

 *Finney County*  
**Extension Connection**

December 2015

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**Save the date!**

What? Knowledge @ Noon  
Where? Finney County Library  
When? 12 January, 2016  
Topic? "Tax Return Preparation Info"

## Fitness Tip

Knowing that 'tis the season for eating, try to block off time to burn some of the extra calories. Set aside time to take a walk, ride a bike, or go to the gym. Keep as close as you can to your regular fitness routine, but also take advantage of your time with your friends and loved ones. Plan a group activity, such as taking a walk together or playing a team sport.



## Health Tip

The excitement and rushing around—and in some cases, frustration and disappointment—associated with the holiday season can often take an emotional toll on people who are not adequately prepared to keep things in balance. There are a number of things you can do to help keep your holidays “merry and bright.”

**Go with the Flow**—When life’s special moments don’t meet our idealized expectations, the result can often be disappointment and emotional distress. That’s why it is often better in such situations to take a more relaxed approach. Try to let go of expectations of how things should be. Adjust and be flexible, depending upon the situation. Who knows; you may be surprised—things might even turn out better than you expected!

**Stay Positive**—Remind yourself that you want to make the best of any situation that comes along. You can use positive affirmations, such as telling yourself: “This will be enjoyable,” or “I’m relaxed and having a good time,” to get you through some of the rough patches. While you want to be sympathetic to the problems or difficult moods of others, you don’t want to get caught up in them to the extent that they become your own personal weight to bear.

**Connect with Yourself**—Whether you are a host or a visitor, making the extra effort to maintain the spirit of hospitality over an extended period of time can lead to mental and psychological fatigue. Go to the “Connections” section on the next page for some ideas on relaxing and recharging.

# Health Tip Continued...

## Connections

The holidays give many of us an opportunity to reconnect with family and old friends. For others, it can be a time of loneliness and isolation. Here are some thoughts on how you can help make the holidays a time of “peace on earth, and good will to all.”

### Connect with Family

- ◆ Spend extra time with one of your favorite relatives.
- ◆ Seek out an older loved one for a conversation at a family gathering.
- ◆ Take a more gentle, tolerant approach with all those in your life—even the people that you find challenging.



### Connect with Yourself

- ◆ Get up early and listen to your favorite music, while the rest of the house is asleep.
- ◆ Take a walk by yourself.
- ◆ Soak in the tub.
- ◆ Go out to get a massage.
- ◆ Slow down and be in the present moment.
- ◆ Be conscious when eating and drinking and savor the experience.



### Connect with the Community

- ◆ Show kindness through acts such as visiting a neighbor, a nursing home, or a hospital.
- ◆ Be generous. Give to your favorite charity or let someone go ahead of you in line at the cashier or in traffic.
- ◆ Reach out to friends and loved ones part of your spiritual community, if you have one.



### Connect with Nature

- ◆ Drive out to a safe natural setting and enjoy the beauty.
- ◆ Visit a park or botanical garden to be surrounded by nature.



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# Food Safety

## Holiday foods: Tips on storage and shelf life

Country ham: If unsliced, dry-cured ham is shelf-stable for one year. If sliced, ham may be refrigerated for two to three months. Once cooked, it can be refrigerated for three to four days.

Sausage: Dry fermented sausage that is labeled "Keep refrigerated" can be stored unopened at room temperature for four to six weeks or in the refrigerator for up to six months. Once opened, sausage will keep about two weeks in the refrigerator. If the package says "refrigerate," keep it refrigerated and use it within three weeks once opened.

Turkey: Frozen uncooked turkey can be stored in the freezer for up to six months without loss of quality or safety. Otherwise, refrigerate for use within one to two days.

Game birds: If raw, store in the refrigerator no more than one or two days before cooking, or three days after cooking. Frozen birds will keep up to one year in the freezer.

Cheese: Most hard or processed cheeses can be safely stored unopened for three to six months in the refrigerator and three to four months if opened.

Nuts: Refrigerate after opening to preserve freshness and prevent rancidity. Nuts also may be frozen for up to a year after opening to retain quality and freshness.

More information on food safety is available at the K-State Research and Extension website.

# Holiday Recipes

If a traditional Christmas dinner with ham and mashed potatoes is not what you are looking for this year, you might want to try some of the following entrées that will stun your company and make your holiday meal a festive extravaganza.

## #1 Apple-&-Leek-Stuffed Pork Tenderloin

Makes: 4 servings

Active Time: 1 hour 10 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour 10 minutes

### Ingredients

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus 1 teaspoon, divided

1 cup chopped leek, white and light green parts only, rinsed

1 sweet apple, such as Braeburn, Honeycrisp or Macoun, peeled and chopped

1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme, plus 1 sprig, divided

3/4 teaspoon salt, divided

3/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper, divided

1-1 1/4 pounds pork tenderloin, trimmed

2 cloves garlic, peeled

1/2 cup applejack or apple brandy

2 cups apple cider

2 teaspoons cornstarch

2 teaspoons Dijon mustard



# Holiday Recipes

## Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 450°F.
2. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add leek and cook, stirring, until beginning to soften, about 3 minutes. Add apple, chopped thyme, 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until the apple is beginning to soften, about 2 minutes. Transfer the mixture to a bowl to cool. Rinse out the pan.
3. To butterfly the tenderloin, lay it on a large cutting board. Holding the knife blade flat and parallel to the board, make a lengthwise cut through the center of the meat, stopping short of the opposite edge so that the tenderloin remains in one piece. Open as you would a book. Cover with plastic wrap. With a meat mallet, rolling pin or heavy pan, pound the pork to an even 1/4-inch thickness.
4. Spread the apple mixture in the center of the pork, leaving a 1-inch border all around. Starting at a long side, roll up the pork to enclose the filling. To keep the stuffing from falling out during roasting, fold in about 1 inch of the two short ends. Tie kitchen string firmly lengthwise around the roast to secure the two ends. Then tie it crosswise with string at 2-inch intervals. Lightly brush the roast with 1 teaspoon oil and sprinkle with the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper.
5. Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in the skillet over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to medium and brown the roast on all sides, about 4 minutes total. Transfer the roast to a rimmed baking sheet (set the pan aside). Place in the oven and roast until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part registers 145°F, about 15 minutes. Let rest on a clean cutting board for 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, prepare the sauce. Crush garlic with the flat side of a knife. Return the pan to medium-high heat. Add applejack (or apple brandy), thyme sprig and the garlic; bring to a boil and cook for 1 minute. Whisk cider and cornstarch and add to the pan. Return to a boil and cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened and reduced by just over half (to about 3/4 cup), 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from the heat; discard the garlic and thyme. Whisk in mustard and any juice from the baking sheet. Slice the pork and serve with the sauce.

# Holiday Recipes

## #2 Rack of Lamb with Warm Apple & Lentil Salad

Makes: 4 servings

Active Time: 40 minutes

Total Time: 40 minutes

### Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons coarse dry breadcrumbs, preferably whole-wheat
- 1 1/2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh rosemary, divided
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper, divided
- 1 1 1/2-pound rack of lamb, Frenched and trimmed
- 3 teaspoons Dijon mustard, divided
- 2 shallots, finely chopped
- 1 15-ounce can lentils, rinsed, or 1 1/3 cups cooked lentils
- 1 Granny Smith apple, finely chopped
- 2 stalks celery with leaves, finely chopped
- 3/4 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth, or water
- 2 teaspoons sherry vinegar, or cider vinegar



### Preparation

Preheat oven to 450°F.

Mix breadcrumbs, 1/2 teaspoon oil, 1/2 teaspoon rosemary, 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper in a small bowl.

Heat the remaining 1 teaspoon oil in a large ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat. Add lamb, meat-side down, and sear until browned, about 1 1/2 minutes. Turn it over and spread 2 teaspoons mustard over the meat. Sprinkle the breadcrumb mixture over the mustard. Transfer the lamb to the oven and roast until a thermometer inserted in the center registers 140°F for medium-rare, 15 to 20 minutes. Transfer to a plate and tent with foil to keep warm.

Return the pan to medium-high heat (be careful: the handle will still be hot). Add shallots, the remaining 1/2 teaspoon rosemary, 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper and cook, stirring constantly, until starting to soften, about 1 minute. Stir in lentils, apple, celery, broth (or water), vinegar and the remaining 1 teaspoon mustard; bring to a lively simmer. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the liquid is slightly reduced and the celery and apple are starting to soften, about 4 minutes. Cut the lamb into 8 chops and serve over the lentils.

Mustard and rosemary complement rich lamb and earthy lentils in this elegant meal.

# Holiday Recipes

## #3 Sauerbraten

Sauerbraten, a classic German recipe, is the ultimate make-ahead entree. First you brine it, then you braise it, then it marinates for a day before you serve it—sauerbraten literally means “pickled roast beef.” Serve this sauerbraten with the traditional German dumplings called spaetzle, or mashed potatoes or buttered noodles, and roasted green beans.

Makes: 8 servings

Active Time: 1 1/2 hours

Total Time: 5 days

### Ingredients

#### Marinade

2 cups dry red wine, such as pinot noir

1 cup red-wine vinegar

2 cups water

1 medium onion, finely chopped

2 tablespoons pickling spice

2 teaspoons whole black peppercorns

4 sprigs fresh thyme

### Roast

1 4-pound boneless beef roast, such as rump roast or chuck roast, trimmed

1 teaspoon ground ginger

1/2 teaspoon ground allspice

1 teaspoon salt

3/4 teaspoon ground pepper

1 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 medium onion, chopped

2 parsnips, peeled and chopped

2 stalks celery, chopped

1 cup low-sodium beef broth



**Make Ahead Tip:** Prepare through Step 2 five days ahead; prepare Steps 3-7 two days ahead. Finish with Steps 8-9 about one hour before serving.

Be sure to use a nonreactive pan—stainless-steel, enamel-coated or glass—when cooking with acidic foods (citrus, cranberries, tomatoes) to prevent the food from reacting with the pan. Reactive pans, such as aluminum and cast-iron, can impart off colors and/or flavors.

# Holiday Recipes

## Preparation

1. Five days before serving: Combine wine, vinegar, water, onion, pickling spice, peppercorns and thyme in a 5- to 6-quart nonreactive, ovenproof pot (see Tip); bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove from heat; let stand for 30 minutes. Transfer to the refrigerator until room temperature, about 30 minutes more.
2. Place roast in the cooled marinade. Cover and refrigerate for 3 days, turning the meat over once a day.
3. Two days before serving: Remove the roast from the marinade and thoroughly pat dry with paper towels. Strain and reserve the marinade (discard the solids). Whisk ginger and allspice into the marinade and set aside. Wash and dry the pot.
4. Preheat oven to 325°F.
5. Season the roast with salt and pepper. Add oil to the pot and heat over medium-high. Add the roast and brown on all sides, reducing the heat if the pot starts to get too dark, about 10 minutes. Transfer the roast to a plate.
6. Reduce heat to medium; add onion, parsnips and celery to the pot and cook, stirring, until they start to brown, 4 to 6 minutes. Push the vegetables to the sides and place the roast in the center. Pour in broth and the reserved marinade; bring to a simmer. Cover the pot with a tight-fitting lid.
7. Transfer the pot to the oven and bake for 30 minutes. Check the liquid: it should be simmering, but not vigorously boiling; if it's boiling, reduce the oven temperature to 300°. Continue to bake, turning the roast over once halfway through, until a fork twists easily when inserted into the top of the meat, 2 to 2 1/2 hours more. Uncover and let cool at room temperature for about 1 hour. Transfer to the refrigerator and chill until cold before covering again. Refrigerate for 1 day.
8. One hour before serving: Preheat oven to 350°.
9. Thinly slice the roast. Pour the liquid and vegetables into a blender. Blend until smooth, in batches if necessary. Pour the sauce back into the pot and stir in gingersnaps until the crumbs dissolve. Nestle the sliced roast into the sauce; bring to a simmer over medium heat. Cover,