

Lubbock County Family Network



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AVOID GUESSING ABOUT HOLIDAY FOOD SAFETY

During the coming holidays, thoughts turn to family, food, and finding enough time to fit everything in!



Food safety may take a back seat as we take short cuts, prepare foods ahead, cook late into the night, and host numerous holiday feasts.

Before you cook the turkey, set up the buffet, or start making holiday goodies, see how you do on this holiday food safety quiz, based on information from the USDA and the Food and Drug Administration.

Approximately, how long should you allow for thawing a frozen turkey in the refrigerator?

- a. 24 hours per each 1-2 pounds of turkey
- b. 24 hours per each 4-5 pounds of turkey
- c. 24 hours per each 6-7 pounds of turkey

Answer: b. Place the frozen bird in its original wrapper in the refrigerator (40°F or below). Allow approximately 24 hours per each 4-5 pounds of turkey. A thawed turkey can remain in the refrigerator for 1-2 days.

THAWING TIME IN THE REFRIGERATOR	
Size of Turkey	Number of Days
4-12 pounds	1-3 days
12-16 pounds	3-4 days
16-20 pounds	4-5 days
20-24 pounds	5-6 days

What is a safe internal temperature for cooking a whole turkey?

- a. 145°F
- b. 155°F
- c. 165°F



Answer: c. Use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of the turkey. A whole turkey is safe cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 165°F throughout the bird. Check the internal temperature in the innermost part of the thigh and wing and the thickest part of the breast. If you have stuffed your turkey, the center of the stuffing must also reach 165°F.

For reasons of personal preference, you may choose to cook turkey to a higher temperature. All turkey meat, including any that remains pink, is safe to eat as soon as all parts reach at least 165°F.

The stuffing should reach 165°F, whether cooked inside the bird or in a separate dish.

Let turkey stand 20 minutes after removing it from the oven. Remove any stuffing and carve the turkey.

COOKING TIME - UNSTUFFED	
Size of Turkey	Estimated Time to Reach 165°F
8-12 pounds	2¾ - 3 hours
12-14 pounds	3-3¾ hours
14-18 pounds	3¾ - 4¼ hours
18-20 pounds	4¼ - 4½ hours
20-24 pounds	4½ - 5 hours

Based on a 325°F oven per USDA recommendations.

COOKING TIME - STUFFED	
Size of Turkey	Estimated Time to Reach 165°F
8-12 pounds	3-3½ hour
12-14 pounds	3½ - 4 hours
14-18 pounds	4-4¼ hours
18-20 pounds	4¼ - 4¾ hours
20-24 pounds	4¾ - 5¼ hours

Which of the following are important practices to follow if stuffing a turkey?

- Do not mix wet and dry ingredients for a stuffing until just before stuffing the bird
- Stuff the turkey loosely
- Cook a stuffed turkey immediately
- Use a food thermometer
- b, c, and d
- All of the above

Answer: f. Cooking a home-stuffed turkey is riskier than cooking one not stuffed. Even if the turkey itself has reached the safe minimum internal temperature of 165°F as measured in the innermost part of the thigh, the wing and the thickest part of the breast, the stuffing may not have reached a temperature high enough to destroy bacteria that may be present.

Stuff it safely with these suggestions from USDA:

- Prepare Stuffing Safely** – If you plan to prepare stuffing using raw meat, poultry, or shellfish, you should cook these ingredients before stuffing the turkey to reduce the risk of food-borne illness from bacteria that may be found in raw ingredients. The wet ingredients for stuffing can be prepared ahead of time and refrigerated. However, do not mix wet and dry ingredients until just before spooning the stuffing mixture into the turkey cavity.
- Stuff Loosely** – Do not cool the stuffing. Spoon it directly into the turkey cavity right after preparation. Stuff the turkey loosely – about ¾ cup of stuffing per pound. The stuffing should be moist, not dry, because heat destroys bacteria more rapidly in a moist environment. Do not stuff turkeys to be grilled, smoked, fried, or microwaved.
- Cook Immediately** – Immediately place the stuffed, raw turkey in an oven set no lower than 325°F.



- Use a Food Thermometer** – For safety and doneness, check the internal temperature of the turkey and stuffing with a food thermometer. If the temperature of the turkey and the center of the stuffing have not reached a safe minimum internal temperature of 165°F, further cooking will be required. Do not remove the stuffing from the turkey before it reaches 165°F because the under-cooked stuffing could contaminate the cooked meat. Continue to cook the turkey until the stuffing is safely cooked.
- Let It Rest** – Let the cooked turkey stand 20 minutes before removing the stuffing and carving.
- Refrigerate Promptly** – Refrigerate the cooked turkey and stuffing within 2 hours after cooking. Place leftovers in shallow containers and use within 3-4 days. Reheat leftovers to a safe minimum internal temperature of 165°F.

What is the longest that perishable foods should sit out at room temperature on a buffet table?

- 2 hours
- 3 hours
- 4 hours



Answer: a. Foods should not sit at room temperature for more than two hours. Keep track of how long foods have been sitting on the buffet table and discard anything there two hours or more.

Divide cooked foods into shallow container to store in the refrigerator or freezer until serving. This encourages rapid, even cooling. Reheat hot foods to 165°F. Arrange and serve food on several small platters rather than on one large platter. Keep the rest of the food hot in the oven (set at 200-250°F) or cold in the refrigerator until serving time. This way foods will be held at a safe temperature for a longer period of time.

REPLACE empty platters rather than adding fresh food to a dish that already had food in it. Many people's hands may have been taking food from the dish, which has also been sitting out at room temperature.

Hold hot foods at 140°F or warmer. On the buffet table you can keep hot foods hot with chafing dishes, slow cookers, and warming trays. Cold foods should be held at 40°F or colder. Keep foods cold by nesting in bowls of ice. Otherwise, use small serving trays and replace them.

References:

- Food Safety for those Glorious Holiday Goodies!*, Partnership for Food Safety Education, accessed September 19, 2011 at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/pubs/holiday_goodies1.pdf
- Holiday or Party Buffets*, USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service, accessed Sept. 19, 2011 at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/fact_sheets/Lets_Talk_Turkey/index.asp

- *Let's Talk Turkey – a Consumer guide to Safely Roasting a Turkey, USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service, accessed Sept. 19, 2011 at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/fact_sheets/Lets_Talk_Turkey/index.asp*
- *Stuffing and Food Safety, USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service, accessed Sept. 19, 2011 at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/fact_sheets/Stuffing_and_Food_Safety/index.asp*

PIE PROBLEMS, SOLVED

Problem: Bubbled-over fruit filling

Fix: Leaks happen, especially with lattice pies. Crimp the edges of the pie tightly and if it has a double crust, add steam vents. Be sure to bake the pie on a parchment-lined baking sheet to catch any drips.

Problem: Crumbly cookie crust

Fix: When making a cookie crust for an Icebox pie, make sure the cookie crumbs are coated evenly with melted butter and are not too dry. For a nice thick crust, press into a pie pan with a measuring cup.

Problem: Weeping meringue

Fix: Top the pie with meringue when the filling is still hot. This “cooks” the bottom of the meringue and prevents beads of liquid from rising to the top. Overbaking may also cause weeping.

Problem: Runny fruit filling

Fix: Baked fruit can release a lot of liquid. Make sure that your pie filling includes a thickener (such as flour, cornstarch, or quick-cooking tapioca) and that the pie is baked for long enough.

Source: From Southern Living in Extension FCS *Programs Serving Families* Newsletter by Connie Moyers, Roosevelt Co., NM Extension Home Economist, Retired

DON'T LET STRESS DAMPEN THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT

Financial pressure and time restrictions are often the top stressors during the holidays, but there are ways to reduce that stress, said a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service expert.

“You can reduce your holiday stress by making a budget and adequately planning your holiday shopping and family time,” said Dr. Joyce Cavanagh, AgriLife Extension family economics specialist, College Station.

Cavanagh said one of the best ways to reduce holiday stress is to commit to making and sticking to a holiday spending plan.



“Most people think about planning for gift buying but forget about all of the other holiday-related spending such as entertainment, decorations, holiday meals, donations and travel,” she said. “All of these should be factored into your holiday spending plan to reduce your chances of being surprised and overspending.”

She said as a guideline some personal finance experts suggest limiting holiday spending to 1.5 percent of annual income.

“That’s \$600 for someone with a \$40,000 annual income.” Cavanagh said, “Setting that spending limit and using only cash can keep you from overspending. If you decide to use credit, don’t charge more than you can afford to pay off when you get the bill. And know what the interest rate is on your credit cards.”

She said to make a list of everyone to receive gifts and decide how much to spend on each person.

“Have gift ideas in mind before shopping so you aren’t making impulse purchases,” she said. “Keep track of what you spend and who you bought it for. It will help reduce your stress when you can look at your list and know exactly what you still have to buy. And knowing what gift wrapping and party supplies you already have on hand can keep you from buying more than you need.”

Preparing a list and shopping early allows for more time to watch for sales on specific items, she noted.

“If a gift is this year’s ‘must have’ item, shopping early means you may get it before they are sold out. Waiting until the last minute often means buying any gift rather than the right gift.”

Cavanagh said those with large extended families might consider giving a family gift instead of individual gifts.

“Or the extended family members could draw names so each person is giving one gift instead of many,” she said.

She also suggested “thinking outside the gift box” when giving.

“Some of the best gifts a person could receive aren’t things you can buy,” she said, “Give the gift of yourself –either as time or talent. Homemade gift certificates redeemable by the recipient can be valuable but inexpensive gifts.

“For example, teenagers can provide babysitting services. If you like to bake, providing a dozen homemade cookies every month or a birthday cake later in the year would be welcome gifts. If you knit or sew or are a woodworker, consider making gifts rather than buying them.”

She said if hosting a holiday meal, one way to lessen the expense and stress is by asking others for help.

“Plan your menu and ask your guests to bring specific items, or ask them to bring a side dish or dessert and let them choose their favorite dish.”

Cavanagh said it’s important to remember the best gift is the gift of time.

“Incorporate games or other family activities to make your holiday gatherings special,” she said “Gifts are soon forgotten, but memories last a lifetime.”

Source:

By: Paul Schattenberg, 210-859-5752, paschattenberg@ag.tamu.edu
Contact: Dr. Joyce Cavanagh, 979-845-3859, jacavanagh@ag.tamu.edu
Today.agrilife.org/2016/12/02/don-let-stress-dampen-holiday-spirit/

FAMILY FITNESS THROUGHOUT THE HOLIDAYS

As the temperature outside continues to grow colder, it is easy to simply want to cuddle up on the couch with a warm cup of hot cocoa, snacks, and your favorite holiday movie. However, with the rising obesity levels, especially among children, staying active before, during, and after the holidays is an important part of being healthy.

A key way to help your children become healthy adults is to encourage an active lifestyle. Children in the United States today are less fit than they were a generation ago, and physical inactivity has become a serious problem. Americans are increasingly overweight, with the number of obese adults and overweight children doubling between the late 1970s and the early 2000s.

Both children and adults need time to improve their health through physical activity. A pattern of inactivity, also known as a sedentary lifestyle, begins early in life, making the promotion of physical activity among children imperative. Research indicates that regular physical activity has significant health benefits. Even modest increases in activity levels can have health-enhancing effects, including a reduction in chronic disease risk such as hypertension, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and obesity.

So, what can parents do to help increase the entire family’s fitness level? It’s not as difficult as it seems. First and foremost, parents can be good role models. If children do not see the adults in their lives taking interest in hobbies and participating in activities that promote continuous movement for 30 to 60 minutes a day, they are less likely to adopt active lifestyles.

Decreasing “screen time” for families during the holidays in another way parents can increase the family fitness level. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, the

average child watches about 3 hours of television a day. And the average child spends 5½ hours daily on all media combined, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation. Choosing to turn off the television or computer and taking an outdoor family walk to see neighborhood holiday decorations or just dancing around in the family room to favorite music are two ways to keep the family moving.

Take every opportunity to establish good viewing habits, and ensure that children have no more than 2 hours of television and video time per day, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Parents should also encourage their kids to do a variety of activities. For children, exercise means playing and being physically active. Kids exercise in gym class, walking or playing fetch with the dog, or even playing tag in and outdoors. According to the 2005 dietary guidelines from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health and Human Services, all children 2 years and older should get 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise on most, and preferably all, days of the week, with adolescents and adults getting at least 30 minutes.

To keep kids away from the TV and off the couch, encourage games to get kids moving, and set a positive example by joining in. What sounds like more fun, 30 minutes walking on a treadmill or 30 minutes playing and laughing with your children? As winter approaches, here are some helpful ways to increase your family’s physical activity time:

- Designate a space indoors where children can climb, jump, dance, and tumble. Let this space become the “play zone.”
- Establish a weekly Dance-A-Thon night, dancing to a variety of favorite fun music from various eras.
- Create either an indoor or outdoor obstacle course of favorite games using household items (i.e., trash can basketball, blanket volleyball, bean bag tossing, hopscotch, etc.)
- Work together in a family garden.
- Put up and take down holiday decorations outside as a family.

Being active is a crucial element of health for all ages. So this year, resolve to take small steps to help your family make healthy behavior changes that will keep your family moving towards better health in the coming year.

Source: Alice Kirk, *Extension Program Specialist, Child Health and Wellness, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, November 2005*

References:

- USDA MyPyramid, www.mypyramid.org
- American Heart Association, www.americanheart.org
- CDC Youth Recommendations, <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/recommendations/youth.htm>
- American Academy of Pediatrics, <http://www.aap.org/>

ACHIEVE YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS BY CHOOSING THE RIGHT ATHLETIC SHOES

It's a new year and time to finally keep that resolution of "losing weight and being health." One way to achieve this goal is by choosing the right athletic shoes.

With the many types of athletic shoes that are available, it can be hard to choose the right shoes. There are differences in design and variations in material and weight. The American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons says that these differences have been developed to protect the areas of the feet that encounter the most stress in a particular athletic activity. Some of the different types of sports shoes available include the following:

- **Athletic shoes** are grouped into the following categories: running, training, and walking; they include shoes for hiking, jogging, and exercise walking. These shoes should have a comfortable soft upper, good shock absorption, smooth tread, and a rocker sole design that encourages the natural roll of the foot during the walking motion. Features of a good jogging shoe should include cushioning, flexibility, control, and stability in the heel counter area, lightness, and good traction. Cross-training shoes combine several characteristics of other types of shoes so that you can participate in more than one sport and wear the same shoe. A good cross trainer should have flexibility in the forefoot that is needed for running, in addition to stability on the inside and outside of the shoe for the control needed for aerobics and tennis. Walking shoes should flex easily at the ball of the foot, which help feet to push forward.
- **Court sport shoes** include shoes for tennis, basketball, and volleyball. Most court sports require the body to move forward, backward, and side-to-side. As a result, most athletic shoes use for court sports are subject to heavy abuse. The key to finding a good court shoe is the sole. Ask a coach or shoe salesperson to help you select the best type of sole for your sport.
- **Field sport shoes** include shoes for soccer, football, and baseball. These shoes are cleated, studded, or spiked. The spike and stud formations vary from sport to sport. They can be replaceable or detachable cleats, spikes, or studs affixed into nylon soles.
- **Track and field sport shoes** are very specific to the sport. The needs of the individual are most important when picking the shoe. For example, foot types, gait patterns, and training styles should always be considered. It is always best to ask a coach about the type of shoe that should be selected for the event in which you are participating.

It is also important to choose proper-fitting sports shoes. Proper-fitting sports shoes can enhance performance and prevent injuries. Follow these specially designed fitting

facts when purchasing a new pair of athletic shoes:

- Try on athletic shoes after a workout or run and at the end of the day. Your feet will be at their largest.
- Wear the same type of sock that you will wear for that sport.
- When the shoe is on your foot, you should be able to freely wiggle all of your toes. There should be a thumb's width from the tip of the toe to the end of the shoe.
- The shoes should be comfortable as soon as you try them on. There is no break-in period. If they are not comfortable in the store, they won't be comfortable when you are exercising.
- Walk or run a few steps in the shoes. They should be comfortable. The heel of the shoe should not slip off the foot as you walk or run.
- Always re-lace the shoes you are trying on. You should lace through each top eyelet as you crisscross the lacing pattern to ensure a more snug fit and decrease slippage. Do not tie the laces too tight as this may cause injury to the nerves or tendons on the top of the foot and ankle.

Now that you know what type of shoe to buy and tips to picking out a properly fitting shoe, you need to consider its construction—how well it was made. Understanding the basics of shoe construction can help you choose intelligently from among the thousands of available styles.

- Stitching should be secure, even, and straight. There should be no rough spots, wrinkles, bulky seams, or gummy adhesives.
- Rubber around the base of the shoe should be one continuous strip, tightly attaching the sole to the upper.
- The toe box should be square for adequate toe room.
- The shoe should have side and tongue padding for extra comfort. Cushioning on the cuff around the ankle and at the Achilles tendon helps to reduce friction and irritation.
- The inner sole should be soft and resilient, with adequate arch cushions.
- The reflector should be as big as possible, especially if you will be outside at dusk or dawn.
- The insole should be removable for cleaning and, when it loses springiness, replacement.

In addition to being overwhelmed by all the choices in athletic shoes, you may be surprised at how much they cost. Slick ads and television commercials tout technological features, the latest gimmicks, and shoes named after sports celebrities. Paying more than \$100 does not necessarily get you a better shoe. Good quality shoes may be pricy, but do not overlook the less expensive shoes because they can outperform their costlier brandmates. Be sure that whatever price you decide to pay for the shoes, it is because the shoe has the features that meet your needs –

not because it is a certain brand or has a sports celebrity's name on it.

Source: Prepared by: Courtney J. Schoessow, MPH, Extension Program Specialist-Health, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, January 2006, Family & Consumer Sciences website: <http://fcs.tamu.edu>

NEW YEAR, NEW BEGINNINGS, SAME RESOLUTIONS?

With a new year there comes a fresh start, and desire to improve oneself by forming New Year's Resolutions. Many times the best intentions prove to be poor in practice. Have you ever committed to completely give up sweets, or making it to the gym seven days a week? A few leftover Christmas cookies, and a gym membership later you have completely broken and given up on those resolutions. You may feel defeated and hopeless, but do not worry, you are not alone. Statistics from statisticians.com shows that 8% of people accomplish their New Years' resolutions out of 45% of people who make a resolution. So how do you become a part of the successful eight percent? Here are a few helpful tips that provide a solution to your failed resolution.



Make a SMART Goal

In order to be successful with your resolutions, you need to make realistic goals. A good goal has specific aspects to it that make it achievable. These characteristics can be remembered through the acronym SMART.

- Specific goals identify an action or event in detail.
- Measurable goals are quantifiable. You can gauge your progress through a set number or amount.
- Achievable goals are possible to attain at your starting point, and will not be overwhelming.
- Realistic goals means knowing your limits, but also allowing for a little push in order to improve, while still encouraging success.
- Timely goals express a time period in which the goal will be achieved or accomplished.



The next time you make a resolution or goal, consider this acronym. By making goals that are realistic, measurable, and time attentive, you can be successful.

A Few Examples of SMART Goals:

Instead of stating a vague goal such as: "I will go on a diet and exercise", make it specific and measurable, "I will exercise 5 days a week for 30 minutes at a time, and I will only eat out once a week". Other examples include:

- "I will eat healthier", instead try, "I will eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables everyday."
- Do not say, "I will give up all sweets", a more attainable goal, "I will only eat one sweet item a week defined as a dessert which includes candy, cakes, etc."
- "I will drink more water", this is not a specific goal. Instead try, "I will drink eight glasses of water a day".
- Instead of saying, "I will lose weight", state a specific amount of weight along with a timeline of when to lose the weight. Make sure it's realistic!

By making a **SMART** goal, you will set yourself up for success! Remember these tips, and enjoy the feeling of accomplishment along with the benefits of resolving one of those bad habits.

Article Source: Holley Browning, TTU Dietetic Intern 2012-13

PARENTS, OTHER ADULTS PRIMARY ROLE MODELS FOR TEACHING KIDS ABOUT MONEY

Children are not born with "money sense" so they need their parents, educators, caregivers and other adults to help them learn how to properly manage money, said Nancy Granovsky, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service family economic specialist, College Station.

"The ability for children to learn how to properly use money is something that will benefit them throughout their adult life," Granovsky said. "They can learn money management from parents and other adults – if the adults take the time to discuss the value and usefulness of money with them, show them how to plan and budget, and provide them with some practical learning experiences."

Granovsky said children learn about money by example and experience. Adults can begin to teach sound money management skills as soon as they are old enough to understand money is used to get them the things they need and enjoy. "Children are absorbing everything they see and hear parents and other adults do or discuss about money, positive or negative, so it pays to become a positive role model," she said. "A parent's values as they relate to money – such as how they spend, save, borrow, use credit and the like – are those their children are most likely to emulate and adopt."

She said young people need to know about making sound money decision and what's most important when shopping and buying.

"For example, if you use a list for your shopping and have a budget for that shopping, your children will consider that 'normal' and will probably grow up to use a list and think about budgeting when they shop," she said. "But if you spend money before you actually have it and tend to buy

impulsively, your kids will likely learn those habits as well.”

Granovsky said to include children in discussions about budgeting family income. Being able to set financial goals, budgeting and then match spending with planning is a life skill that takes practice.

“Learning to properly manage money allows young people to distinguish between wants and needs, teaches them the importance of budgeting and saving and helps them make sound spending decisions,” she said. “On the other hand, not learning proper money management can lead to embarrassment, financial stress and personal anxiety.”

Granovsky said information on teaching children about financial management skills and habits can be found at the eXtension website, <https://extension.org/>, which provides research-based information from America’s land-grant universities.

She said “Talking to Children About Money” at this site is particularly useful for tips on how to address money issues and help build money management skills with children at different stages of development, including young children ages 4-8, adolescents ages 9-13, and teenagers. That can be found at <http://bit.ly/2cYgbeB>

Granovsky also noted the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has put out a report of how young people acquire the building blocks of good personal financial management. The report, which can be found at <http://bit.ly/wcFAyxz>, describes the essential building blocks of executive function, financial habits and norms, and financial knowledge and decision-making skills that can be developed starting in childhood.

“The report also includes strategies educators, policymakers, parents and caregivers can use to help young people develop these needed skills and habits for money management,” she said. “It provides guidance and tips on how adults can help children get the knowledge and develop the skills needed to manage their money.”

She said by working together, adults can help young people gain the financial capability they need to help ensure a more secure and rewarding future.

Granovsky recommended checking with the AgriLife Extension office to see what youth financial education opportunities are available. She said some of these materials may include Welcome to the Real World, the National Endowment for Financial Education’s High School Financial Planning Program and the 4-H Consumer Decision Making Contest.

Additional resources for helping youth learn financial responsibility and good financial habits include:

-Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Teaching Young People About Money – Tips for Parents and Caregivers, <http://bit.ly/2cZ06Dk>.

-Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation–Money Smart for Young People, <http://bit.ly/2cEDqXT>.

–MyMoney.Gov- Resources for Youth, <http://www.mymoney.gov/Pages/for-youth.aspx>

“This site has activities and video games parents can use in teaching youth about money,” Granovsky said.

-Kids.gov - Money component, <https://kids.usa.gov/money/index.shtml>

“This website from the federal government is part of a larger Kids.gov website that has links to additional resources for parents,” she said.

“This curriculum from the FDIC is one of several Money Smart resource curricula that can be used by teachers or parents,” Granovsky said.

-Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy, <http://www.jumpstart.org>

“This coalition of financial education stakeholders, of which the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture and land grant university Cooperative Extension system are a part, offers a variety of resources of interest to both parents and teachers.”

Source: September 30, 201 Writer: Paul Schattenbers, 210-859-5752, paschattenberg@ag.tamu.edu
Contact: Nancy Granovsky, 979-845-1869, ngranovsky@ag.tamu.edu

END THE YEAR ON A CLEAN NOTE

After the holiday season ends, just before the New Year begins, most of us will find a refrigerator filled with leftovers and other food items. Too often, we find that we have pushed food items to the back of the refrigerator where they are forgotten and tend to spoil. This can create a safety hazard. Moreover, the refrigerator is cluttered, making it difficult to find the food items you want.

For these reasons, it is important to clean your refrigerator regularly, not just during the holiday season. Try these steps today:

1. Clean out your refrigerator within a week after Thanksgiving’s end. You will want to remove everything from the refrigerator prior to cleaning.
2. Inspect containers and remove outdated leftovers and any items you are not sure about or will no longer use. Remember, and follow, the old adage, “when in doubt, throw it out.” *Tip:* write the date on the container when the food items is placed in the refrigerator to take the guess work out of when to discard foods.

- Clean everything, including shelves, drawers, and bins using baking soda and warm water. Baking soda is not only cheaper than store bought detergents, but it will not leave a residue or odors that can result from not rinsing cleaning solutions thoroughly enough. Dry with a soft cloth or paper towel.
- Wash the outside of the refrigerator with a mixture of water and dishwashing detergent. When done, rinse and dry the refrigerator.
- After inspecting each container for cleanliness, return the containers to the refrigerator.

Taking these steps will help you start the New Year on a healthier note!

Source: *On the Track to Better Health...* by Jon Periott. December 2016 BLT Newsletter

Recipe Corner

Leftover Turkey Casserole



- 8 slices of bread, whole wheat
- 4 oz cubed turkey
- ½ cup onion, chopped
- ½ cup celery, chopped
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1½ cups milk, 1%
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup, low-sodium (10.75 oz)
- 2 teaspoons margarine
- ½ cup cheddar cheese, low-fat shredded (or jack cheese)
- ½ cup mayonnaise, light

- Lightly coat a 9x9x2-inch baking dish with vegetable spray. Cut 6 slices of bread (fresh or day-old) into 1-inch cubes and place half into the bottom of a baking dish.
- In a bowl, combine turkey, onion, celery, mayonnaise, and pepper. Spoon mixture over bread cubes.
- Place remaining bread cubes over turkey mixture and press down slightly with spoon.
- Combine eggs and milk and pour mixture over cubes. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- When ready to bake, preheat oven to 325°F
- Spoon the soup over the top of the casserole.
- Spread one teaspoon of margarine on the side of each slice of bread. Cut buttered bread into 1/2-inch cubes and sprinkle on top of casserole.
- Bake for 60 minutes or until the knife inserted in the middle comes out clean. Remove from the oven and sprinkle cheese over the top. Let stand 15 minutes before cutting and serving.

Source: *On the Track to Better Health...* by Jon Periott. December 2016 BLT Newsletter

Healthy Crockpot Black Eye Peas

Ingredients:

- 5 cups Water
- 1 lb Dry Black Eye Peas
- 1 Medium Onion, Diced
- 2 Cloves of Fresh Garlic, Diced
- ½ tsp Cayenne Pepper
- 1½ tsp Ground Cumin
- 1 tsp Black Pepper, Ground
- 1 or 2 whole Bay Leaves



Directions:

Sort and rinse black-eyed peas. Place all ingredients in the crockpot then stir and cover. Cook on low for 6-7 hours. Remove the bay leaves before serving!

Nutrition Facts:

There are 12 half-cup servings in this recipe. About 95 calories per serving with zero grams of total fat and cholesterol. This is a low sodium recipe with 17 mg unless extra salt is added. There are 24.5 grams of carbohydrates with 10 grams of fiber and 9 grams of protein. This is a healthy recipe with significant fiber and low calorie, fat, and sodium content.

Eating black-eyed peas is a tradition for some on New Year's Day. By consuming a few bites of these peas, prosperity and luck are pledge for the upcoming year! This recipe provides many healthy benefits along with great flavor. While making your resolutions, try this delicious recipe to help ensure success!

Resource of Recipe: recipes.sparkpeople.com

Sincerely,

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Family and Consumer Health
Lubbock County

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