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 there will be hands-on classes for Jams, Pickles, Green Beans, and Tomatoes. All require pre-registration and registration is confirmed when payment is received. The cost for each class is $10.00.

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: Thursday, June 2, 2011
9am to 1pm

Pickles will be on July 12th from 9am to 1pm / Green Beans will be on July 26th from 9am to 3pm / Tomatoes on July 28th from 9am to 2pm.

"Preparing Our Local Bounty: Cooking Demonstrations Highlighting Our Abundance of Seasonal Foods" Join Cooperative Extension and the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project to learn from local chefs ways to prepare meals highlighting different foods and food products that are available from area producers. On Tuesday, May 31 at 5:30pm, Laurey Masterton will join us as we will highlight local honey, greens and meats. Each class will include the health benefits and ways of preserving selected foods. So, bring your appetite for tasty local food and your questions for the experts. Pre-registration is required and confirmed with receipt of $5.

Basic Home Maintenance Course

Neglecting the minor repairs around your home will lead to more expense and lessen a home’s value in the future. Have you wanted to make those basic home repairs but didn’t know where to start? This five-class series Basic Home Maintenance Course will show you how. Beginning Tuesday, June 7 from 5:30 – 7:30pm. The remaining dates for the course are June 9, 14, 16 and 21.

Some of the topics to be covered are: saving on your heating and cooling bills, basic plumbing repairs, interior and exterior maintenance, landscaping and lawn care, indoor air quality, common household pests, etc. The fee of $20.00 includes all materials and handouts for this five series course.

All classes are held at the Buncombe County Cooperative Extension. Pre registration and pre payment are required for all classes. If you need more information on any class, please call the Extension Center, 828-255-5522.

Contact Us

Nancy Ostergaard
Extension Agent
Family and Consumer Sciences
http://onhomefront.blogspot.com/
nancy_ostergaard@ncsu.edu

Cathy Hohenstein
Extension Agent
Family and Consumer Sciences
cathy_hohenstein@ncsu.edu

http://buncombe.ces.ncsu.edu
NEW HOME INVADER

Over the past few months our office has seen an increase in calls from homeowners with the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug. This new invader overwinters in homes much like the Asian lady beetle and Boxelder beetle. The Brown Marmorated Stink Bug will not harm people, but can give off an unpleasant odor when crushed or vacuumed.

If your home had an invasion last fall, or you want to prevent future invasions, now is the time to take action. Preventing entry is the best control for all the home invaders mentioned above. Seal and caulk all areas that may give access to the wall or house.

- Adjust or install tight-fitting sweeps or thresholds at the bottom of exterior doors.
- Install weather stripping around other parts of the door frame.
- Seal utility openings where air conditioner pipes, phone, cable TV and other wires enter the foundation and siding. Holes can be plugged with caulk, cement, urethane foam, or copper mesh.
- Caulk around windows, doors, siding and fascia boards.
- Keep window screens in good condition and install insect screening behind attic gable vents.

MOSS ON ROOFS

As you begin the spring maintenance on your home, you may notice the appearance of moss, lichen and/or algae. They grow actively in wet weather and can be found on rooftops, decks, lawns, walkways and shady sides of outdoor structures. To control moss, algae and lichens on roofs:

- Scrape away as much moss as possible. A power washer works to remove moss, lichen and algae. Be careful with the tools, as they can damage your roof as well as remove the moss.
- Keep all organic debris such as leaves and branches off of your roof, deck or patio.
- Remove branches that overhang your roof and decks to allow direct sunlight and good aeration to reach your roof.
- Use commercial moss removers to keep moss and algae from returning. These are best applied when the moss is actively growing. If possible, apply them during a dry spell.

Controls containing zinc sulfate are relatively safe around plants and are available for home use. Zinc sulfate also comes in a granular form for dry application. Zinc sprays or granules will corrode copper, so should not be used if gutters and downspouts are made of copper. Always read the container’s label for directions and make sure it controls the fungi you’re trying to eliminate.

Zinc galvanized ridge caps, copper flashing, or copper wires on the roof, can also be used to help prevent moss and other growth, once moss is removed. Rain leaches down small amounts of the metal, which may help prevent moss, lichen and algae from taking hold. The metal flashing or wire protects from the roof ridge to about 10-15 feet down the roof. For larger roofs, wire may be strung at points across the peak of the roof and across the halfway point. This method will help protect the entire surface from growth.

Do not use table salt on your roof. It is corrosive to metal and not very effective at controlling moss.

Source: University of Minnesota Extension
MAKING THE $ GO FURTHER

Have you ever been in the company of individuals that lived through the Great Depression? If so, you may have wondered why they were so careful with their money, saved items you would not imagine saving, etc. With the current economic times, we maybe should consider the old depression saying, “use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.”

Common sense tells us we need to spend less than we earn; however, we need to know how much we spend in order to better budget our money. This can be done by tracking where every dollar, every dime is spent for at least a month. Once you have a spending record, divide it into spending categories that make sense to you and tally up the total for each category. Look for regularly occurring, smaller expenses such as a daily $1 cup of coffee, can of soda, or bottle of water. If you have this one drink every day of the year, it totals up to $365.

Some other areas that may help cut family expenses are:

- Walk or ride for short-distance travel.
- Check out movies from the library.
- Make use of public facilities such as parks, local ballparks, museums.
- Wash clothes or dishes only when you have a full load.
- Don’t let water faucets drip.
- Turn out lights when no one is in the room.
- Buy versatile clothes that will expand your wardrobe.
- Watch for coupons, rebates, and specials on needed products.
- Always shop with a list.
- When eating out, find early-hour discounts, get free or two-for-one coupons, or go where kids eat free.

To be successful in reducing family spending, the entire family has to be involved. To help gain family support, have a contest to see who can think of the most ways to save.

SUN SAFETY

Although it is recommended to use sun screen all year around, many individuals forget or forego its use during the winter months when the time outdoors is limited. If you are one of those individuals, now is the time to once again begin the use of sun screen. Getting in the habit of using sun screen can help reduce future skin cancers. Skin cancer remains the most common type of cancer in the United States despite being such a preventable disease.

Did You Know?

- 1 out of every 5 Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime.
- Up to 80% of a person’s lifetime exposure of sunlight occurs before age 18.
- Apply sunscreen 30 minutes before going outdoors.
- 1 or 2 blistering sunburns before age 18 may double the risk of melanoma.

Remember the sun rule: Short Shadow – Seek Shade
Teens and Working

As summer approaches, many families are faced with trying to find things for their teens to do. If they do not already have a job, this may be the first time teens are considering working and they will need the support of their families as they decide where to work and what type of job they may want. With the decline in our family run businesses, this often means teens are looking outside of the family for working experience. The type of job they decide to take can be a stepping stone towards future careers and choices on what they might want to do after they have finished high school. So take advantage of the summer break to ease your teen into the workforce. Here are some things families might want to consider as their teens enter the workforce.

Benefits from having a job
- Working can increase responsibility, self-esteem, feeling of competence and independence.
- Working teens learn life skills in managing time and money, carrying out instructions, getting along with co-workers, and adapting to workplace routines.
- Youth who work limited hours are more likely to be employed after high school.
- They have a better chance of earning higher wages after graduation.

Challenges
- Often though, first jobs can be routine and lack positive interaction with adults.
- Teens often work in retail or service jobs earning minimum wage.
- Studies have found that teenagers who work more than 20 hours a week are more likely to experience detrimental effects in their school work, family and personal lives.

Discussion points when supporting your teen
- Talk with teens about why they want to get a job.
- Discuss how it will affect school and other activities and responsibilities at home. Being involved with family, school and community activities is an important part of a teen’s development. Too many hours working can take away from that.
- Discuss possible jobs with your teen.
- Help think through opportunities for promotion, learning new skills and work safety.
- Ask who co-workers and supervisors will be.
- Will the supervisor respect the need to work limited hours?
- What is the policy on breaks, overtime and time off?
- Work with your teen to set up a plan for how earnings are used. What should be saved and what can go for day to day needs and wants?

Buncombe County Department of Social Services staff issues youth employment certificates for youths between the ages of 14 and 18. They may also be issued by designated schools or agencies. You may contact your school guidance counselor to inquire if they are a designee. DSS has copies of the state and federal laws regarding youth employment which is available for parents or employers. Even with these state and federal limitations, you need to monitor the number of hours your teen works and their activities before and after work hours to make sure working does not have a negative affect on their school work and positive social development. For more information on teens and working, contact our office at 828-255-5522.

Source: Minnesota Cooperative Extension
The 2010 Dietary Guidelines are Out – Are You Meeting Them?

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010 were released this winter. Though many of the recommendations are similar to past recommendations, there are some new recommendations to go along with the older recommendations. Also, the new guidelines include more information on what we are currently eating and drinking and where we need to make changes to meet the healthy recommendations set forth below.

- Eat more fruits and vegetables and whole grains.
- Eat a variety of vegetables, especially dark-green, red and orange, and beans and peas.
- Choose low-fat or fat-free dairy foods and drinks.
- Choose a variety of protein foods, which include seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, beans and peas, soy products and unsalted nuts and seeds.
- Use oils to replace solid fats where possible.
- Choose foods with more potassium, dietary fiber, calcium and vitamin D. These include many of the above vegetables, fruits, whole grains and low-fat or fat-free milk or milk products or fortified alternatives.
- Reduce foods high in sodium by decreasing processed foods and eating more foods prepared at home.
- Balance calories eaten with physical activity to prevent weight gain and maintain a healthy weight.
- Adolescent females should choose foods that supply iron such as fortified foods, whole grains, nuts, low-fat meat and other protein foods with a good source of vitamin C foods or drink.
- Encourage calcium rich foods and drinks, such as dairy or dairy alternative, some fish and vegetables such as greens, in adolescents to promote their continued bone growth into young adulthood.

A way to work towards these guidelines is to prepare and eat more meals at home. Many of our high calorie, high fat, high sugar and high sodium foods come from processed foods or foods eaten out of the home. As a family, if we eat more meals prepared at home, we are starting our children off with healthier behaviors. The research shows that as children get older, even as infants to toddlers, their eating behaviors change and intakes such as sweetened drinks, higher calorie food choices such as baked desserts, fried foods and low-nutrient snack foods increase. The other pattern that occurs is that their intake of calcium rich milk and milk-products decrease. If families do not like milk or milk-products, they can choose from an increased variety of non-milk alternatives that have naturally occurring, as well as fortified, calcium and other nutrients. You can also find more information on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010 at [http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/dietaryguidelines.htm](http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/dietaryguidelines.htm).

Look for more tips on ways to meet these recommendations in future newsletters.
Spice Up Your Life Without the Salt Shaker

Many of us are trying to watch our sodium or salt levels. One way to make the switch from using the salt shaker, is to increase our use of non-sodium spices and herbs. The spring is the best time to begin, by planting your own herbs. Consider the following recommendations for cooking with herbs and spices and try growing your own this year in containers or in your garden. You can contact our office for more information on how to do this. Try following these flavor and food combinations, adapted from information provided by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov).

For meat, poultry and fish, try one or more of these combinations:

- **Beef**: Bay leaf, marjoram, nutmeg, onion, pepper, sage, thyme
- **Lamb**: Curry powder, garlic, rosemary, mint
- **Pork**: Garlic, onion, sage, pepper, oregano
- **Veal**: Bay leaf, curry powder, ginger, marjoram, oregano
- **Chicken**: Ginger, marjoram, oregano, paprika, poultry seasoning, rosemary, sage, tarragon, thyme
- **Fish**: Curry powder, dill, dry mustard, marjoram, paprika, pepper

For vegetables, experiment with one or more of these combinations:

- **Carrots**: Cinnamon, cloves, dill, ginger, marjoram, nutmeg, rosemary, sage
- **Corn**: Cumin, curry powder, onion, paprika, parsley
- **Green Beans**: Dill, curry powder, marjoram, oregano, tarragon, thyme
- **Greens**: Onion, pepper
- **Potatoes**: Dill, garlic, onion, paprika, parsley, sage
- **Summer Squash**: Cloves, curry powder, marjoram, nutmeg, rosemary, sage
- **Winter Squash**: Cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, onion
- **Tomatoes**: Basil, bay leaf, dill, marjoram, onion, oregano, parsley, pepper

Flat Top Stoves and Canning

The best advice for canning on flat top stoves is to follow manufacturer’s advice, because the styles of smooth cooktops being manufactured differ in ways that influence suitability for canning.

**Things to consider:**

- You can damage your cooktop surface from the excessive heat and/or scratches from the canners.
- There is also the risk that the food will be under processed because some burners have automatic cut-offs when the heat gets excessive, and the drop in heat can result in the pressure dropping below needed continuous temperatures allowing microorganisms to survive, like the botulism spores.
- Even if boiling water canning is approved by the manufacturer, you may not be able to use them because many canners do not have bottoms flat enough to work well on a smooth cooktop because you must be able to maintain a full boil over the tops of the jars. The pot used as a canner must also be large enough to have lots of water boiling freely around the jars, and at least 1 inch over the tops of jars.

The recommendation, therefore, is to contact the manufacturer of your smooth cooktop before making your decision to can (or not) on it. They are the recommended source of this information and may also have up-to-date alternatives or suggestions for equipment that you can use. We also caution that you might have to be sure they understand how large your boiling water or pressure canner is, how long it must be heated at high heat, how long the hot canner may stay on the burner until it cools after the process time, and that the canner is made from aluminum (if it is).
PREVENT FALLS IN YOUR HOME

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, falls are the leading cause of injury deaths, and the most common cause of nonfatal injuries and hospital admissions for trauma among people age 65 years and older. Many senior adults lack the knowledge needed to prevent falls. The steps below can aid in preventing falls, and if followed, will help lead to a longer independent living lifestyle.

- Exercise on a regular basis. Programs that increase strength and improve balance aid in preventing falls.
- Have a doctor or pharmacist review medications to determine side effects that might affect coordination or balance.
- Schedule eye exams at least once a year to check any change in vision.
- Eliminate fall hazards in the home and improve lighting.

Home Safety Tips

Many unintentional falls can be prevented in the home if simple adjustments are made to remedy them before accidents occur. The U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission offers the following tips to help prevent falls in the home.

1. When using stairs, always grip the handrails. Keep stairs well lighted.
2. Keep floors cleared and slip resistant. Remove loose carpets, cords, and other items you could trip over. Be sure all rugs, mats, and other surfaces are non-skid.
3. Install grab bars and slip-resistant surfaces in your bathroom.
4. Use only stable step stools with a top handrail. Don’t climb alone - have someone nearby to help you.
5. Stand up slowly from a sitting or lying down position.
6. Be sure your telephones and emergency numbers are easily accessible - so you can get help if you fall.

We Turn 100 This Year!

In 1911, history was made and nothing has been the same since; Jane S. McKimmon was hired as the first Home Demonstration agent in North Carolina. From its beginnings in 1911 with "Tomato Clubs," Home Demonstration/Family and Consumer Sciences has provided educational programs that improve the lives of North Carolina families. Originally a part of the Extension Department of the North Carolina College of Agriculture and Mechanics at North Carolina State College, Family and Consumer Sciences was established in 1920 as the Home Demonstration Program. In 1967, the program was renamed Home Economics Extension, in 1978 was elevated to departmental status, and in 1995 was renamed again as the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences. In 2007, the FCS Department merged with 4-H Youth Development to form the Department of 4-H Youth Development and Family & Consumer Sciences.

First designed to benefit rural homemakers and their families, Home Demonstration/FCS Programs now reach rural and urban families alike. The current faculty members have expertise in areas across the spectrum of family needs including nutrition, food safety, parenting, human development, aging, housing, community and volunteer leadership development, health, and family resource management. Please help us celebrate our 100th Anniversary by sharing with us memories you have of how our programs and services have helped you over the years. You can email Cathy Hohenstein at cathy_hohenstein@ncsu.edu or contact our office with your memories.
Roasted Asparagus & Olive Oil

Before preparing, gently rinse the asparagus in a large bowl to remove any soil. Break off the tougher part of the stem near the bottom where it snaps naturally. One of the simplest, yet most delicious, recipes for asparagus involves few ingredients and time but offers plenty of flavors.

**Ingredients:**
- 1 lb. asparagus
- 1 cup blue cheese (can substitute parmesan or other), crumbled
- 2 tbsp. olive oil

**Directions:**
Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a large bowl, toss asparagus and olive oil. Pour asparagus and oil into a stick-free pan. Bake 15 to 20 minutes. Sprinkle with cheese during the last 3 to 5 minutes of cooking.

*From The Produce Lady, NC Cooperative Extension, Rockingham County*

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**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*