

# HEALTHY, WEALTHY, & WISE

The Family & Consumer Sciences Newsletter

Manatee County Extension Service | 1303 17th Street West · Palmetto, FL 34221 | (941) 722-4524

## Healthy, Wealthy, & Wise: The Blog

There's a new blog in town! The Family & Consumer Sciences department is pleased to announce the new blog (short for *web log*), "Healthy, Wealthy, & Wise." Just like the newsletter, the blog is designed to provide users with the latest, up-to-date, research-based information on the following topics:

- Nutrition & Health
- Food Safety & Quality
- Housing & Home Environment
- Parenting & Family Life
- Disaster Preparedness

The blog will be updated regularly by Samantha Kennedy, M.S., Family & Consumer Sciences Agent. Blog users are encouraged to leave comments and ask questions. There are also lots of useful links. To read the blog, please visit: <http://manatee-fcs.livejournal.com>.

## Agent's Corner



I simply cannot believe it's October already! Wow, does time fly. Soon it'll be Thanksgiving and then Christmas and then 2009.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. Fall is here and with it, cooler weather (eventually). That means being able to spend more time outdoors without the risk of melting into a puddle of your former self. Of course, just because the air is cooler doesn't mean the sun is less harmful. So stay cautious and continue using that sunscreen!

Take care of yourself. ☺

*Samantha Kennedy*  
Samantha Kennedy, M.S.  
Family & Consumer Sciences Agent

## October 2008 Volume 3, Issue 7

### *Simply Florida: A Taste of Flavors from the Sunshine State*

Looking for a great gift idea for that gourmet cook in your life? The new *Simply Florida* cookbook created by Family & Consumer Sciences agents throughout Florida is the perfect choice! Order your copy today by calling Samantha at (941) 722-4524 or by visiting <http://www.simplyflorida.org>.

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## Flavor of the Month: Acorn Squash Soufflé

### Ingredients:

1/2 c. (1 stick) butter or margarine	2 egg yolks, lightly beaten
2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour	2 c. shredded carrots
1 c. milk	2 c. cooked acorn squash
1 tsp. chopped onion	3/4 c. cracker crumbs
1 1/2 tsp. salt	1 c. (4 oz.) shredded cheddar cheese
1/8 tsp. pepper	2 egg whites

### Directions:

Melt the butter in a heavy saucepan over low heat. Add the flour and cook until thickened and bubbly, stirring constantly. Stir in the milk gradually. Cook until smooth and thickened, stirring constantly. Stir in the onion, salt, and pepper. Remove from the heat and cool slightly. Add the egg yolks and beat until blended. Stir in the carrots, squash, cracker crumbs, and cheese.

Beat the egg whites in a bowl until stiff but enough for dry peaks to form. Fold into the squash mixture. Spoon into a greased baking dish or soufflé dish. Bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 45 minutes or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean.

*Yield: 8 servings.*

*Taken from Simply Florida: A Taste of Flavors from the Sunshine State.*



Help end hunger and improve your vocabulary by testing your word skills at **freerice.com**. Playing the vocabulary game generates advertisements, which pay for the rice that's donated to the United Nations World Food Program. Each correct answer earns 20 grains.

Pain in the shoulder blade or upper back is a classic pre-heart attack symptom—occurring up to four to six months or even a week before a heart attack. *Others include:* unusual fatigue, sleep disturbance, shortness of breath, chest pain, indigestion, and anxiety. If you've been experiencing one or more of these symptoms and are concerned, talk to your doctor.



"Anybody caught selling macramé in public should be dyed a natural color and hung out to dry." - Calvin Trillin

## Winter Squash: Storage and Preparation

Store winter squash in a cool spot with good air circulation (not the refrigerator, but a cool pantry) for up to a month.

Cutting into winter squash requires a lot of caution and a bit of strength. Smaller squash can be jabbed with a large, sturdy knife and then carefully sliced open. For harder or larger varieties, you may need to tap the knife through the skin with a rubber mallet or meat mallet.

If you can't cut into the squash, place in a preheated 400°F oven for 12 minutes or microwave on high for 3 minutes. The heat will loosen the skin enough to let a knife inside—but be careful of escaping steam from the inner core.

Once opened, clean out the seeds and stringy fibers with a spoon—a grapefruit spoon is a great tool for the job.

Winter squash can be peeled with a vegetable peeler or paring knife, but no need to remove the skin if you're planning to bake it and scoop out the flesh when it's done.

*Taken from Eating Well, September/October 2007.*



## The Bugs are Back in Town!

Well, maybe. September is the start of the second lovebug season in Florida. However, just because the pesky flyers have been conspicuously absent so far doesn't mean we should count them out.

Just in case our "loving" friends decide to pop in for a visit, here's a tip on how to clean their carcasses off your car before they can damage your paint:

Spray the remnants with plain water and gently rub them away with a dryer sheet. It works like a charm!



## Kitchen Tip

Easily carve thin slices from large cuts of meats like flank steak, tenderloin, or pancetta by chilling them in the freezer for 15 minutes.



To prevent ice crystals from forming in your favorite frozen treats, try these tips:

- Press plastic wrap directly on the surface before putting the lid back on.
- Be patient! Soften the ice cream slowly; don't nuke it!
- Run the scoop under hot water then dry it off before scooping.

"I didn't really say everything I said."

Yogi Berra

## Nuking Know-How

### What kinds of wraps are OK to use?

No worries with wax paper, cooking bags, parchment paper, paper plates, or white paper towels (the dyes in non-white towels can seep into your food).

Plastic wrap is OK, too. But pull it taut over the container so it doesn't touch food, because chemicals from plastic wrap can leach during heating.

### Which containers are safe to use?

Any rigid plastic container that's labeled "microwave-safe" is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for indefinite use. Non-rigid containers such as Gladware, etc. is tested safe for up to six uses and makes an easy transition from fridge to microwave. Glass containers made for the microwave are also a good option. Other containers may be equally safe, but if they aren't labeled, they may not meet FDA standards.

### What should never go in the microwave?

Soft or flexible containers, like empty yogurt or margarine tubs, may warp or melt, releasing chemicals into your food. Styrofoam is the worst. Also, be wary of imported dishware with metallic glazes—some of them aren't microwave-compatible.

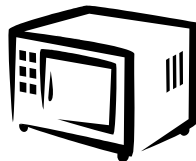
Covering food with aluminum foil won't make your microwave explode, but it can cause small sparks and will actually keep food from being heated.

### How do I prevent cold spots when I'm reheating?

To warm up your food evenly, use low power, add some water or other liquid, and keep the food covered to hold in steam and prevent it from drying out. Then move the food around from time to time to endure a more even heat. (That's why instructions on microwaveable meals recommend stirring the food midway through cooking.)

### How do I cook meat without overdoing the edges?

Cut the meat in portions of the same thickness. Cook on high power (in a 600- to 750-watt oven) for six minutes per pound. Larger cuts should be cooked on low. Seafood should be cooked for only three to four minutes per pound. Since food continues to cook after the microwave stops, keep food covered (taking advantage of the steam) and let it stand for a few minutes before checking the internal temperature with a food thermometer.



Foods cooked in the microwave are just as nutritious as those cooked on the stove. In many cases, microwaved foods even retain more vitamins & minerals.

*Adapted from Health, April 2007.*

## Seven Forgettable Fads

We've all seen those infomercials and "As Seen on TV" sections in the store touting miracle products that will "cleanse" and "detoxify" your body, making you feel like a million bucks.

They are, of course, not all they're cracked up to be. Here are seven that you shouldn't bother wasting your money on:

1. **Activated charcoal capsules.** They don't absorb and flush out toxins; your liver takes care of that.
2. **Chelation.** This chemical injection into the blood won't reduce plaque buildup in arteries.
3. **Colonic cleanser kits.** These herb capsules and drink powders make you go, but so does bran cereal (and the cereal also has beneficial vitamins and minerals).
4. **Excessive sweating.** Seaweed wraps or long stints in the sauna might feel good, but not because you're eliminating any toxins.
5. **Herbal supplements and teas.** Capsules, extracts, and brews made of everything from milk thistle to marshmallow root might sound healthy, but they won't do anything for your liver, colon, and lymph nodes.
6. **Ionic foot baths.** These gizmos supposedly generate positively-charged ions that force toxins through the pores of your feet. And you're going to win the lottery, too.
7. **Patches.** Foot patches with vinegars and other natural ingredients that "pull" toxins out of the body? Try a foot massage instead.

*Taken from Health, May 2007.*

## Last Laugh...

**"You can't put many more types of meat on a bacon cheeseburger. Once you've made it a bacon cheeseburger, you're done. If you're adding more than that, you have to opt out of Medicare."**

**Bill Maher**

## Important Dates

October 6	Guild Birthday Lunch 1:00 - 3:00pm
October 13	Guild Meeting 1:00 - 3:00pm  *Distribution Day
October 20, 27	Guild Meeting 1:00 - 3:00pm
November 3	Guild Birthday Lunch 1:00 - 3:00pm

### DISTRIBUTION DAY October 13, 2008

Due to the generous donation of time and talents, we have enough for another distribution day. Thanks, everyone!


  
**UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA**  
 IFAS Extension  
*Manatee County Extension*

*Solutions for Your Life.*

Samantha E. Kennedy, M.S.  
 Family & Consumer Sciences  
 1303 17th Street West  
 Palmetto, FL 34221

Phone: 941-722-4524  
 Fax: 941-721-6608  
 Email: [skennedy@ufl.edu](mailto:skennedy@ufl.edu)

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