Hands-On Canning Workshops This Summer

Hands-on canning workshops are great ways to learn the safest techniques for canning and preserving our summertime bounty. This summer we have four hands-on classes scheduled. All require pre-registration and registration is confirmed when payment is received. The cost for each class is $5.00 and all classes will be held at the Buncombe County Cooperative Extension Office at 94 Coxe Avenue in Asheville.

Let’s Start with Jams!
With an abundance of berries in season, now is the time to preserve some of those local strawberries and other berries as jam. Come to this hands-on class and learn how to make berry jam. We will cover making jams with and without added pectin. We will also discuss ways to make sugar free freezer and other refrigerated jams. You will be able to take home a sample of what we make.

Date and Time: Wednesday, June 2, 2010 - 9am to 1pm

It’s Pickling Time!
Do you like the taste of dill pickles? Did you ever wonder if there was a simple, easy dill pickle recipe? Come learn how to make a simple dill pickle and preserve those little pickling cucumbers for the long fall and winter months. This class will also discuss how to make relishes and other pickled products.

Date and Time: Wednesday, July 7, 2010 - 9am to 1pm

Canning Beans Safely!
One of the most popular foods to can is beans, but it can also be one of the most riskiest to eat if not canned safely. Come, can beans together with us and learn the latest recommendations for canning your beans to use later in those wintertime casseroles. This class will cover using weighted and gauge pressure canners as well as discuss the importance of adjusting time for canning at higher altitudes.

Date and Time: Wednesday, July 28, 2010 - 9am to 3pm

Putting Tomatoes By!
One of the best foods for learning how to can is tomatoes. In this hands-on class we cover canning tomatoes with a water bath canner and a pressure canner. Because we cover both methods of canning, this class allows you to experience both techniques. We will also discuss freezing and dehydrating tomatoes as other options for preserving them for future use.

Date and Time: Wednesday, August 11, 2010 - 9am to 2pm
New Dishwashers Run Differently

As energy requirements continue to increase, water and energy usage must be reduced. The following information should answer some of the questions related to energy consumption in today’s dishwashers.

**Why do dishwashers dry differently today?** Rinse aid allows dishwashers to use less water with the same amount of cleaning and drying effectiveness by making the water sheet along dishes more efficiently. Rinse aid, along with the heat dry option are necessary for good drying performance.

**Why has wash performance changed?** To meet today’s energy standards, the normal cycles no longer use the excessive amount of water they used in the past. Today, you must choose cycles specific to actual load sizes and soil amounts (Heavy Duty, Light/China, ProScrub, Hi-Temp Scrub, etc.) to achieve good cleaning. The sensor in your dishwasher monitors the soil level. Cycle time and/or water usage can vary as the sensor adjusts the cycle for the best wash performance. If the incoming water is less than the recommended temperature, or food soils are heavy, the cycle will automatically compensate by adding time, heat, and water as needed.

**Why are cycle times longer today?** Pumps and motors are very low wattage and use a fraction of the energy of a 7-10 year old dishwasher, however, they must run longer to achieve the same wash performance. It is not abnormal for today's dishwashers to run 2-3 hours. Even though they run longer, they are not using more electricity.

**Why does hard water build up more today?** If you have hard water, the reduction of water and energy will increase the hard-water deposit buildup on your new dishes, dishwasher, and dishwasher components. You can control this if you increase the rinse aid setting, use a bit more detergent, and regularly use a dishwasher cleaner to help reduce the buildup of hard-water deposits.

**Stains on the Dishwasher Tub**

**Are there brown stains?** Brown stains are likely due to high iron content in the water supply. In order to remove stains, add 1 to 3 teaspoons of citric acid crystals to the covered section of the detergent dispenser and rewash dishes (after food soil has been removed). Do not use detergent. Follow with a normal wash cycle with detergent. If treatment is needed more often than every other month, the installation of an iron removal unit is recommended.

**Are there orange stains?** Washing large amounts of dishes with tomato-based soil can cause a pink/orange appearance. Prerinsing or using a Rinse Hold cycle will reduce the chance of staining. Stains gradually fade over time. Regular use of heated drying will slow fading. Stains will not affect dishwasher performance. Regular use of a rinse cycle and an air-dry or energy-saving dry option will reduce the likelihood of staining. An interior tub cleaner can be purchased locally.

**Are there black or gray marks?** Aluminum items (such as utensils) should be loaded so that they will not rub against dishes during washing. Throw-away aluminum items should not be washed in the dishwasher because they may break down and cause marking. Hand-wash these items. Aluminum markings can be removed by using a mild abrasive cleanser.

**Is there a white film?** This film is due to hard water minerals. The minerals tend to build up, especially just beneath the door area. White spots can be seen on cookware with a nonstick finish. This can be due to the dishwasher detergent removing the cookware seasoning. Reseason the cookware after washing it in the dishwasher.

**Are there lipstick stains?** Lipsticks are often wax or petroleum based. A high-temperature wash is required to remove this type of soil.

**Is there yellow discoloration near the heating element?** Yellowish discoloration near the heating element can be caused by beta carotene. This can be found in tomato-based products like spaghetti sauce. The discoloration is more evident at the heater, since heat accelerates the staining.

Source: KitchenAid
General Upholstery Care

When performing your weekly housecleaning duties, don’t forget the upholstered furniture. The useful life of upholstered furniture can be increased if the consumer follows a few simple fabric protection rules. It is important that a fabric be chosen that is appropriate for its intended use.

**Vacuuming** - Weekly vacuuming or light brushing is a fabric care tip that helps to remove soil and protect fabric from the embedding of dirt or grime between fibers which can increase abrasion and wear.

**Cushion turning** - The life of upholstered cushions can be increased through periodic turning. The weekly reversal of loose cushions will allow even distribution of wear over a long period of time.

**Fabric protection** - Fabric protection helps to increase the useful life of upholstered furniture by protecting fabrics from soil and stains. Some fabric protections are mill applied and others can be applied in the store or at home.

A protective finish does not eliminate the necessity of proper fabric care. It modifies the absorbency and soil removal characteristics of a fabric, but it does not put a plastic cover on it. Loose dirt should be vacuumed and brushed away before it becomes embedded and harder to remove. Spills and stains should be cleaned away quickly following manufacturer’s fabric care code instructions for furniture cleaning.

Source: University of Illinois Extension

Keeping Your Family Healthy

The period of May 1 through September 30 is considered the ground-level ozone season in North Carolina. So while we are enjoying the hot summer days and spending more time outdoors, we can also be exposing ourselves to elevated levels of ozone. Ground-level ozone is produced in urban areas where there are several cars, industry, and other sources of combustion. The cars, trucks, power plants, factories and other sources emit air pollutants that chemically react to form ozone as a secondary pollutant. Sunlight is necessary to start the chemical reactions that form ozone, and heat is important to make the chemical reactions more efficient. That's why our higher ozone levels are during the summer months, when heat and sunlight are more intense. Ozone levels also vary on a daily basis. Ozone levels peak in the afternoon, when temperatures are higher, and then drop at night in most of North Carolina. However, ozone levels can remain high throughout the day and night at or near mountain ridge tops.

Ozone is unhealthy to breathe, particularly among sensitive groups: children, people with asthma and other respiratory ailments, and anyone who works or exercises vigorously outdoors. Symptoms of ozone exposure can include coughing, throat irritation, chest pain, rapid and shallow breathing, and asthma episodes. Repeated exposure to ozone pollution may cause permanent damage to the lungs. Emergency room visits for asthma have increased as much as 36 percent on high ozone days.

Since ozone levels are generally much lower in the mornings, you can limit exposure by working and exercising outdoors before noon. On days when the levels are forecasted to be high, limit your family’s time outdoors to morning hours or late afternoon. It is important to pay attention to the five color codes that describe our air quality conditions during the summer: Green, Yellow, Orange, Red, and Purple. These color codes are based on EPA's Air Quality Index (AQI) and make it easier to understand the various levels of air pollution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ozone Color Code</th>
<th>Air Quality</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Unhealthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>Very Unhealthy</td>
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</tbody>
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When ozone levels are forecasted to be Code Orange, Red or Purple it means the ozone concentrations are predicted to exceed the proposed Federal standard of 0.08 parts per million averaged over an 8-hour period. Ozone levels above the standard are considered unhealthy to breathe, particularly among sensitive groups.
Shingles with Dark Streaks

Do you have dark streaks appearing on the roof? Although the streaks may be unsettling to some homeowners because of the way the roof/shingles look, the shingles will not be damaged. The fiberglass shingles commonly develop dark, mildew-like stains. The stains are caused by an algae called *Gloeocapsa magna* that feed off the limestone in fiberglass shingles.

The best way to kill the algae is to install 7” copper or zinc strips under the shingles along the top of your roof. Place approximately 4-5 inches of the copper strip under the shingles with 2-3 inches remaining exposed to the weather. When it rains, the rainwater will carry small amounts of metal residue down the roof. The continuous exposure to copper or zinc will prevent algae growth and stains. An alternative to installing the copper or zinc strips is cleaning the shingles with a commercial roof algae remover.

If you are planning to install new fiberglass shingles, look for shingles that contain copper-coated granules.

Fight The Summertime Boredoms

At some point during the summer, most kids and even some adults will end up with the *Summertime Boredoms*. It may be because the temperatures climb and the humidity gets unbearable, or it's a bad air quality day, or thunderstorms have rolled in and have kept you from the pool and everyone is cooped up inside. Whatever the reason, families need some ideas of fun interesting activities to do inside. If you make a plan and have a list of things to do ahead of time, you don’t have to come up with the activities when that boredom has already set in.

Get the whole family involved in making up a list of indoor activities that go beyond watching the television and being on the computer. You can add active games like Wii sport or fitness, but make sure you have others to choose from as well. If the kids come up with the list, then the activities will be more appealing to them. Have each of the kids make up a list of things they like to do. Then come up with a list of things that the whole family or more than one kid can do together. You can take these activities and create activity jars. Write down the activities on different pieces of paper to put in a jar or container. Each family member can have their own jar. That way, if one of the kids says, “I’m bored”, you can direct them to pick three activities out of the jar and chose one to do. When the whole family is bored or more than one person is looking for something to do, you can choose from the family jar. Things to keep on hand to help with these activities are board games, decks of cards, art supplies and other supplies for projects around the house that the kids can help do. When all else fails, put on the radio or some music and start up an impromptu dance.

Another idea for fighting the *Summertime Boredoms*, is to contact the local visitor’s center, chamber of commerce, or parks and recreation departments and gather information on attractions in the area. We often forget that we can “visit” our own town and experience the multitude of attractions right here in the county.

For more ideas on activities to do with the kids this summer contact our office.
Remember the Word “Housecleaning”?

Spring is here, and it may be the time to do what our mother’s used to call spring cleaning. Because of busy schedules the weekly cleanings are sometimes a project of the past. However our living area does need to be cleaned periodically.

- **Beginning in the much dreaded bathroom.** The bathroom has almost become an all-purpose room and the more it is used the more attention it will require. Often overlooked when cleaning are the light switch plates, fixtures and faucets. The sink handles and faucets get a lot of use from a lot of different hands, so not only do you want to make your bathrooms clean, but you also want to prevent the spread of germs. Use an antibacterial cleaner to sanitize the various areas of your bathroom. All the surfaces that come in contact with water and/or soap will need to be cleaned often to prevent mold, mildew and bacteria from accumulating. These surfaces include all porcelain-coated items, such as toilets, sinks, shower and tubs, as well as ceramic or plastic tiles and glass shower doors. Clean all your bathroom surfaces at least once a week. As with the rest of your bathroom, wash your bathroom floor thoroughly once a week. Since you will most likely stand in your bathroom in bare feet, it is important to keep the surface clean. Periodically wash the shower curtain, shower liner, and walls.

- **The kitchen.** One of the most common areas in the home for unwanted household pests is the kitchen. Many times pests can be avoided with added cleanliness, eliminating the breeding grounds for ants, cockroaches and the like. Washing dishes after each meal, wiping off counter tops and any spills that should occur during meal preparation, is also necessary. Don’t forget to sweep the floor to remove all food particles and wash the floor once a week or more often if needed. Cockroaches prefer warm areas so are attracted to the inside of oven doors, microwaves, toasters, around refrigerator motors, etc. Keeping these areas clean will help in their control. In addition to the surfaces you can readily see in your kitchen, don’t forget cleaning the areas behind closed doors. This includes inside cabinets for food debris that will attract bugs, inside your oven for burned on food that can give a bad taste to the next meal or the food that is unrecognizable in the refrigerator. Your refrigerator should be cleaned once a week and the interior surfaces washed every three to four months. Your stove top should be wiped down soon after cooking once the burners have cooled down. The longer you wait the harder the area will be to clean! Once a month clean the outside of all your appliances, removing any spills immediately as they occur.

- **The odor bearing garbage can.** Garbage cans can take on a life of their own if not cleaned regularly. People have a tendency to just change the garbage bags without cleaning out the container itself, which is a breeding ground for odor and bacteria. On occasion, overfilled garbage bags leak, or food falls between the bag and can.

- **How clean is your carpet?** If your home has carpet, the heavy traffic areas will need quick, frequent crisscross vacuuming, while a thorough vacuuming (moving all furniture and dusting prior to vacuuming) of other rooms may only be necessary on a weekly or even less frequent basis. Treat spots and spills as quickly as possible.

Tips to Make Housework Easier!

**Establish a System Before Beginning**
- Put cleaning supplies in a basket or tote
- Use a small container to collect items that belong elsewhere
- Take a bag to collect trash from each room
- Start in the common areas (living room, kitchen) then move to bedrooms, etc.

**Super Quick Touch-up for Unexpected Company**
- Make beds
- Wipe away visible dust
- Lightly vacuum and sweep (if time permits)
- Wash, rinse and stack dishes, or load dishwasher
- Close doors to create “off-limits” areas until company leaves

Mornings can be hectic but if you spend a little time before you leave for work, it will make arriving home much easier! Start the night before by straightening up, emptying trash, etc. Clear away clutter and breakfast dishes then move from room to room and give each one a quick going over.
Making Smart Drink Choices

Soft drinks are the #1 source of added sugar in the American diet. The United States ranks FIRST among other countries in soft drink consumption. The average American consumes 22 teaspoons of added sugar a day while the recommended amount of added sugar a day is only 5 - 9 teaspoons. That’s 200 - 400% more than recommended! The average American consumption of soft drinks is about 50 gallons per year.

SOFT DRINKS include soda, lemonade, sweet tea, sports drinks and any beverage sweetened with sugar or sugar substitute. How much sugar do you think are in the beverages you consume? Look at how much sugar is in a few of these popular choices:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beverage</th>
<th>Sugar Content</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 oz. bottle of Coke</td>
<td>17 teaspoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 oz. bottle of Fruitopia</td>
<td>18 teaspoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 oz. bottle of Sunny Delight</td>
<td>19 teaspoons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some soft drinks may have added vitamin C, calcium or other nutrients, but they are basically flavored sugar water. You must look at the nutrition facts label to see how many servings are in each container and how much sugar is in each serving. The major problem with consuming too much sugar is the extra calories. Another problem is children are consuming soft drinks at an earlier age.

How many soft drinks do you consume? If you were to drink 1 can of sugar sweetened soft drink every day and not cut back in calories anywhere else, you could gain up to 15 pounds in a year.

Soft drinks were once thought to be a treat. Now they are a part of our regular diet. Recently, soft drinks have come under scrutiny for their contributions to the rise of type 2 diabetes, heart disease and other chronic conditions.

To calculate how much sugar is in your beverage:

1. Look at the “Nutrition Facts” panel.
2. Write down the number of “Servings per Container” ________
3. Write down how many “Grams of Sugar” ________
4. Multiply “Servings per Container” by “Grams of Sugar”
5. Divide “Total Grams of Sugar by 4. This will tell you how many teaspoons of sugar are in your beverage container

Bottom line: The evidence is strong that cutting back on sugary drinks or eliminating them altogether may help with weight control and lower the risk of diabetes.

Ideas for consuming less sugar:

- Choose soft drinks every once in a while and use smaller portions
- Decrease the amount of sugar in tea
- If you drink soft drinks, choose diet drinks
- Choose healthier beverages such as low-fat or fat-free milk
- The smartest choice of all is WATER
Strawberry-Spinach Salad
Makes 6 servings
Serving Size: 1 cup

Ingredients:
- 1/2 cup sugar
- dash paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon prepared mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 teaspoon onion, minced
- 1/4 cup vinegar
- 1 (9-ounce) bag of fresh spinach
- 1 pint fresh strawberries, sliced
- 1/4 cup nuts, chopped (optional)

Dressing Directions
1. Combine all ingredients except spinach, strawberries, and nuts.
2. Blend with a fork or wire whisk until blended and sugar melts.

Salad Directions
1. Clean spinach and pat dry. Cut off stems and place in bowl.
2. Add sliced strawberries
3. Drizzle dressing lightly to taste over spinach and strawberries
4. Toss to coat
5. Sprinkle nuts over top

Launch of the first National Physical Activity Plan

On May 3, 2010, the U.S. National Physical Activity Plan will be launched. Along with this plan, North Carolina will release its State Indicator Report on Physical Activity. Both of these important documents will support communities as they strive to increase physical activity. The U.S. National Physical Activity Plan is being launched by a private-public sector collaborative, engaging hundreds of organizations dedicated to changing our communities in ways that will enable every American to be sufficiently physically active. The National Plan aims to create a culture that supports physically active lifestyles for the ultimate purposes of improving health, preventing disease and disability, and enhancing quality of life. The National Physical Activity Plan aligns with relevant initiatives across the United States.

Specifically:
- First Lady Michelle Obama’s Let’s Move campaign.
- The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans (2008). The National Plan presents a framework for the changes that our society must make to enable all Americans to meet the scientifically founded recommendations of the Physical Activity Guidelines.
- The National Physical Activity Plan supports Healthy People 2020.
- The National Physical Activity Plan is complementary to and consistent with the U.S. Task Force Guide to Community Preventive Services recommendations for increasing physical activity in communities and recognizes the importance of environmental and policy strategies and endorses evidence-based interventions such as those included in the Community Guide.

For more information about the plan or to see how you can support the plan, you can go to their website, http://physicalactivityplan.org/index.htm. Becoming more physically active is one of the best

Source: Cooking with EFNEP
Recipes for Eating Smart and Moving More Cook Book.
Take Some Time to Plan Your Time

Do you ever feel that there are not enough hours in the day? For many of us, our busy lifestyles and commitments can cause us to feel that we don't have enough time to do all that we are trying to do. This pressure can result in stress, which in turn, can result in physical and mental ailments. Since we can't change the number of hours or minutes in a day, we need to focus on changing what we are trying to accomplish in that time. This is not a problem just for our working population and young families, many of us in retirement also feel the stress of lack of time. We may over commit to our volunteer activities or have increased family responsibilities as family members age and need more help.

First take the time to plan your time. Try these tips.
- Make a list, prioritize and check things off as you get them done.
- Review your list from time to time. Is everything on that list necessary?
- Ask yourself, “What’s the best use of my time right now?” Then do it!
- Be willing to sacrifice "perfection" to get things done.
- Learn to say “no” to demands that don’t benefit you.
- Arrange your work time to keep interruptions to a minimum.
- Be realistic about what you can accomplish during a given period.
- When is your energy at its peak? Plan your work for those times and use your less energetic times for leisure or a nap.
- Whenever possible, delegate! Don’t waste time on minor decisions.

Remember if we over commit and don’t manage our time effectively, then we can increase our stress and increase our risk for illness which will in turn affect our ability to get things done. So remember to Take the time to plan your time!

Contributors Areas of Responsibility and Expertise

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