

Extension Connection

October 2015

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Welcome! As the new Finney County Extension Agent for the Family and Consumer Sciences, I want to welcome everyone. I am very excited to be part of this community and provide Garden City and Finney County with researched-based information on health, fitness, food, and well-being.



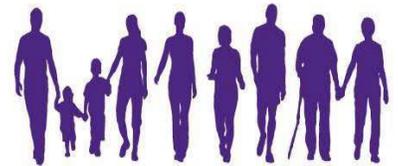
My name is Anne Combs and I am a proud Army wife and mother of 4 amazing children. After traveling the world, we came to settle in Garden City, KS. I have a Master's degree in Education and have worked in many different community settings, such as CASA, the Crisis Center, foster camps, and school districts.

Save the date!

What? Knowledge @ Noon
Where? Finney County Library
When? 10 November, 2015
Topic? "Winterizing Your Garden"

Fitness Tip

Regular exercise gives you greater resistance to stress, anxiety, and fatigue, while improving the condition of your heart and lungs. Fall is a great season to get active as the days are not as hot anymore. Garden City offers numerous opportunities to be active. Take a walk along the Talley Trail or visit the Lee Richardson Zoo to get a stroll in. Many of the city's parks are surrounded by a walking trail. The best thing about it is that kids can tag along and turn exercise into a family affair. Physical activity is one of the best ways to energize your body after a long day at work. Walking may not be what you feel like doing when you get home, but it could be exactly what you need. It also provides great opportunity to connect with your child or spouse without the distraction of electronics.



Health Tip



While you might feel less thirsty now that the temperatures are cooler, remember to stay hydrated. Water is a preferred beverage choice because it is readily accessible, contains no calories, fat, or cholesterol, and is low in sodium. To drink more water, make it your morning ritual to fill a water bottle so you can start every day drinking water instead of soda, coffee, tea, etc. Reduce waste by refilling a reusable water bottle. Wash the bottle every night and let it air dry.

Food Preservation

10 Tips for Safe Home-Canned Food

Home-canned foods are a year-round treat. But if those foods are not canned safely, foodborne illness can turn a treat into tragedy. Use current canning methods and follow these tips to can foods safely.

1. Altitude Adjustment — Kansas altitude can range from below 1,000 feet to just over 4,000 feet. Failure to adjust for altitude will lead to under-processed food, which encourages the growth of *Clostridium botulinum*. Recipes in the USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning give altitude information with each recipe.

2. Headspace — Proper headspace helps ensure a good vacuum seal on jars. Too little headspace can compromise the seal. Food and liquid expands during processing and may seep underneath the sealing compound. Too much headspace leaves excess air inside the jar, causing discoloration, seal failure, and spoilage. For best results, always follow headspace measurements in the recipe.

3. Processing Equipment — Processing methods recommended for home canning are water bath canners for high-acid foods and pressure canners for low-acid foods. The following old methods are not recommended and may cause spoiled food and foodborne illness:



Open Kettle Canning — In this method, hot food is poured into jars and the lid and ring are applied with no further heat processing. This allows bacteria, yeast, and mold to grow and spoil food. Examples include inverting hot jars and sun canning.

Oven — Oven temperatures vary with the accuracy of oven regulators and air movement. Dry heat moves slowly through jars, allowing bacteria to grow. Jars may crack due to temperature shock.

Dishwasher — Use the dishwasher to wash empty jars and keep them hot. Do not use it for processing filled jars. The water temperature is not high enough to kill bacteria for safe canning.

4. Untested or Homemade Recipes — Canning your favorite recipe is risky, and may cause spoilage and foodborne illness. It is difficult to determine the safety of a homemade recipe without having detailed knowledge of the recipe, preparation procedures, total acid content, and consistency of the final product. Use tested recipes from trusted resources such as USDA, K-State Research and Extension publications, or home preserving equipment and ingredient manufacturers. Commercially canned foods are rigorously tested for safety. It is dangerous to try to recreate them at home.

5. Acidifying Tomatoes — Tomatoes are on the borderline between a low-acid and high-acid food. Tomato processing recommendations include both boiling water and pressure canning. Pressure processing instructions are equivalent in heat treatment to water bath processing. Both methods require acidification. There are no recommendations to process tomatoes without acidification.

Food Preservation

10 Tips for Safe Home-Canned Food

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6. Improper Processing Time — Use trusted resources for safe processing instructions. Guessing can lead to under-processing and foodborne illness or to over-processing and poor quality food.

7. Lids and Jars — Recipes specify what size of jar to use. If a recipe lists pints only, do not use a larger jar. Regular and wide-mouth Mason-type, threaded, home-canning jars with self-sealing lids are the best choice. They are available in 4-ounce, ½-pint, 12-ounce, pint, 1½-pint, quart, and ½-gallon sizes. Half-gallon jars are only used for canning high acid juices. With careful use and handling, Mason jars may be reused many times. When using 12-ounce jars, follow pint jar processing recommendations. When using 1½-pint jars, follow quart jar processing recommendations.

Jars that cannot accommodate two-piece canning lids are not recommended for home canning. The common self-sealing lid consists of a flat metal lid and a metal screw band. These lids are used one-time only. Reusing metal lids can lead to seal failure and spoilage. Lids manufactured since 2014 do not require heat treatment before use. All lids, however, can be heated gently in hot simmering water. Do not boil lids as excessive heat softens the gasket compound too much. Metal screw bands can be reused.

One manufacturer makes a reusable plastic lid. No university research has been done to test the safety of these lids to date. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for best results.

8. Modifying Tested Recipes — Adding thickeners, pasta, rice, or any other ingredient to tested recipes can result in spoilage and foodborne illness. These changes alter the acidity and consistency, which slows heat penetration. Instead, make the recipe as stated, then add extra ingredients before serving.

9. Fancy Pack — Fancy packs are not practical and produce potentially unsafe products. Processing times depend on specific preparation procedures. For example, preparation instructions specify cutting carrots into pieces, instead of packing them whole. Fancy packs can slow heat penetration through the jar of dense food. The slow process of fancy packing hot food will cool the food too much, resulting in under-processing.

10. New Appliances for Home Canning — Food preservation manufacturers are selling new appliances to help consumers preserve food without a lot of expertise or in smaller batches. These appliances must be used according to their instructions and recipes. Use of recipes not developed for these appliances can lead to seal failure, food spoilage, and other potential health risks.



Halloween Health and Safety Tips

S

Swords, knives, and other costume accessories should be short, soft, and flexible.

A

Avoid trick-or-treating alone. Walk in groups or with a trusted adult.

F

Fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags to help drivers see you.

E

Examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before eating them. Limit the amount of treats you eat.

H

Hold a flashlight while trick-or-treating to help you see and others see you. Always WALK and don't run from house to house.

A

Always test make-up in a small area first. Remove it before bedtime to prevent possible skin and eye irritation.

L

Look both ways before crossing the street. Use established crosswalks wherever possible.

L

Lower your risk for serious eye injury by not wearing decorative contact lenses.

O

Only walk on sidewalks whenever possible, or on the far edge of the road facing traffic to stay safe.

W

Wear well-fitting masks, costumes, and shoes to avoid blocked vision, trips, and falls.

E

Eat only factory-wrapped treats. Avoid eating homemade treats made by strangers.

E

Enter homes only if you're with a trusted adult. Only visit well-lit houses. Never accept rides from strangers.

N

Never walk near lit candles or luminaries. Be sure to wear flame-resistant costumes.

October is National Apple Month

4 apples to try during this month:



Fuji

This crisp, juicy, and bi-colored apple is sweet and is fantastic for snacking, salads, and baking.



Granny Smith

This crisp and tart apple has a lemon-like flavor and is great for baking and cooking.



Honeycrisp

Just like its name implies, this apple is crisp with a honey-like sweetness and it is great for snacking.



Gala

This bi-colored apple has a mellow sweet flavor with a hints of vanilla. It is smaller in size and great for snacking paired with peanut butter or cheese.

16 Things to Make with Apples

1. Applesauce: Quarter 4 pounds apples. Simmer with 1 cup water, 3 tablespoons sugar, and a pinch of salt, partially covered, until soft, 25 to 30 minutes. Pass through a food mill. Whisk in 2 tablespoons butter.
2. Apple Butter: Cook 1/2 cup sugar in a large skillet until deep amber. Add 4 cups applesauce (No. 1) and 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon. Cook, stirring occasionally, until reduced by half, about 30 minutes.
3. Caramel Apples: Cook 1 1/2 cups sugar and 1/2 cup water in a saucepan over medium heat, swirling, until golden. Off the heat, stir in 1/4 cup cream and 1/4 teaspoon each vanilla and salt. Transfer to a 4-cup liquid measuring cup, cool slightly. Insert wooden sticks into 4 apples, dip in the caramel. Set on oiled parchment paper to harden.



16 Things to Make with Apples

6. **Apple Cake:** Whisk 1 1/4 cups flour, 3/4 cup sugar, 1 teaspoon baking powder and 1/2 teaspoon each salt, baking soda, cinnamon and nutmeg. Shred 1 apple and squeeze dry, then whisk with 2 eggs, 1/2 cup each vegetable oil and milk, and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Fold into the flour mixture. Bake in a buttered 9-inch-round pan at 350 degrees F, 20 minutes; cool. Beat 8 ounces cream cheese, 1/2 stick butter, 1 cup confectioners' sugar, 1 teaspoon each lemon juice and vanilla, and a pinch of salt; spread on the cake.
 7. **Apple-Pork Burgers:** Mix 1 pound ground pork, 1/2 pound uncased fresh breakfast sausage, 1 small grated apple, 1 grated garlic clove, 1 teaspoon kosher salt, and pepper to taste. Form into four 1/2-inch-thick patties and cook in an oiled skillet over medium-high heat, 4 to 5 minutes per side. Serve on buns with Swiss cheese, bacon, mustard and sliced apples.
 8. **Sausage-Apple Skewers:** Thread 1-inch chunks of apple, bratwurst and red onion on skewers; brush with oil. Grill over medium-high heat, turning, until lightly charred, 10 minutes.
 9. **Apple-Braised Cabbage:** Cook 4 cups shredded red cabbage and 1 chopped apple in a skillet with 3 tablespoons each butter, cider vinegar and water over medium heat, covered, until tender, 20 minutes.
 10. **Potato-Apple Pancakes:** Peel and shred 1 apple and 1 small russet potato; squeeze dry. Mix with 2 tablespoons flour, 1 teaspoon kosher salt and a pinch of nutmeg. Fry heaping spoonful in butter in a skillet over medium heat, turning, 4 minutes per side.
 11. **Apple-Brie Polenta:** Bring 3 cups water and 1 cup apple cider to a boil. Whisk in 1 cup instant polenta and 1/2 cup grated peeled apple and simmer, whisking, until thick, about 5 minutes. Stir in 1 tablespoon chopped sage, 1/2 cup brie (rind removed) and 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt.
 12. **Apple-Mustard Chicken:** Cook 1 each chopped onion and apple in butter in a skillet until soft. Add 1 cup chicken broth, 1/8 cup prunes and 2 tablespoons whole-grain mustard. Add 4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts; cover and poach over low heat until cooked through, 15 minutes. Add 1/4 cup cream, and salt, pepper and chopped dill to taste; bring to a simmer to thicken.
 13. **Apple Skillet Pancake:** Whisk 3 eggs until frothy; whisk in 3/4 cup each milk and flour. Peel, core and slice 1 apple; cook in an ovenproof 10-inch skillet with 3 tablespoons butter and 1 tablespoon sugar until just soft. Add the batter and bake at 450 degrees F until puffy and golden, 15 minutes.
 14. **Apple-Cheddar Fondue:** Simmer 1/8 cup each apple cider and white wine. Whisk in 3/4 pound shredded extra-sharp cheddar tossed with 2 teaspoons cornstarch. Add 2 tablespoons applejack brandy and season with salt and pepper. Serve with cubed bread and apple slices.
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15. **Waldorf Salad:** Toss 1/2 cup sliced grapes, 2 each chopped apples and celery stalks, 1/4 cup each mayonnaise, sour cream, walnuts and parsley, and lemon juice, salt and pepper to taste.
 16. **Sesame-Apple Slaw:** Whisk 2 tablespoons sesame oil, 1 tablespoon brown sugar, 2 teaspoons each rice vinegar, and soy sauce, and 1 teaspoon grated ginger. Add 3 cups each shredded apples and cabbage, and salt to taste.
 17. **Baked Apples:** Scoop out the core of 4 apples using a melon baller, leaving the bottoms intact. Mix 3 tablespoons each of brown sugar and butter with 1/8 cup fresh breadcrumbs and 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon; stuff into the apples. Put in a baking dish with 1/8 cup apple cider and bake at 375 degrees F for 45 minutes.
OPTIONAL: add 3 tablespoons chopped toasted walnuts or pecans to the filling.