Upcoming “Hands On” Canning Classes

Making Dill Pickles and Zucchini Relish – July 9th 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

Canning Tomatoes – August 6th 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

Pre-registration is required due to limited class size. Call our office to register or for more information. Cost may vary due to cost of materials.

Other opportunities for lecture and demonstration Food Preservation Classes:

Canning and Preserving Made Easy – July 22nd 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at the Madison County Cooperative Extension Center, Marshall, NC.

Lecture and demonstration class that will cover canning low and high acid foods, pickles, jams and jellies, freezing and dehydrating foods. Cost is $10 ($15 for couples who share materials). To register call Sue Estridge, Extension Agent, Family and Consumer Sciences, at (828) 649-2411.

Canning Low and High Acid Foods – July 30th 10:00 am to 12:00 pm.

Lecture and demonstration class that will review canning using the water bath and pressure canning methods. Class will be held at the NC Arboretum – call (828) 665-2492 for costs and registration information.

Summer Break Ideas for Your Kids

With the end of the school year, many families are trying to decide what to do with their children this summer. Many parents may be trying to decide if their children are old enough to stay at home alone. First, the National SAFE KIDS Campaign recommends that no child under the age of 12 be left alone. With that in mind, consider your child’s age and maturity level. You also want to make sure your child, and you, are comfortable with being home alone. For more information and tips for making this decision you can contact our office. Here are some ideas to help deal with the extra time kids have this summer.

• Have an activity jar – have the family come up with ideas to do this summer, write them down and put them in a jar and pick one when kids are bored or you have some extra time to spend with them.

• Make a list of home improvements or jobs that kids can help with. Showing them you recognize that they are old enough to help with these will boost their self esteem as well as get you a helping hand.

• Start a garden or redo some of your landscaping and give your kids a spot.

• Un-plug the TV, computer and other electronic devices and make a plan for when you will use them.

• Ask neighbors if there are odd jobs your middle schoolers or teens can do. They may be able to be a “mother’s helper” or help older neighbors with weekly chores.

Most of all, remember to make the most of the extra time we get during the summer and create quality family time with the extra daylight hours.
Don’t Forget the Sun Screen

Often we only think of sun screen during those hot sunny days of summer, while it should become a part of our daily life year around. Even on the cloudy days we need to grab the sun screen and apply it thirty minutes before going outside. The adverse health effects from the sun’s ultraviolet rays (UV) includes not only skin cancer but diseases to the eye and immune suppression. Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States with 1 in 5 Americans currently developing the disease. Children are most at risk and studies show early sun exposure, especially sunburn, during childhood appears to increase the risk of melanoma later in life. Just one or two blistering sunburns in childhood can double a person’s risk of developing this most serious form of skin cancer. The accumulated lifetime exposure to the sun also plays a factor in triggering skin cancer later in life.

Anyone, regardless of age, should limit their unprotected sun exposure during the hours of 10:00 am and 4:00 pm when the sun’s rays are the strongest. Since children play outdoors and receive most of their lifetime exposure before they reach the age of 18, it is important to have them play safe in the sun by finding shade, wearing cover-up clothing, and using sunscreen. Shade structures, such as trees and umbrellas, provide year round protection. (Trees provide about 60% blockage from the sun’s rays.) Wearing wide-brim hats despite ones age, sunglasses, long sleeves, and tightly woven clothes are also other good forms of defense. Hats should protect the face, head, ears and neck. Sunglasses should block out 100% of UVA and UVB radiation to protect your eyes from damage.

The use of broad-spectrum sunscreens whose ingredients block both UVA and UVB rays should be used daily by the entire family. When using a sunscreen be sure it has a Sun Protective Factor (SPF) of at least 15. A higher SPF is recommended for children. All sunscreen should be applied liberally and evenly every time someone is going out in the sun, and should also be reapplied frequently.

Ceiling Fan vs. Air Conditioner

Running your ceiling fan continuously during the summer does not reduce the need for air conditioning and does not necessarily save you money. Like your lights, ceiling fans should only be used in rooms when they are occupied. Fans circulate the air and create a breeze, which makes the temperature feel cooler to your body, much like the wind chill in winter. Running the ceiling fan when a room is occupied can cool the occupant by approximately 6 degrees. Since the ceiling fan does not cool the room itself there is no need to have it operating when the room is unoccupied. Without occupants in the room, there is no one to sense the lower temperature. Fans that are kept running constantly will actually increase your energy consumption and could be a fire hazard.

An air conditioner that is sized properly will not only cool the home but will also act as a dehumidifier and remove the excess moisture from the air. An oversized air conditioner will cool your home too quickly to remove the moisture very effectively. This results in a home that is cool and “ clammy.” If units are not providing sufficient dehumidification, the typical homeowner response is to lower the thermostat setting. Since every degree the thermostat is lowered increases cooling bills 3% to 5%, systems that have nominally high efficiencies, but inadequate dehumidification, may suffer from higher than expected cooling bills.

New Renters’ Rights in Foreclosure

Renters must now be allowed to remain in their homes for the duration of their lease - even if the home is being foreclosed on. President Obama signed the Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act of 2009 (S. 896) into law on May 20. The new law provides renters with a minimum of 90 days notice before a tenant must vacate a property. If a buyer plans to use the property as his primary home, or the tenant's lease is month to month, or there is no lease at all, the tenant is entitled to at least 90 days notice.

If there is a lease, tenants will be allowed to stay for the duration of the lease before evictions can proceed. If a state offers greater protections to renters, the new law allows the stronger protections to apply. These new renters’ rights also apply to Section 8 tenants.

These new tenant protections are effective immediately and expire December 31, 2012. For more information check out the National Low Income Housing Coalition at www.nlihc.org.
To NOSH or Not?

NOSHING means to have a snack or eat between meals. NOSHING is not all bad. In a survey conducted by the Consumer Reports National Research Center, 85 percent of women said they snack between meals and 94% said they nibble even when they’re not hungry. Make the most of your NOSHING by choosing the right foods.

Summer time is a time for families and fun and no one wants to be stuck in the kitchen. Planning in advance can help you provide healthy “fun” snacks for you and your family. Children should eat between meals, because they can’t eat enough at one meal to provide them with the vitamins and nutrients they need to keep going through the day.

The most healthy snacks have no more than 150 calories per serving and include protein, complex carbohydrates and fiber. Carbohydrates give you energy and protein takes longer to digest; therefore, curbing your appetite longer. Unhealthy foods can actually drag you down instead of giving you the energy to complete the summer to-do lists.

CHECK THE LABELS: There are a lot of new snacks on the market and don’t be fooled by the label. Snacks may say “baked”, but they can be loaded with fat and salt.

Here are a few summer time solutions to good nutrition that can also be used year round.

HAVE A HAPPY, HEALTHY SUMMER!

**Fruit Rice Cakes**

Makes 6 servings  
Serving Size: 1 rice cake

**Ingredients**

- 6 rice cakes  
- ¼ cup low-fat cream cheese, softened  
- Fruits of choice such as kiwi, peaches, strawberries, apples, bananas, mandarin oranges, sliced grapes, oranges, etc.

**Directions**

1. Top each rice cake with 2 teaspoons cream cheese.  
2. Arrange a variety of fruit pieces on top of cream cheese.

**Nutrition Information Per Serving**

60 Calories, Total Fat 2g,  
Saturated Fat 1g, Protein 2g,  
Total Carbohydrate 9g, Dietary Fiber<1g, Sodium 30mg, Good source of vitamin C

**Broccoli Salad**

Makes 8 servings  
Serving Size: ½ cup

**Ingredients**

- 1 bunch broccoli or ½ bunch of broccoli and ½ head of cauliflower, washed and cut into pieces  
- 2 pieces of bacon, cooked crisp and crumbled  
- ¼ cup onion, chopped  
- ½ cup raisins  
- ½ cup low-fat mayonnaise (or plain non-fat yogurt)  
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar  
- 2 tablespoons sugar

**Directions**

1. Make dressing of mayonnaise, vinegar, and sugar.  
2. Combine broccoli, bacon, onion, and raisins.  
3. Stir in dressing.  
4. Cover and refrigerate.

**Nutrition Information Per Serving**

60 Calories, Total Fat 1.5g, Saturated Fat 0g, Protein 2g,  
Total Carbohydrate 11g, Dietary Fiber 1g, Sodium 150mg, Excellent source of vitamin C, Good source of vitamin A

---

Source: Cooking with EFNEP  
Recipes for Eating Smart and Moving More Cook Book.
Vacation or Staycation

During these difficult financial times a family may need to decide if they will vacation out of town or stay home and experience their local area. With the money saved not staying in hotels and eating out, there may be more money for local activities. Whatever plans you decide on, here are some money saving tips that will stretch your budget.

- Plan ahead – If you will need plane tickets, purchase them early. Check out various web sites for the best deals.
- Budget planning - Decide how much you have to spend, and stick to your budget.
- Book a hotel room that has a kitchen. Preparing at least one or two meals a day will help stretch the budget.
- Don’t be afraid to ask for discounts. It is worth the try, as you won’t get it without asking.
- Look for free things to do. Look up a calendar of events at your destination or the local Chamber of Commerce, and find what’s free or cheap. Our area is filled with activities throughout the year.
- Rent a house with your family or friends to reduce costs. Hostels are another way to stay someplace cheap.
- Pay in cash to avoid the post vacation bills. You don’t want the payments to outlast the memories.
- Stay at hotels that offer breakfast. It will be one meal you won’t have to pay for.
- Drive to your destination - Instead of flying, driving is a great alternative. Especially if the location is within a day’s trip. Compare the cost of the car and gas to the plane tickets.
- Pack snacks - It’s tempting to buy candy and other junk food while traveling, but resist the urge, and bring your own.

However you decide to spend your vacation it should be a time of fun and relaxation. Your time should be for reducing stress not adding to it by spending money you don’t have this year. Planning ahead and shopping for deals can allow you to afford a vacation away or staying home making day trips to local attractions.

Remember To Rehydrate This Summer

During the hot summertime we need to make sure that we are giving our bodies enough fluids. If you are going to be out in the sun or even the shade during these hot days, prepare your body by drinking some water before you go out. As we perspire we lose water along with some electrolytes like sodium and potassium. We can usually restock the electrolytes when we eat again, but we don’t want to wait to replenish our water. So remember to drink plenty of water throughout the day. Aim for getting 16 to 32 ounces of water every hour you are out in the hot sun. It can be best to drink these in frequent small amounts like 4 to 8 ounces each fifteen minutes. Unless you will be sweating and using a lot of calories or out for a few hours, you do not need the special sports drinks. They will usually add more calories than you are burning, when drinking water will be all you need to stay hydrated. Also, it is important to know when to call it quits. When you're exercising or out in the heat, be on the lookout for heat-related illness. Signs and symptoms may include:

- Weakness
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Muscle cramps
- Nausea or vomiting
- Rapid heartbeat

If you suspect a heat-related illness, stop exercising and get out of the heat. Drink water, and wet and fan your skin. If you don't feel better within 30 minutes, contact your doctor. If you develop a fever higher than 102 F (38.9 C) or become faint or confused, seek immediate medical help. Regular exercise and getting outdoors is important — but don't let the hot weather put your health at risk.
How to Take Your Blood Thinner and Eat Your Greens Too!

Greens have a high amount of vitamin K, a nutrient that will affect how your blood thinner, like warfarin or Coumadin® works. Vitamin K will work against the blood thinners and decrease their effectiveness. The blood thinners prevent blood clotting proteins from using vitamin K. This helps decrease the risk of blood clots that can cause health issues. When on blood thinners, you need to keep your intake of vitamin K from foods and supplements consistent. This means that if you like greens you need to make sure you eat the same amount each day or get the same amount of vitamin K from other sources to keep your intake the same each day. This can be hard and many health providers will recommend not eating foods or taking vitamin supplements that have high amounts of vitamin K. By avoiding high levels of vitamin K it is easier to keep your intake consistent from day to day. If you really like greens, talk to your health provider about how you can keep your intake consistent to match your blood thinner needs. For a list of other foods high in vitamin K, contact our office.

Drinks that can affect your blood thinners are alcohol, cranberry juice and green tea. Talk with your health care provider before including these in your diet.

With Canning, Safety Comes First

One of the most important things to remember when canning food, is that safety comes first. To ensure that you have a safe product, you need to use researched, tested recipes. These recipes have been tested to determine the correct canning process, water bath or pressure canner, and the correct processing time, with adjustments for higher altitudes. The combination of the processing time with the method of canning has been determined based on the acidic level of the foods being canned, the water availability, and the consistency of the foods. These tested recipes have also been developed to create a high quality product. An example of one of our recommendations is that we do not recommend canning summer squash and zucchini unless you have pickled them. Because the processing time to ensure that botulism and its spores have been destroyed is so long, the quality of the summer squash and zucchini is so mushy that it is unusable. We also do not have a safe processing method and time for mashed winter squashes like pumpkin. Because of this, canning pumpkin butter is not recommended. When preserving these items, we recommend freezing because that is a safe method.

Food Safety can be confusing. Not all of our zucchini or pumpkins or other low acid foods will have botulism bacteria and its spores, but because we can not tell which do, we have to treat all of our low acid foods with caution and use research tested recipes. This means that even if you have used a recipe or a process in the past and have not gotten sick, you most likely did not have any botulism spore present to release the toxin that could have made you sick. There was a reported Botulism infection of three people this past January in Washington State due to improperly processed home green beans. These people were lucky because they received immediate treatment. But not all people are that lucky. Botulism illnesses have one of our highest food borne illness death rates and severe complication rates such as permanent neural damage.

For tested recipes or to check a family recipe for safety, you can always contact our office at (828) 255-5522 or email me at cathy_hohenstein@ncsu.edu to check a recipe or to get a researched based recipe. Some other resources for researched based recipes are:

- The National Center for Home Food Preservation at the University of Georgia, http://www.uga.edu/nchfp.
- The most recent Ball Blue Book, or their website http://www.homecanning.com.
Your Home, Health & Mold

Although our mold season often peaks from July to late summer, it is important to remember that mold can thrive indoors all year. The spores are very tiny and lightweight, allowing them to travel through the air. Mold growth can often be seen in the form of discoloration, ranging from white to orange and from green to brown and black.

The most common health problems caused by indoor mold are allergy symptoms. Although other and more serious problems can occur, people exposed to mold commonly report problems such as:

- wheezing/breathing difficulties
- nasal and sinus congestion
- cough
- sore throat
- skin and eye irritation
- upper respiratory infections (including sinus)

Mold only needs a few simple things to grow and multiply: moisture, nutrients and a suitable place to grow. Of these, controlling excess moisture is the key to preventing and stopping indoor mold growth. Some common moisture sources: flooding, backed-up sewers, leaky roofs, humidifiers, mud or ice dams, damp basement or crawl space, constant plumbing leaks, steam from cooking, shower/bath steam & leaks, wet clothes on indoor drying lines, clothes dryers vented indoors and combustion appliances (e.g. stoves) not exhausted to the outdoors, simply watering house plants can generate large amounts of moisture. In addition to the health issues mold can also cause structural damage to a home.

If you can see mold, or if there is an earthy or musty odor, you can assume you have mold growing, you do not have to test for its presence. **Unless the moisture is removed and the contaminated area is cleaned and disinfected, mold growth is likely to reoccur. Call our office for removal methods.**

Contributors Areas of Responsibility and Expertise

**Nancy Ostergaard**

Extension Agent
Family & Consumer Sciences
- Housing
- House Furnishings
- Human Environment and Health
- Environmental Issues (i.e. solid waste, air quality)
- Aging Issues
- Extension & Community Association Liaison

*email: nancy_ostergaard@ncsu.edu*

**Cathy Hohenstein**

Extension Agent
Family & Consumer Sciences
- Foods
- Food Safety
- Nutrition & Health
- Human Development
- Clothing & Textiles

*email: cathy_hohenstein@ncsu.edu*

**Sharon Carter**

Extension Nutrition Program Assistant (Adult)

*email: sharon_carter@ncsu.edu*