

Family and Consumer Newsletter

Yadkin County Center

June 2010



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Food Preservation

With fruits and vegetables beginning to multiply, it's time to get out the canning, freezing and drying equipment so the bounty can be enjoyed later this year. The method of food preservation you use depends on the type of food you have. Unless food is preserved in some manner, it begins to spoil soon after harvesting due to the microorganisms collected from air, soil as well as people.

The canning process involves placing foods in jars and heating to a temperature that destroys bacteria and inactivates enzymes. When heating and cooling forms a vacuum seal, the contaminating of food within the jar is prevented. Acid foods can be canned in a boiling water bath, while low acid foods must be processed in a pressure canner at 240 degrees or 11 pounds pressure. To assure processing accuracy, bring the pressure canner lid with the gauge to the Yadkin County Extension Kitchen for a free test on June 23 or 30, between 10:00 – 2:00.



Pickling is a form of canning by adding an increase in acidity which makes it difficult for bacteria to grow. The amount of acid is very important to the safety of the product. Pickled products are also recommended to place in a boiling water bath to destroy any microorganisms present and to form a vacuum seal.

Freezing is one of the easiest, most convenient, and least time consuming methods of preserving foods. Freezing does not sterilize foods but does retard the growth of microorganisms thus cutting down on food spoilage. It also slows the chemical changes that affects food quality.

Drying is one of the oldest methods of preserving food. Drying removes the moisture from food so that bacteria, yeast and mold cannot grow and spoil the food. By drying foods, enzyme activity is slowed down but not inactivated. The optimum temperature for drying food is 140 degrees F. If higher temperatures are used, the food will cook instead of drying. Foods can be dried in the sun, in an oven or in a food dehydrator by using the right combination of warm temperatures, low humidity and air current.

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EPA Offers Cooling Tips for Every Budget this Summer



WASHINGTON - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Energy Star program offers low to no-cost energy-efficient cooling tips to beat the heat. A typical household spends almost 20 percent of its utility bill on cooling, and by taking step this summer to improve energy efficiency, you can save energy, save money and help fight climate change. Try these simple tips to start saving today:

No-Cost

- Program your thermostat to work around your family's summer schedule—set it a few degrees higher (such as 78 degrees) when no one is home, so your cooling system isn't cooling an empty house. With proper use, programmable thermostats can save you about \$180 a year in energy costs.
- Check your HVAC system's air filter every month. If the filter looks dirty, change it, but change the filter at least every three months. A dirty filter will slow air flow and make the system work harder to keep you cool, wasting energy.
- Run your ceiling fan to create a cool breeze. If you raise your thermostat by only two degrees and use your ceiling fan, you can lower cooling costs by up to 14 percent. Remember that ceiling fans cool you, not the room, so when you leave the room make sure to turn off the fan.
- Pull the curtains and shades closed before you leave your home to keep the sun's ray from overheating the interior of your home. If you can, move container trees and plants in front of sun-exposed windows to serve as shade.

Low-Cost

- Remember to have your HVAC system serviced annually to ensure it's running at optimum efficiency for money and energy savings.
- Swap out incandescent bulbs with more energy-efficient lighting choices. Energy Star qualified lighting not only uses less energy, it also produces about 75 percent less heat than in candescent lighting, so cooling bills will be reduced, too.
- Seal your air ducts. As much as 20 percent of the air moving through your home's duct system is lost due to leaks and poor connections. Seal duct work using mastic sealant or metal tape and insulate all the ducts that you can access (such as those in attics, crawlspaces, unfinished basements, and garages).
- Make sure that connections at vents and registers are well-sealed where they meet floors, walls, and ceilings. These are common locations to find leaks and disconnected ductwork.

Other Tips

- When buying a room air conditioner, look for one that has earned EPA's Energy Star. If every room air conditioner in the United States were Energy Star qualified, they would prevent 900 million pounds of greenhouse gas emissions annually—equivalent to the emissions from 80,000 cars.
- Add insulation to your attic to keep cool air in. If every American household did so, Americans would collectively save more than \$1.8 billion in yearly energy costs.
- Hire a contractor to seal and insulate the interior ductwork in your home (the ducts you can't reach yourself).
- If your central air conditioning unit is more than 12 years old, replacing it with a model that has earned EPA's Energy Star could cut your cooling costs by 30 percent.

Source: *US Environmental Protection Agency*



June is Dairy Month

When we think of June what do we think of; Father's Day, Flag Day, or school letting out? Something we may have forgotten is that June also is Dairy Month. Without our dairy farmers, there wouldn't be milk, cheese, cottage cheese, cream cheese, sour cream, yogurt or ice cream.

A cow produces an average of 6.3 gallons of milk each day. That's more than 2,300 gallons each year. U.S. dairy farms produce roughly 21 billion gallons of milk annually. On average, a dairy farmer receives about 30 cents of every retail dollar spent.

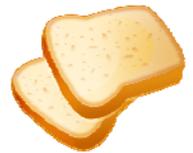
Consuming three daily servings of milk, cheese or yogurt is an easy way for families to get a powerful punch of nutrients to help build stronger bones and healthy bodies. Research suggests that enjoying three servings of dairy foods a day as part of a nutrient-rich, balanced diet may help you maintain a healthy weight. Low-fat and fat-free milk, cheese and yogurt give us nine essential nutrients including calcium, potassium, phosphorus, protein, vitamins A, D and B12, riboflavin and niacin, plus great taste.

People who consume more low-fat and fat-free dairy foods have better overall diets, have more nutrient intake and improved bone health. In fact, studies show dairy foods, when consumed as part of a healthy diet, may help reduce the risk of osteoporosis, hypertension, obesity, colon cancer and metabolic syndrome, a cluster of conditions that can lead to heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

Remember when we buy dairy foods at the grocery, it's the hard work of millions of dairy farmers that brings us those wonderful products. *Sources: www.nationaldairycouncil.org*

Tips and Tidbits

- To pick up tiny pieces of broken glass, wipe the area with a fresh piece of bread after sweeping up the larger pieces.
- Did you know that a 20 oz. soft drink has 17 teaspoons of sugar and 200 calories?
A 20 oz. sport drink has 9 teaspoons of sugar and 125 calories. Water has 0!
- To prevent food contamination, only purchase fresh cut produce that is refrigerated or surrounded by ice.



Rose Workshop

Roses made from coffee filters may sound a little odd but wait until you see them! Marie Poole is our guest craft instructor from Surry County for a workshop on Tuesday, June 22 at 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. in the Yadkin Extension Kitchen. The fee is only \$4.00 for all the supplies to make realistic looking roses for favors or arrangements. Call to the office at 679-2061 to register by June 18 so supplies can be bought. You won't want to miss this creative workshop!

Calendar of Events

- June 23, & 30 – Pressure Canner Lid Testing, Cooperative Extension Kitchen,
10:00- 2:00
- June 15 – 9:00 a.m., ECA Executive Board, Cooperative Extension Kitchen
- June 22 – 10:00 a.m., Rose Workshop

The Secret to a Great Grilled Burger

Grilling burgers is a big part of summer and for a healthy experience, food safety is extra important. Burgers and other ground meats are particularly vulnerable to bacteria. Using a meat thermometer to test the internal temperature is necessary to be sure to cook to 160 degrees. Always use a different plate for raw and cooked meat.

When making hamburgers, start out by selecting a coarse ground meat. Finely ground meat will become soft and fall apart during grilling. To stay moist without shrinking too much, choose the 85% lean ground beef. Lean ground beef will tend to make dry burgers. Finely chop any vegetables added to the burger. The softer meat will be if handling too much so avoid working the meat too much. By adding bread or cracker crumbs to the meat you can soak up any excess moisture from the addition of steak sauce or applesauce.

Start grilling on a very hot grill to allow for the burger to cook the grease quickly and form a surface on the patty. Turn as soon as the burger releases from the grate. Cook the other side on an unused part of the grill. Cook for 3-4 minutes on each side or until the internal temperature is 160 degrees. Let the burgers sit for 1-2 minutes before serving.



Cola Burgers

1 egg	6 tablespoons French salad dressing, divided
1/2 cup cola-flavored carbonated Beverage, divided	2 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese
1/2 cup crushed saltine crackers	1 1/2 pounds ground beef

Preheat grill for high heat. When grill is hot, lightly oil the grate. In medium bowl, mix together the egg, 1/4 cup of cola, crackers, 2 tablespoons of French dressing, and parmesan cheese. Crumble in the ground beef, and mix well. Form into 6 balls, and pat into 3/4 inch patties. Pour the remaining cola and dressing into a small bowl, and mix well. Grill burgers for about 3 minutes per side. Brush with dressing and cola, then grill for 8 to 10 more minutes, basting occasionally.

Fresh Strawberry Upside Down Cake

2 cups crushed fresh strawberries	3 cups miniature marshmallows
1 (6 oz) package strawberry flavored Gelatin mix	1 (18 ounce) package yellow cake mix, batter prepared as directed on package

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spread crushed strawberries on the bottom of 9x13 inch baking pan. Evenly sprinkle strawberries with the dry gelatin powder, and top with mini marshmallows. Prepare the cake mix as directed on the package and pour on top of the marshmallows. Bake in preheated oven until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, about 40 to 50 minutes. Cool in pan for 15 minutes. Run a knife around the pan to loosen the sides; turn the cake out onto a serving tray. Store cake in the refrigerator.

For accommodations for persons with disabilities, contact Marilyn Wells at least one week in advance of event at 336-679-2061.



Marilyn C. Wells
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Family & Consumer Sciences