

HEALTHY, WEALTHY, & WISE

The Family & Consumer Sciences Newsletter

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

We're Back!

After a long hiatus, the "Healthy, Wealthy, & Wise" newsletter is back, filled with timely news you can use on topics ranging from nutrition and food safety to personal safety and health.

If this is your first time receiving this newsletter, thank you for subscribing! I hope you enjoy it and find it useful. If you are a newsletter veteran, thank you for being patient and for all your inquiries about the newsletter. I hope this and future editions don't disappoint.

In the future, this newsletter will be produced bi-monthly, with six issues a year. So sit back, relax, and enjoy.

PLEASE NOTE

In an effort to save on postage and reduce paper use, you can receive this newsletter electronically. To sign up for our electronic mailing list, please send an e-mail to skennedy@ufl.edu. Receiving the newsletter via e-mail means you will no longer receive a hard copy in the mail.

August/September 2009 Volume 4, Issue 1

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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Agent's Corner



If you're like me and you enjoy reading fun and educational web logs (or "blogs") on the Internet, then this is your lucky day! Because "Healthy, Wealthy, and Wise" is also a web log (or "blog"). Just like the newsletter, the blog is filled with timely, current, and relevant information to help you live a safe and healthy life.

You can find it at <http://manatee-fcs.livejournal.com>. So click, read, comment, ask questions, and enjoy!

Go Gators!

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

Is that a fish in my tomato?



Genetically modified foods are becoming more and more common in today's food supply.

Molecular biologists are genetically engineering many seeds to enhance traits such as resistance to herbicides and other desirable characteristics.

The FDA has approved more than 50 bio-engineered foods, including papayas, potatoes, squash, sweet corn, tomatoes, and soybeans.

Produce that is going to be labeled "organic," however, cannot be genetically modified.

"I've been on a diet for two weeks and all I've lost is two weeks."

Totie Fields

Grilling Great Grub

Grilling and summer go hand-in-hand and with over a month and a half of official summer left, there's still time to break out the grill for a delicious family feast.

Here are a few tips to help you become a master of the grill:

1. **Break up your prep work.** If you're having company over for dinner, grilling most of the menu ahead of time can help ease your stress when the guests arrive.
2. **Get the grill grates clean and hot.** Hot grates ensure the food won't stick and also helps prevent cross-flavoring. For a gas grill, allow it to heat for 10 to 15 minutes; for a charcoal grill, wait until the coals become white-hot.
3. **Don't fiddle.** Resist the urge to flip! Flipping the food too often may cause it to stick to the grates. Not to mention, you'll miss out on those tantalizing grill marks!
4. **Stay close.** Unlike the oven or the stovetop, grilling requires a little more finesse and lot more watchfulness. Once the cooking starts, remain at your station to reduce the risk of a fire or other accident.
5. **Skewer veggies for ease.** It's not necessary, but using thin metal skewers to grill veggies makes it a lot easier to flip them. It also helps prevent those veggie chunks from falling through the grates into the fire.

Adapted from *Cooking Light*, May 2009

Flavor of the Month: Tomatoes and Eggs Alfredo

Ingredients:

2 large fully ripened tomatoes (about 1 pound)
1/2 tsp. dried thyme
1/4 tsp. salt
3/4 c. prepared Alfredo sauce
6 eggs, lightly beaten (or equivalent amount of egg substitute)
2 English muffins, split and toasted
8 slices (8 oz.) bacon, crisp-cooked and drained

Directions:

Core the tomatoes. Cut two thick slices from the center of each tomato. Chop the remaining portions of the tomatoes. The chopped tomatoes should measure about 1 3/4 cups. Sprinkle both side of the tomato slices with the thyme and salt. Heat the Alfredo sauce in a saucepan using the package directions. Cover and keep warm.

Combine the eggs and chopped tomatoes in a bowl and mix well. Pour into a medium nonstick skillet. Cook, covered, for 5 minutes or until set; do not stir. Cut the egg mixture into quarters.

Arrange one muffin half on each of four serving plates. Layer each muffin half with 1 tablespoon of the Alfredo sauce, two slices of the bacon, one-fourth of the egg mixture, 2 tablespoons of the remaining Alfredo sauce, and one tomato slice. Garnish with a sprig of your favorite herb, if desired. Serve immediately.

Yield: 4 servings

This recipe was taken from *Simply Florida: A Taste of Flavors from the Sunshine State*.

Get your copy today!

"Thanks to the Interstate Highway System, it is now possible to travel from coast to coast without seeing anything."

Charles Kuralt



A Milk Mystery

TRUE or FALSE: Skim milk has more calcium than whole milk.

If you answered FALSE, you may be a dairy dunce. But have no fear, many people get this wrong. The fact is, the less fat milk contains, the more calcium it has.

Why? Well, it's simple really. Fat molecules take up a lot of space, leaving less room for other nutrients. When you take the fat away, there's more room for other nutrients like calcium. And FYI, per 8 oz. serving, whole milk contains 276mg of calcium, 2% milk contains 285 mg, 1% milk contains 290mg, and skim milk contains 306mg. Drink up!

An Egg-cellent Suggestion



Some uncooked eggs can carry *Salmonella*, a dangerous group of bacteria that can cause serious illness. The minimum internal cooking temperature for eggs is 145°F, which has been determined to be adequate to kill salmonella bacteria.

For recipes that ask for eggs that will not be cooked or baked thoroughly, use pasteurized eggs, which have been treated prior to packaging to minimize the risk of salmonella.

Eggs should always be stored in the refrigerator whether they have been pasteurized or not. For maximum freshness and safety, they should also be stored in their original carton on the top shelf. You should also always wash your hands after handling raw eggs.

Fat: Fact or Fable?

In honor of cholesterol education month, here's a list of facts and fables regarding fat.

⇒ **A fat-free diet is the ticket to optimal health.** FABLE. Many studies have shown that diet consisting of moderate amounts of fat (with emphasis on the mono- and polyunsaturated kinds) can help reduce the risk of heart disease. Not to mention, vitamins A, D, E, and K require fat in order to do their jobs in the body.

⇒ **Dietary cholesterol is not the same as fat.** FACT. Dietary cholesterol is a waxy, fatlike substance found in foods derived *from animals*. (Plant foods DO NOT naturally contain cholesterol.) Cholesterol and fat are often paired together because many high-fat foods are also high in cholesterol.

⇒ **Fat makes you fat.** FABLE. Fat does add calories to your diet. But so do carbohydrates, protein, and alcohol. However, fat contains the most calories per gram (9) and can therefore add calories to a meal more readily. Just remember, too many calories from any source (without the equivalent amount being used as energy) will lead to weight gain.

⇒ **Eating fatty fish is better than taking fish oil pills.** FACT. EPA and DHA are two beneficial fatty acids prevalent in many fish which have been linked to a reduced risk of heart disease. And while you can get these fatty acids in a supplement, actually consuming fish regularly can also add other beneficial nutrients like calcium and protein to your diet.

⇒ **All trans fats are bad.** FACT. There are two types of trans fats: artificial ones and natural ones. Artificial ones are manufactured from hydrogenated oils found in processed snack foods and margarine. Natural ones are found in foods such as beef and dairy products. The shape of trans fat molecules makes them clump together more easily in your blood vessels, which can lead to plaque build-up. Foods containing trans fats should be eaten in moderation.

Adapted from *Cooking Light*, May 2009





September is National Cholesterol Education Month



Safe Supermarket Shopping

Grocery shopping can be a tedious task and our dislike for it may cause us to turn a blind eye to safety for the sake of just getting it over with. However, thinking about food safety even during the shopping process is very important. Here are some things to keep an eye out for on your next food shopping trip:

Do a quick once-over. Your grocery store should be clean and well-lit, and there shouldn't be an abundance of torn or broken packages or loads of perishables sitting in the aisles. Most grocery stores are inspected two to three times a year by county health departments and you have the right to see the results if you're concerned. Just ask the store manager.

Shop in order. Shop the center aisles first. These contain the nonperishable, shelf-stable items that won't be at risk of sitting too long at room temperature. Then pick up the temperature-controlled items such as dairy, meat, produce, and frozen items last before heading to the checkout lane. The goal is to get in and out of the store as quickly as possible to keep foods from getting too warm. Just be sure to leave a space for the cold foods in your cart so raw meats are not sitting on top of your other groceries.

Check labels. Check the "sell by" or "use by" dates on the packages. If the date is fast approaching and you know you won't be using the item right away, check the back of the shelf. The fresher stuff is usually stocked there. On rare occasions, items past their date are still on the shelf. If you come across an item like that, remove it and give it to the store manager for proper removal.

No bruising allowed. Avoid produce with punctured or bruised skin and partially-thawed frozen foods. These are potential food safety hazards.

Beware the bag. Prepared salad greens, spinach, and other produce items are great in terms of convenience. But they are at higher risk of being contaminated since all that prep requires they be handled more often. The smarter (and less expensive!) option is to buy whole fruits and vegetables and prep them yourself. It make take a little extra time, but it's generally a safer option.

Temperature matters. Produce should be displayed in open cases that are occasionally misted. Meat and dairy should be kept below 40°F and frozen foods should be frozen solid with no frost. Items stacked too high or too close together may not be cold enough.

Adapted from *Health*, June 2009

Important Dates

August 17, 24, 31	Guild Meeting 1:00 - 3:00pm
September 7	Labor Day Extension office CLOSED
September 14	Guild Birthday Lunch 1:00 - 3:00pm
September 21, 28	Guild Meeting 1:00 - 3:00pm

DON'T FORGET!

You can get this newsletter via e-mail. Just drop me a line at skennedy@ufl.edu to be put on the list.



Solutions for Your Life.

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