WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for October 28, 2024
Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about holiday spending, and as always look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

The latest winter holiday spending prediction from the National Retail Federation forecast that spending will increase between 2.5% and 3.5% compared to last year. There are also a couple of different budget estimates out there anticipating each person will spend between $875 to $1,652.

No matter what our income, a spending plan can be helpful as we start planning for Christmas. Gathering your thoughts now can allow for flexibility as opportunities come up in the next two months. Here are some spending categories to consider.

1. Food – What would the holidays be without special meals, cookie baking, or candy making? Remember that increased busyness in our schedules could result in more fast-food eating. It is sometimes a lack of planning that causes us to spend more on food this time of year.

2. Decorations – Not everyone is drawn to decorating, but for some people this category is where overspending occurs. Including decorating costs as part of the holiday season budget can give you the freedom to enjoy creating a festive atmosphere without getting carried away with debt.

3. Experiences – These can range from completely free to "how much did you say again?" Not all gifts need to be things, and sometime an experience now – or tickets for the future – could be a great way to make memories while spending time with family or friends.

4. Travel – For some families this can be a large portion of the holiday budget. Be on the lookout right now for less expensive airline tickets. Traveling could include car rental, hotel stays, pet boarding, and more.

5. Charity – If we don't budget for it, it can get squeezed right out of the picture. There are plenty of ways to be generous right here, like the Salvation Army Christmas Castle project that helped nearly 400 kids in our community last year.

6. Gifts – I purposely left this one for last, because when people budget for Christmas, this is usually the only category that most planners think of. Planning early allows for more

opportunities to find sales. The downside is that without discipline, there is also more time to keep making purchases. Create a spending plan to give you freedom with thoughtful decisions.

And now let's see what else is new from OSU Extension. During the "Take Charge of Your Diabetes During the Holidays" program you will learn how to prepare favorite holiday foods that are both nutritious and delicious. The program will be Wednesday, November 6 from 5:30-7:30 PM at Coshocton Regional Medical Center. There is no cost for the program, but registration is required and is limited to 30 participants. Register by visiting coshocton.osu.edu or call OSU Extension for more details at 740-622-2265.

Also, we here at OSU Extension are funded cooperatively through local, state and federal tax dollars. Forty percent of our funding comes through state and federal funds and 60% of the funding for our staff and programming is through a local tax levy. This levy first passed in 2010 and has been renewed twice. This levy is on the ballot for renewal in this fall's election. It is not a new tax. It costs the owner of a $100,000 property less than $1 per month.

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and empower our families, individuals, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at coshocton.osu.edu. Make it a healthy day!