UF UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA | IFAS EXTENSION

Healthy, Wealthy, & Wise

The Family & Consumer Sciences Newsletter

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

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We're going green!

In an effort to save on postage and reduce paper use, you can receive this newsletter by e-mail. 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.

Super Smart, Super Speedy Snacks

Apples. These crispy treats are good sources of *quercetin*, and anti-oxidant that may protect the brain from the damage associated with Alzheimer's disease.

Avocados. The flavonoids in these fruits can decrease inflammation in neurons, which can help protect against cognitive decline.

Blueberries. The berries, dried or fresh, can provide a boost during that inevitable afternoon slump.

Curried nuts. The anti-inflammatory effects of the spice can help protect against memory loss and dwindling brain power.

Agent's Corner

Summer's here! Well, technically it's still spring, but it sure has felt like summer here and there. And as you know, summer in Florida means HOT weather, high humidity, and an increased risk for dehydration and sunburn. So remember, when you go outside, be sure to put on sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher on all exposed areas and wear a hat and sunglasses. Also remember to hydrate. Drink cool, clear water without added sugars or caffeine.

Have a great summer!

Samantha Kennedy, MS
Family & Consumer Sciences Agent

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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Recipe Spotlight: Blueberry Buckle

In honor of one of nature's smartest snacks, try this delicious recipe from the *Simply Florida* cookbook.

Ingredients:

2 c. sifted all-purpose flour
2 1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 c. packed light brown sugar
3 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
2 Tbsp. butter or margarine
1/2 c. granulated sugar
1/4 c. (1/2 stick) butter or margarine, softened
1 egg, lightly beaten
1/2 c. milk
2 c. fresh or frozen blueberries

Directions:

Sift 2 cups flour, the baking powder and salt together. Combine the brown sugar, 3 tablespoons flour and the cinnamon in a bowl and mix well. Cut 2 tablespoons butter into the brown sugar mixture until crumbly.

Beat the granulated sugar, 1/4 cup butter and the egg in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Add the flour mixture alternately with the milk, beating well after each addition. Stir in 1/2 cup of the blueberries.

Spoon the blueberry mixture into a greased 8x8-inch baking dish and top with the remaining 1 1/2 cups blueberries. Sprinkle with the brown sugar mixture and bake in a preheated 350-degree oven for 1 hour or until the edges pull from the sides of the dish. Cool in the baking dish on a wire rack for 5 minutes. Run a sharp knife around the edges to loosen and cut into nine squares. Serve warm.

Yield: 9 servings.

"Never eat more than you can lift." - Miss Piggy

A Few Egg-citing Facts

May is National Egg Month and to celebrate, here are a few *egg-cellent* facts about one of America's favorite foods:

The shell is composed of two fine layers of calcium carbonate, which separate over time, creating an air cell. That's why older eggs float in water, while fresh eggs sink.

Another name for the egg white is **albumen**. Composed of water and protein, it also contains riboflavin, niacin, magnesium, and potassium. Fresh egg whites are cloudy.

The yolk contains all of an egg's fat as well as cholesterol, vitamins A, D, and E, and nearly half of an egg's protein. The color of the yolk is dependent on the bird's diet and has absolutely no effect on the egg's nutritional value.

A large egg contains 75 calories, 5 grams of fat, and 6.3 grams of protein.

The color of an egg's shell depends on the breed of hen that lays it. The egg shell color does not affect the egg's nutritional profile and there are no flavor differences between white and brown eggs.

Adapted from Cooking Light, April 2007.

Potassium's Perks

So here's a not-so-new health tip: eating more fruits and vegetables is good for you. Yes, these foods have been shown to be very beneficial to health in many ways. But one way you may not be aware of is how they may reduce your risk of stroke.

The results of eight separate studies have shown that those who ate 3-5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day reduced their stroke risk by 11 percent. Those who ate 5 or more servings a day decreased their risk by 26 percent.

What's the secret? Researchers think it's potassium. This mineral helps lower high blood pressure, a condition which is one of the primary risk factors of stroke.

Adapted from Cooking Light, April 2007.

Helpful Hints for Healthier Grilling

Grilling is one of the healthiest forms of cooking and a summertime staple. Backyard burgers, tasty T-bones, and crispy corn on the cob are just a few of the delicious things that can be cooked on the grill. But research has shown that if done improperly, the food can become charred. And that char can be chock full of cancer-causing compounds called carcinogens.

But have no fear! Here are six strategies for grilling the healthier way:

Timely flipping. Too much flipping can tear the meat and make it dry. Don't force it! When the food gives with a gentle tug, it's ready to flip.

Proper portions. Cubing or slicing the meat into smaller portions can speed up cook time. Or try quick-cooking options such as shrimp or fish.

Less is more. Foods that cook faster are less likely to char. Also, keep track of the internal temperature. Avoid cooking meats past their temperature goal: 165 degrees F for poultry, 155 degrees F for pork and ground red meats, and 145 degrees F for steaks and chops.

Avoid flare-ups. Never put water on a grease fire. If you have a flare-up, simply move the food to a cooler part of the grill or set it aside while the fire dies down.

Try something different. Grilling isn't just for meat, you know. A variety of foods including fruits, vegetables, and breads can also be deliciously grilled.

Keep it clean. Cleaning the grill rack regularly can prevent burned bits of food from causing future flare-ups.

Adapted from Cooking Light, June 2010.

"You must learn from the mistakes of others. You can't possibly live long enough to make them all yourself."

~Sam Levenson~

Blog Watch

"Healthy, Wealthy, & Wise" is now online as a web log (blog). This resource contains the same timely and useful information as the bi-monthly newsletter, but is updated several times a week, giving you news you can use right at your fingertips. Subscribe to the blog to receive update notifications via e-mail or the RSS feed of your choice.

You can find the blog at http://manateefcs.blogspot.com. Please stop by, read the posts, and leave a comment or two.

Freezing Fiascos? Try These Tips!

Freezing is a safe and effective way to preserve foods. However, if not done properly, it can lead to ruin and waste: freezer burn, dehydration, bad flavors and odors. But these things can be prevented by following these simple tips:

Choose the right container. All containers are not equal. Choose the container that best fits the product. For example, liquids such as soups and beverages can be stored in quart sized plastic storage bags. After they're frozen, they're stackable!

Function over fab. Sure those little round bowls with the polka dot lids are cute, but they're not practical for freezer storage. Square, flat, stackable containers are ideal for the freezer; round containers just waste space.

De-clump that food. To prevent clumping, individually freeze small, soft foods like berries, meatballs, or ravioli on a baking sheet, then transfer the frozen pieces to a freezer bag.

Banish the burn. Wrap foods correctly in materials designed specifically for freezer storage, such as coated freezer paper, double seal zip top bags, and rigid plastic containers with airtight lids. These will keep the air out.

Say no to mush. Fruits will almost always thaw softer than they were before freezing. However, the faster they freeze, the less mushy they'll be. Make sure your freezer is at zero degrees by checking it with an appliance thermometer.

Play it safe. If the power goes out, the food in a *full* freezer should remain safe for 48 hours. If only half full, you have 24 hours, according to the USDA.

Adapted from Cooking Light, June 2010.

May is National Egg Month

Hassle-Proof Onions

The easiest way to chop onions is to buy them pre-chopped. However, pre-cut produce is more expensive and has a higher risk of harboring harmful bacteria due to the increased handling prior to use.

So for all you do-it-yourselfers out there, here are a few easy steps to the perfect chopped onion:

Step 1: Peel

Remove the stem (but leave the root). Peel away the paper-thin outer layer of skin.

Step 2: Halve

Place the onion cut side (where the stem used to be) down and slice it in half from top to bottom, cutting right through the root.

Step 3: Section

Take one half of the onion and place it cut side down on the cutting board. Hold the onion firmly by the root. Placing the tip of the knife about a 1/2 inch from the root (to keep the onion intact), make parallel downward slices across the onion.

Step 4: Slice

Placing the knife blade parallel to the cutting board (sharp edge facing the root of the onion), make a few slices through the middle, stopping within 1/2 inch of the root.

Step 5: Dice

Make downward cuts through the onion, starting at the stem end and moving towards the root.

Voila! Perfect chopped onions every time!

A Couple Tear-Free Tips...

Tip #1

To get the onion scent off your hands, just rub them against a stainless steel sink or utensil for about a minute.

Tip #2

Still have half an onion left? Make it last by chopping it, sealing it in a zip-top bag and refrigerating. It'll last for another week.

Important Dates

May 17, 24	Guild Meeting 1:00pm - 3:00pm
May 31	Memorial Day Extension office CLOSED
June 7	Guild Birthday Lunch 1:00pm - 3:00pm
June 14, 21, 28	Guild Meeting 1:00pm - 3:00pm
July 5	Independence Day (observed) Extension office CLOSED
July 12	Guild Birthday Lunch 1:00pm - 3:00pm

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Solutions for Your Life.

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