan with cooking spray.
3. Thaw corn in the microwave.
4. Drain the water off the chicken breast. Use a fork to shred the chicken breast.
5. Combine rice, corn, chicken, chili peppers, yogurt, and shredded cheese in a medium bowl.
6. Scoop mixture into the casserole dish.
7. Bake casserole for 30 minutes until heated through to 165°F.
8. Optional: Top each serving with 1 tablespoon salsa.

Tip:

Make this a meatless dish by substituting beans for the chicken. Add spice by using pepper jack cheese.

You can find this and many more recipes on the University of Maine Cooperative Extension website: extension.umaine.edu/food-health/recipes/

Photos: All photos property of University of Maine Cooperative Extension, unless otherwise noted.

© University of Maine Cooperative Extension, 2024



In complying with the letter and spirit of applicable laws and pursuing its own goals of diversity, the University of Maine System does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship status, familial status, ancestry, age, disability physical or mental, genetic information, or veterans or military status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies: Director of Equal Opportunity, 5713 Chadbourne Hall, Room 412, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5713, 207.581.1226, TTY 711 (Maine Relay System).

extension.umaine.edu/homemakers/

The University of Maine is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.