

TEXAS A&M  
**AGRI**LIFE  
EXTENSION

Fallon Foster, M.P.H.  
County Extension Agent  
Family & Community Health  
County Coordinator

Franny Woods  
4-H Program Assistant

Tommy Byers  
Better Living for Texans  
Program Associate  
Nutrition Educator

Office 409-882-7010

Orange County  
AgriLife Newsletter  
July 2020

Watch Us On 

Orange County Extension



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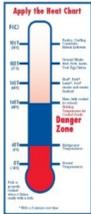
Scan and go directly to  
AgriLife website  
[orange.agrilife.org](http://orange.agrilife.org)



Texas A&M  
AgriLife Extension  
Orange County



**FREE FOOD SAFETY CONFERENCE**



**TUESDAY, JULY 28th**  
**9 am - 3 pm**  
**Orange County Convention & Expo Center**  
**11475 FM 1442**  
**Orange, TX**  
**409-882-7010**



- Speakers
- Continental Breakfast
- Lunch
- Door Prizes
- Vendors

- Hand's On Activities
- Round Table Talk
- Active Shooter Scenarios
- Rodent Control
- Vent-a-hood Maintenance
- Health Department Speakers

Food Handlers Course offered for \$20 from 3:00 pm-5:00 pm

**Deadline to register July 17, 2020**

To register go to: [orange.agrilife.org](http://orange.agrilife.org) and click on the Food Safety Registration tab.

**CALLING ALL VENDORS!**

Come and set up a booth at our

**FOOD SAFETY CONFERENCE**

*Door Prizes Appreciated*

**TUESDAY, JULY 28th**  
**9 am - 3 pm**  
**Orange County Convention & Expo Center**  
**11475 FM 1442**  
**Orange, TX**  
**409-882-7010**



**DATE CHANGE**

RSVP to James Scales at [jscales@co.orange.tx.us](mailto:jscales@co.orange.tx.us) by July 6, 2020



**Texas Master Naturalist**

The Sabine-Neches Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists is accepting registration for persons interested in becoming Texas Master Naturalists. The fall training kick-off get-acquainted meeting will be on 2020/07/23 and training will start in August. Training covers Ecological Regions in Texas; Wetlands, Forest, Rangeland, and Aquatic Ecology; Weather and Climate; Entomology; Mammalogy; Ornithology; Botany; Ichthyology and Geology; Soils; Archaeology; Laws & Regulations; Land Stewardship; Historical Naturalists of Texas and Citizen Scientist programs. People interested should visit <https://txmn.org/sabine> to sign up. A background investigation is required.

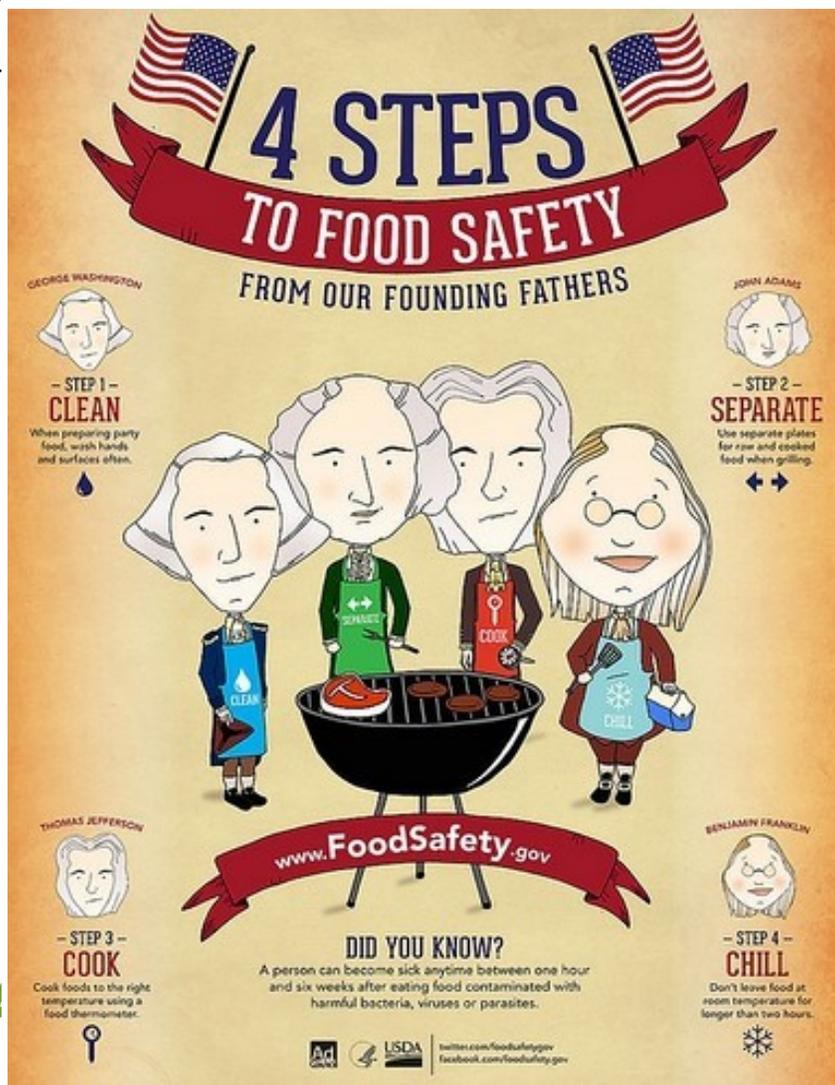
## Here are a few quick tips for you to remember as you hit the grills, watch the fireworks and enjoy quality time with friends and family.

1. Most important, remember The Core 4.
2. Bring soap to wash your hands. **Always wash your hands** before and after you prepare food. If you don't have running water use a hand sanitizer or sanitizer wipes.
3. **Never transport food in the trunk.** Always transport food in the cabin of the car where you can control the environment and make certain there is no accidental contamination.
4. **Do not let the food sit in the car** for more than an hour, especially on days when the temperature exceeds 90F. (The ideal temperature for Microbial growth is 90-115F.)
5. Don't allow perishable foods to be left out of refrigeration **for more than 2 hours.**
6. Pack plenty of Ice. Leftover food should be discarded **if the ice has completely melted** by the time you get it home. So, check your Ice levels and restock as necessary.
7. **Keep raw food separate** from each other. Do not allow raw meats to come into contact with other foods.
8. Make sure your food is fully cooked, especially ground meat products like hamburgers and sausages. **Use a thermometer!! Don't rely on color!** Red meat should be cooked to 145F (+3 minutes of rest to maintain juiciness). Ground products should be in excess of 160F. Chicken should always be cooked to 165F.
9. Remember to use **sunscreen and bug spray.**
10. Adult Beverage Safety REQUIREMENT! If you have a pint too many, **call a driver.**

Finally, I ask one favor. Remember that it is not the politician, journalist or activist that protects our Freedoms. It is the Sailor, the Marine, the Soldier, and Law Enforcement that protects your rights. So leave a pint for the Fallen who gave their lives for yours.

thatfoodsafetyguy.com

Keep a **3-foot safe zone** around your grill to keep kids and pets safe.



## Orange County Food Safety

### ***Meat Prices on the Rise as Supply Declines During COVID-19 Pandemic***



There's been no shortage of challenges in the meat–livestock sector since the COVID-19 pandemic began, with meat plant closures, hogs euthanized due to overcrowding, and worker safety issues all contributing to a slowdown in the supply chain.

Many consumers who had previously taken for granted the efficiency and effectiveness of the meat supply chain are now seeing limited supply in supermarkets and prices starting to rise. USDA reported that the country's beef processing capacity is much lower than in 2019 due to COVID-19-related shutdowns and slowdowns, and wholesale beef prices are increasing as a result—they're up 67 percent since January 2020.

Economist Jayson Lusk, department head of agricultural economics at Purdue University, says that, as meatpacking plants slowed production and shut down due to worker illness in April and May, the amount of meat available decreased, resulting in higher prices. "The worst of the situation occurred in early May, when beef- and pork-packing plants were running about 40 percent below the output from last year," he told Food Quality & Safety. "In the past couple of weeks, we've made progress. Pork is now only about 10 to 15 percent below last year's production and beef is about 20 percent below last year."

Lee Schulz, PhD, an associate professor of economics at Iowa State University, says that this temporary decrease in the availability of meat means grocery stores and consumers are bidding up the price of what's available and wholesale meat prices have surged, reaching a level never seen before, at least in nominal terms. "Temporarily lower meat supplies should lead to higher meat prices, but that presupposes a steady demand curve," he told FQ&S. "Factors such as disposable income, unemployment levels, and the overall economic environment will also play a role. The outlook for meat prices out front is precarious because the current dynamic greatly depends on processing capacity, purchasing patterns, and ultimately consumer demand. Prices should begin to stabilize as those uncertainties ease."

#### **What's to Come**

There are still a lot of unknowns that could impact whether meat prices continue rising or stabilize, as experts can't predict whether more COVID-19 related closures of meat plants will occur or if the safety measures enacted will slow down the supply. "Packers place utmost concern on worker health, safety, and availability. They have engineered controls such as workstation alignments and modifications, plus worker physical distancing measures where possible," Schulz says. "How much these adjustments will reduce packing plant capacity is a huge unknown. Arbitrary 10 to 15 percent figures have been suggested, but they're just speculation. Only time will tell. Ingenuity will be a huge factor."

While beef and pork prices increased significantly in late April and early May, with Lusk noting that beef reached "record levels" and pork reached "near-record highs," prices at the end of May were starting to reverse course. "Still, consumers should expect to see higher than normal retail prices for the coming weeks and limited availability in some locations," Lusk says. "With less labor in packing plants, consumers can also expect to see more whole muscle cuts in vacuum packaging."

In addition, some shortages are expected in the months to come. Glynn Tonsor, an assistant professor in agricultural economics at Kansas State University, said consumers will likely see grocery and restaurant meat prices higher than last year for June not only due to meatpacking plant closures, but also to the pandemic-induced bottleneck in the ability to harvest animals and produce meat. While week-over-week slaughter increases in early May fueled guarded optimism that the worst of packing plant disruptions were over, more than a month with severely reduced slaughter means that a backlog of slaughter animals is growing rapidly.

By Keith Loria  
[foodqualityandsafety.com](http://foodqualityandsafety.com)



James Scales, Health Inspector  
 Deputy Director  
 Orange County Environmental  
 Health and Code Compliance



Fallon Foster, M.P.H.  
 County Extension Agent  
 Family & Community Health  
 Orange County

## Lichen's: A Tree's Friend or Foe?

By Sheri Bethard, Certified Texas Master Gardener, Orange County Master Gardeners

Have you ever seen a crusty object or a thin layer growing on your trees or rocks? We're here to tell you NOT to panic. It might just be lichen, which is not completely a fungi or a bacteria. It is one of the most common mutualistic relationships in the plant world made up of one-part filamentous fungi and one-part algae or blue-green bacteria (cyanobacteria) or even all three! Lichens are not considered a "true species." The unique combination results in a very hardy, weather-tolerant, and genetically diverse group of Nitrogen fixers that is practically self-sufficient. The fungal partner cannot survive alone, but instead thrives on the availability of photosynthetic products provided by the algae or bacteria. The alga feeds the fungus through photosynthesis, while the algae receives some food and support from the fungus



Lichens are common pioneers on trees, shrubs, soil, and even rocks, but do they kill the host that feeds them? The truth is, whichever host the lichen colonizes, it benefits from the added moisture and environmental protection, while also providing a place for the lichen to take root and establish a strong residence. Lichens commonly grow on limbs, branches, and tree trunks of certain tree species. Since they are not pathogenic or considered pests, there is no control method available today.

Lichens appear as surface growths that are usually grey or grey-green in color. Three forms of lichens exist – crustose (flat type of growth), foliose (leaf-like but with a prostrate growth), and fruticose (bush-like and erect, or hanging growth).

Lichens grow under conditions of high light intensity. Heavy lichen growth is often an indication of poor tree vigor as a result a cultural problem or stress. Lichens are NOT parasitic to the tree itself, though heavy growth may begin to restrict gaseous exchange from the limb or twig and can start to block light from reaching the plant's surface.

While they are sometimes unappealing, removing the lichens mechanically can create fresh wounds that invite more severe plant pathogens to inhabit your landscape.



If a tree or shrub seems to be declining AND is covered in lichens, there is some other cause for the demise such as insect infestation, watering practices, or perhaps even legitimate plant pathogens. Overall, the relationship is mutually beneficial and should not be a cause of worry.

There are currently no chemicals to control lichen growth. The best way to reduce lichen growth is to focus on improving the tree's vigor and encouraging the growth of a dense canopy, which will reduce light penetration to the surfaces. Fertilization and timely irrigation can be considered strategies for tree vigor improvement. As the canopy density increases, shading will reduce the photosynthetic capacity of the alga, and, over time, the presence of the lichens should be decreased.

So, to recap, lichen are NOT plant parasitic fungi OR bacteria but can be beneficial to your tree and give you warning signs if there is something wrong with your tree. They are just a little reminder to give your tree a little TLC.

**All Master Gardener  
programs postpone until  
further notice.**



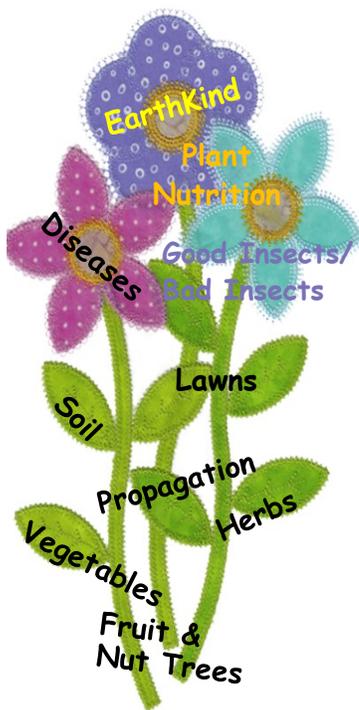
**New Start date for 2020  
Certification Training**

**The Orange County  
Master Gardeners Presents...  
Master Gardener Certification Training  
Course 2020**

Join the Orange County Master Gardeners for classes led by local horticultural specialists and Master Gardeners to become a Certified Texas Master Gardener. Classes are \$150, which includes all training material, speaker fees, and supplies.

**NEW START DATE**  
**Thursday, Sept. 3rd**  
Some Saturday classes/  
field trips will be sched-  
uled.

RSVP required 409-882-  
7010  
[https://txmg.org/  
orange/](https://txmg.org/orange/)  
Email: [sheribethard@yahoo.com](mailto:sheribethard@yahoo.com)



**The Orange County Master Gardener  
HOTLINE**

**A Master Gardener Volunteer is  
available to answer your questions.**

**Tuesday & Thursday 10 AM – 2 PM.  
Call 409-882-7010 or stop by the**

**Orange County Master Gardeners hold  
their monthly meeting on the 2nd  
Thursdays of each month.**

**Social & meal begins at 6 pm**

**6:30 pm Business meeting followed by  
a special presentation**

**The public is welcome to visit any of  
the meeting.**

**Meetings are held at  
Orange County Convention &  
Expo Center, 11475 FM 1442 Orange.**

**If you have further questions about  
the Orange County Master Gardens  
contact the Texas A&M AgriLife Exten-  
sion Office at 409-882-7010.**

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.

Hurricane Season is upon us. Always be prepared.

# Emergency Kit

## Visual Checklist for Disaster Supplies

 Water	 Food	 Prescription Medications	 First Aid Kit	 Baby Supplies	 Pet Supplies	 Bleach & Eye-dropper
 Mylar Blanket	 Blankets	 Sleeping Bag	 Glasses & Eye Protection	 Extra Clothing	 Personal Hygiene	 Towelettes
 Towels	 Sanitation	 Plastic Sheeting	 Tube Tent	 Backpack	 Dust Mask	 Work Gloves
 Flashlight	 Batteries	 Matches	 Candles	 Lightsticks	 Knife	 Multi-purpose Tool
 Wrench, Pliers, Crowbar	 Rope / Cord	 Duct Tape	 Can Opener	 Kitchen Items	 Scissors	 Fire Extinguisher
 Compass	 Pen & Paper	 Radio	 Cell Phone & Charger	 Whistle	 Signal Mirror	 2-way Radios
 Emergency Guide/Plan	 Family Documents	 Maps	 Camera	 Games & Books	 Extra Keys	 Cash, Travelers Checks, Coins

**References**



Letter or Note of Love & Hope

You may need to survive on your own after an emergency. This means having your own food, water, and other supplies in sufficient quantity to last for at least three days. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. You could get help in hours, or it might take days. In addition, basic services such as electricity, gas, water, sewage treatment, and telephones may be cut off for days, or even a week or longer.

Ready America

1. Get a kit
2. Make a plan
3. Be informed

Checklist prepared with guidance from Craig Baldwin, Tracy Burt, Abigail Dennis, Michele Gregory, Hideoh Kanagai PhD, Andy Parish, Lisa Puffer, Matt Brown PhD, Jane Stephens, Tomoko Sugisaki and Bob Weil.

Spring 2011



Emergency Checklist Kit Guide



Stephens Planning & Design

### DIY MRE's

original content and photographs by Big Sam  
text arranged and edited by Red Dawn

#### Step 1 - Shopping

Anything that can be consumed raw cooked using only water. Nothing requiring refrigeration or dairy

—short list of suggested items—

- canned snack crackers
- ch or canned Tuna, Chicken, Spam, Sardines... etc..
- instant drink mixes (coffee, crystal light, koolaid)
- ivitamins, Painkillers, Mints
- bags
- silon cubes
- pen noodles
- te servings of salt, pepper, sweetener, hot sauce... etc...
- ola bars, cereal bars
- dy bars, candy
- nt oatmeal packets
- d fruit

#### Step 2 - Arrange meals

variety is the spice of life and it applies here. You don't want to eat the same meal thirty times in a row so diversify the contents of your MRE's

#### Step 3 - Sealing the MRE's

Use a Vacuum Sealer and vacuum bags. Amazon and Deni make decent ones for under \$20 online. A sealer will cost you somewhere around 25-50 dollars but it will preserve your MRE's for years. Place your MRE into a vacuum bag and seal it. Do not forget to pierce packages that are not ready sealed with air (noodles, candy, s, granola bars, crackers) with a needle. They will be sealed in the vacuum. This lets the air go out giving you a better seal and maintaining its integrity

Choose your MRE's wisely and you could see a 3 to 5 year shelf life when properly stored at cool temperatures. Instead of paying 7 dollars for an overpriced MRE you can make one for around 3 - 4 dollars each and add what you want instead of a set menu



## PREPARE FOR A HURRICANE

**KNOW YOUR AREA, MAKE A PLAN!**  
Include more than one evacuation route.



**Ready**

**PREPARE AN EMERGENCY KIT!**  
Prepare a kit with supplies for at least 10 days.



**PREPARE YOUR HOME!**  
Install shutters, clean gutters and drains, trim trees and shrubs.





**Orange County Texas Master Gardener's are always hard at work for our community. They are working at the green house taking care of plants for the April plant sale, answering questions on their Facebook page, and working the Field of Plenty. These are just a few volunteer projects our Master Gardeners do to give back to the community.**

**We THANK YOU & APPRECIATE you!**



“It was a good morning helping at the Field of Plenty. Vegetables were harvested; weeds were pulled; walking paths were mulched; oh, and there was lots of good conversation. If you're interested in participating, Wednesdays, 8 AM - 10 AM, are the regularly scheduled workdays. Safe distancing is practiced, and Mrs. Hoke and Mrs. Smith always have plenty of tasks to assign.”



**This field of vegetables has been planted for the public to pick complements of the Field of Plenty.**  
**Please only pick enough for a meal for your family to leave enough for others to do the same.**



**The FOP is offering FREE PICK!!**

**Come by Wickard at Bruce Street in Orange. The Free Pick sign is up. There are purple hull peas and okra available for the public to pick. Remember take only what you and your family can eat, to save some for others!!**



Multifunction Cookers, common brand Instant Pot®, are a new tool that many cooks have in their kitchen! Multifunction cookers can be a great way to provide quick and nutritious meals with a “hands off” cooking approach so that you can be free to spend your time on other things. Below are some tips to help your multifunction cooker experience go smoothly and safely! You should always make sure to follow the guidance of your multifunction cooker’s user manual and read it thoroughly before beginning to cook.

### About Multifunction Cookers

#### **Pressure Release:**

**Natural Release (NR):** No action is taken. Allow the cooker to cool naturally, release heat and pressure over time. You will know that the cooker is no longer pressurized when the float valve drops into the lid.

**Note:** May take 10 – 40+ minutes. Depressurization time will vary based upon volume of food and liquid.

**Quick Release (QR):** Turn the steam release handle from the “Sealing” position to the “Venting” position. If spatter occurs, turn steam release handle back to “Sealing” position, and try again after a few minutes. The float valve will drop into the lid when the cooker has depressurized.

#### **Stages of Cooking:**

1. **Heating & Pressurization** The cooker will preheat, creating the steam required to build pressure. Once enough steam pressure has accumulated, the float valve will pop up and “pressurize” the cooker. During the Water Test, this may take 5 – 15 minutes. Do not press down on the lid; the float valve will rise when sufficient steam pressure has built up. Until the cooker pressurizes and the float valve has popped up, the lid will be removable. Once pressurized, the lid will lock. **Note:** The time it takes your cooker to pressurize is determined by a variety of factors, including food and liquid volume. It is normal to see steam exit the float valve hole until the float valve pops up and the cooker pressurizes. If you see steam escaping from around the sides of the lid, stop the test to ensure that your sealing ring is properly installed.
2. **Cook Cycle** The cooker will not start the countdown right away. First, the cooker must come to pressure. Within 5 minutes of pressurization, the cooker will beep once and the countdown will appear on the display. When the timer reaches “00:00”, the cooker will beep 10 times to signal that cooking has completed. **Note:** Smart Programs allow you to make changes to time, temperature, and pressure levels during the cook cycle.
3. **Depressurization & Keep Warm** When pressure cooking has completed, follow your recipe’s directions when selecting a venting method. Always ensure that the float valve has dropped completely before attempting to open the lid. If the lid will not turn, do not attempt to force the lid open. If Keep Warm is turned ON after the cook cycle completes, the timer will count up. If Keep Warm is not turned ON, cooker will return to Standby. **Note:** The cooker will cool sufficiently to NR over time, but it will cool faster if Keep Warm is turned OFF.

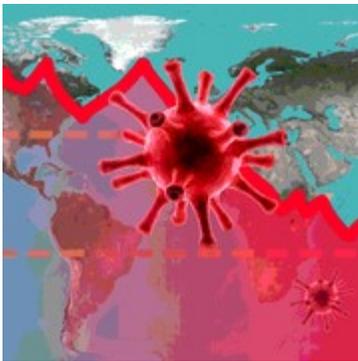
#### **Safety with Multifunction Cookers**

Use a food thermometer – When food is done cooking, no matter what method, you should always use a food thermometer to ensure that meat has been cooked to the proper safe minimum internal temperature. If it has not been cooked to the minimum internal temperature then you will need to continue cooking, whether that be via the multifunction cooker or other method such as oven, stove top, grill, etc.

- **Placement of Multifunction Cooker** – Multifunction cookers are intended for countertop use, it is recommended that you use your multifunction cooker in your kitchen on a kitchen counter. Be sure to keep cookers away from any external heat sources such as heated ovens, stove tops and gas ranges.
- **De-pressurizing** – see above for safe de-pressurizing methods.
- **Read the User Manual** – the best way to ensure the safe operation of your multifunction cooker is to read your cooker’s user manual so that you are familiar with its functions, parts, and best practices.
- **Initial Test** – if this is your first time using your multifunction cooker, do an initial test with water to ensure that you are familiar with the process and your cooker is functioning properly.

## Orange County Food Safety

### Impact of SARS-CoV-2 on the Meat Industry and Food Safety



Food and agriculture together are one of 16 critical infrastructures, deemed by the U.S. government to be essential to the well-being of both the U.S. people and the U.S. economy. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, food- and agriculture-related employment comprised 11 percent of all U.S. employment, representing 22 million full- and part-time jobs. Overall, agriculture, food, and related industries contributed \$1.053 trillion to the U.S. gross domestic product in 2017, or approximately a 5.4-percent share.<sup>[1]</sup> In 2017,

the meat and poultry industry composed the largest segment of U.S. agriculture, with U.S. meat production totaling 52 billion pounds and U.S. poultry production totaling 48 billion pounds (2017).<sup>[2]</sup>

It is fair to say that COVID-19 has not only changed the world and caused immeasurable damage to global public health, it has also altered the traditional way the world has conducted business. In late April 2020, the pandemic gave the appearance of being at the end of the beginning, meaning that the global impact would continue short to medium term, but also that economies were becoming so damaged that the call for re-engagement was growing increasingly louder in many parts of the world. Many believed that the U.S. and the world needed to get back to work.

China, the likely origin of the virus, has also been economically damaged, in some ways more greatly than the U.S.<sup>[3]</sup> Effects originating in China have cascaded into the global economy in unexpected ways. Meat exports to China, for example, have been impacted by processing plant closures. Processing plant closures likewise have caused cascading effects, impacting farmers and grow-out operations.

COVID-19 testing continues to expand, but the real requirement for repairing the economy is a vaccine, which remains for now over the horizon. Once available in needed volumes, perhaps in the late first or second quarter of 2021, aggressive vaccination programs could begin enabling higher-risk employees to come back into the workforce. In the meantime, it is likely that low-risk employees will start returning to work relatively soon, using staggered shift and other types of localized and domain-specific managed strategies.

High infection rates among processing plant workers have led to the closures or curtailing of operations at pork, beef, and poultry processing plants across the country, raising the specter of nationwide meat shortages. In an unprecedented move, President Donald J. Trump issued an Executive Order placing the American meat industry under the Defense Production Act to keep meat processing facilities open.

So, what does all of this mean to the safety of the U.S. meat and poultry supply, and the safety of the thousands of workers in the industry?

#### No Evidence of Transmission in Beef or Poultry

Currently, and thankfully, there is no evidence to suggest that domestic livestock or poultry play a role in the spread of SARS-CoV-2. It's not that coronaviruses can't cause disease in livestock and poultry, but Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome-Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) is currently not associated with disease or disease transmission in either livestock or poultry.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can potentially cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, SARS, and most recently COVID-19. In animals, coronaviruses are most commonly associated with respiratory and gastrointestinal disease. It is very important to understand, however, that not all coronaviruses are alike, and the recently discovered SARS-CoV-2 is not currently associated with disease in domesticated livestock or poultry.

Animal infection models are currently being explored to gain a better understanding of the potential host range for SARS-CoV-2 in an effort to help veterinarians and public health professionals better understand what role, if any, animals might play in the current COVID-19 pandemic. Results of those studies have so far indicated that bats, ferrets, golden Syrian hamsters, and cats can be experimentally infected with the virus and can then spread the infection to other animals of the same species in laboratory settings. Pigs, chickens, and ducks, however, have so far not become infected or found to spread SARS-CoV-2. For more information, visit the American Veterinary Medical Association COVID-19 webpage.

There's still a lot more work to be done in this area, but the good news right now is that there seems to be limited potential for spread of COVID-19 via domestic animals. Regardless of the situation with COVID-19, ensure good food safety practices at all times. For example, always handle raw meat with care to avoid contamination of uncooked foods, and avoid consuming raw or undercooked animal products.

#### Food Safety Concerns

Consumers have had questions and concerns about COVID-19 and food safety almost from the beginning of the outbreak. Concerns are understandable, as our food is handled by numerous individuals before we consume it, and we have learned that the virus can spread by infected individuals through common contact surfaces.

There are, however, a few important things to consider. First, this is a respiratory virus, not an enteric virus, meaning it infects the lungs, not the gastrointestinal tract. Second, most raw meat that is sold will be cooked before consumption. Any virus that was present on that meat would be killed by cooking temperatures. Third, there are existing protocols in place to decrease the transmission of pathogenic microorganisms from food handlers. During the time of COVID-19, these procedures have been increased, leading to more frequent hand washing or wearing of gloves in processing plants and foodservice establishments, wearing of masks and/or face shields by foodservice employees, and more frequent sanitation of contact surfaces in food processing plants, grocery stores, and foodservice establishments.

Consumers are also taking increased precautions, such as using hand sanitizer or gloves before and after grocery shopping and removing delivery/takeout food from containers and transferring to other containers before consumption or refrigeration. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has summarized these recommendations for consumers, as well as the food industry, to decrease risk of COVID-19 transmission through food.<sup>[4]</sup> To date, there has been no association between food products or food packaging and COVID-19.

To read the full article along with references go to:

<https://www.foodsafetymagazine.com/enewsletter/impact-of-sars-cov-2-on-the-meat-industry-and-food-safety>

Article by Dr. Robert Norton, Dr. Soren Rodning, Dr. Emeffa Monu, Dr. Dina V. Bourassa, Alex Tigue, and Dr. Jason Sawyer



James Scales, Health Inspector  
Deputy Director  
Orange County Environmental  
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Orange County

TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
EXTENSION

## Choosing the Right Sunscreen

Summer is in full swing. And while you should use sunscreen every day of the year, it's even more important during summertime – when the days are longer, the sun is stronger, and it's easier to spend more time outdoors. When choosing sunscreen, be sure to read the label before you buy. Food and Drug Administration regulations require the labels to follow certain guidelines. Our guide can help you understand the terms.



- Choose a sunscreen with "broad spectrum" protection. Sunscreens with this label protect against both UVA and UVB rays. All sunscreen products protect against UVB rays, which are the main cause of sunburn and skin cancers. But UVA rays also contribute to skin cancer and premature aging. Only products that pass a certain test can be labeled "broad spectrum." Products that aren't broad spectrum must carry a warning that they only protect against sunburn, not skin cancer or skin aging.
- Make sure your sunscreen has a sun protection factor (SPF) 30 or higher. The SPF number is the level of protection the sunscreen provides against UVB rays. Higher SPF numbers do mean more protection, but the higher you go, the smaller the difference becomes. SPF 15 sunscreens filter out about 93% of UVB rays, while SPF 30 sunscreens filter out about 97%, SPF 50 sunscreens about 98%, and SPF 100 about 99%. No sunscreen protects you completely. The FDA requires any sunscreen with SPF below 15 to carry a warning that it only protects against sunburn, not skin cancer or skin aging.
- "Water resistant" does not mean "waterproof." No sunscreens are waterproof or "sweatproof," and manufacturers are not allowed to claim that they are. If a product's front label makes claims of being water resistant, it must specify whether it lasts for 40 minutes or 80 minutes while swimming or sweating. For best results, reapply sunscreen at least every 2 hours and even more often if you are swimming or sweating. Sunscreen usually rubs off when you towel yourself dry, so you will need to put more on.

### Other ways to stay sun-safe

In addition to choosing the right sunscreen and using it correctly, follow these steps to help protect your skin from sun damage that can cause premature aging and skin cancer:

- Cover up. When you are out in the sun, wear clothing and a wide-brimmed hat to protect as much skin as possible. Protect your eyes with sunglasses that block at least 99 percent of UV light.
- Seek shade. Limit your direct exposure to the sun, especially between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when UV rays are strongest.
- Avoid tanning beds and sunlamps. Both can cause serious long-term skin damage and contribute to skin cancer.



## FACTS on sun safety

**Women are around two times as likely to apply sunscreen as men**

**The sun can even effect your eyes!** By exposing your eyes to UV radiation you can get temporary injuries such as photokeratitis and photoconjunctivitis- where you're burning the skin-like tissues in your eye & eyelid.

**The sun radiates light to the earth.** Different types of light are produced; such as infrared light, colour light, and ultraviolet light.

**UVA:** These types of rays cause skin aging, wrinkling, and contribute to skin cancer.

**UVB:** This type of ray is also dangerous; they cause sunburns, cataracts, and they effect a person's immune system.

**Being exposed to UVB radiation triggers the body to produce vitamin D<sub>3</sub> for the body!**

**You may think a tan looks good, but it's actually a sign that your skin is damaged from UV radiation!**

**Bet you didn't know this...** Wearing perfume in the sun can be dangerous. The heat can chemically change some of the ingredients- which can cause allergic rashes and age spots!

**The higher the sun is in the sky, the more intense the sun's rays are.**

**Even snow can contribute to burns!** The light colour of snow reflects the sun's UV rays- harming our skin even in the cold!

**A double sided fact** Too much sun exposure has been proven to cause skin cancers and other negative impacts on the bodies immune system; although limited amounts have been proven to treat diseases too!

**UV radiation can be produced by artificial means, such as tanning beds.** This type of exposure is just as dangerous as the radiation from the sun.

**95% of UVA rays reach the earth**

**5% of UVB rays reach the earth**

**The sun is strongest between 11 AM and 4 PM.**

# Explore Texas 4-H



## Agriculture & Livestock

From stock shows to beef, dairy, goats, dogs and cats, learn responsibility with animals.



## Family & Community Health

Be a star in the kitchen or a smart shopper - be a leader in your family with healthy

4-H 2020-2021 Year  
September 1st - August 31st  
Enrollment opens for the new year  
August 15th  
Youth ages 8 (and in the 3rd graded) to 18

4-H Connect Enrollment  
New members/volunteers  
please set up a family profile to enroll  
Returning members/volunteers  
go to your family profile and re-enroll



## STEM

Learn about robotics, computers, alternative energy, engineering, rocketry, theater, performance art and photography.



## Explore A Project

You will participate in various hands-on activities, learn new skills, do community service, or even make speeches about your project.



## Explore Events

Explore Texas 4-H Events and Activities! The primary types of 4-H events are: educational, informational, and competitive.



## Join Texas 4-H Today!

From food science and robotics to fashion design and photography, there's a 4-H activity for everyone.

Early Bird Enrollment  
August 15th - October 31st  
\$25 enrollment fee per member  
September 1st  
\$30 enrollment fee per member

Clubs & Projects meet once a month  
Have questions? Contact  
Franny Woods, 4-H Program Assistant  
frannywoods@agtamu.edu  
409-882-7010

## Stinging caterpillar season starts

### *AgriLife experts warn stinging caterpillars can cause contact rashes, painful reactions.*



*Hickory tussock caterpillar.*  
(John Ghent, bugwood.org)

experts say before you blame a flying insect or a poisonous plant for a skin ailment, you may need to consider another culprit – stinging caterpillars.

“Spring foliage has brought on an abundance of caterpillars, a few of whom carry irritating or even venomous hairs,” said Janet Hurley, AgriLife Extension integrated pest management for schools statewide specialist, Dallas.

“We normally have fact sheets available for schools this time of year, but with most children out of school due to COVID-19, we wanted to make sure parents are aware that there are stinging caterpillars in Texas, what they look like, and how to avoid them,” she said.

Stinging caterpillar species include the buck moth caterpillar, spiny oak slug caterpillar, hickory tussock moth caterpillar, saddleback caterpillar and Io moth caterpillar.

Perhaps the most painful caterpillar in Texas is the southern flannel moth caterpillar, also known as the asp or puss caterpillar. An encounter with a puss caterpillar is very painful and may even require a trip to the hospital, according to AgriLife Extension experts.

### What stinging caterpillars look like



*Puss caterpillar.*  
(AgriLife photo by Wizzie Brown)

Hurley said she recently received her first tussock moth caterpillar question – confirming that just about every species of stinging caterpillar has now been spotted in our state.

“A good rule of thumb is if a caterpillar looks ‘fuzzy’ — don’t touch it,” said Molly Keck,

AgriLife Extension specialist in inte-

grated pest management and entomologist, Bexar County. Although many fuzzy caterpillars are not dangerous, do not pick up a caterpillar unless you are sure it is not of the stinging variety. The puss caterpillar, for example, looks deceptively soft and can be especially tempting for children to want to pick up or “pet.”

“These teardrop shaped caterpillars look touchable, but they are not,” emphasized Wizzie Brown, AgriLife Extension specialist in integrated pest management for Travis County. “Asps have spines attached to venom glands that can lead to a nasty sting, rash and other issues.”

### Caterpillar sting symptoms and treatment

“Since these caterpillars tend to hide, you may not even know you’ve encountered one until you feel the sting,” Hurley said.

If you are stung, you may feel immediate pain and reddish colored spots may appear where spines entered the skin. Some people may not feel pain until several minutes after they are stung, while others can experience intense throbbing or radiating pain. Other people may not feel much discomfort, and a red rash may be the only telltale sign.

Brown said different people respond to caterpillar toxin differently. “Some people may have a more severe reaction than others, and where on your body you are stung and the thickness of that skin can affect your reaction too.”

If the caterpillar is still on you, immediately brush it off if possible and then use tape to remove the spines that may still be in your skin, Brown said.

Washing the area with soap and water and applying an ice pack to the sting may offer some relief, and an oral antihistamine may help to relieve itching. Over-the-counter insect sting and bite relief products can also help.



*Saddleback caterpillar.*  
(Jerry A Payne, USDA Agricultural Research Service, Bugwood.org)

*Stinging caterpillars continued*

“The pain often goes away within an hour,” said Mike Merchant, Ph.D., AgriLife Extension urban entomologist, Dallas.

Other symptoms after a sting can include nausea, vomiting, headaches, respiratory stress or shock. Since reactions to the toxins from stinging caterpillars can vary, seek medical advice or treatment immediately or go to an emergency room if you are concerned. Merchant also stressed that any contact with eyes or an allergic reaction to a sting requires immediate medical attention.

## Stinging caterpillar habitat



*Spiny oak slug caterpillar.*  
(Jerry A Payne, USDA Agricultural Research Service, Bugwood.org.)

“You are more likely to encounter stinging caterpillars when they leave their host plant in search of a spot to pupate, which is currently happening with many caterpillars,” said Keck. “They aren’t aggressive and won’t come after you, but they can drop from trees.”

Keck has reported sightings of both buck moth caterpillars and tussock moth caterpillars in the Bexar County area already this spring. Texans statewide need to be on the alert and keep an eye on trees and shrubs for caterpillar development, which typically occurs now into the fall.

Some common tree hosts are apple, basswood, cherry, dogwood, elm, maple, plum and oak, which is a favorite of the buck moth caterpillar. Some stinging caterpillars may even be found on crops such as corn.

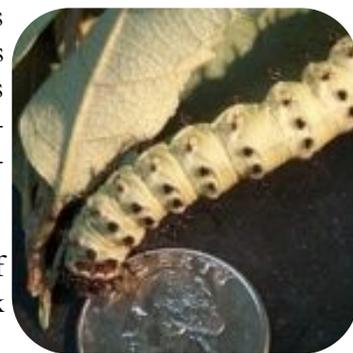
“Adult puss moths emerge in late spring or early summer to lay several hundred eggs on favored host trees,” said Merchant. “Caterpillars may also be seen feeding on dwarf yaupon and other shrubs. One to two generations occur each year, though southern flannel moth caterpillars tend to be more common in the fall.”



*Io moth caterpillar.*  
(AgriLife photo by Bart Drees)

## Pest management

Avoid stinging caterpillars by not sitting under trees and wearing long sleeves and pants outdoors, although even that is no guarantee of protection.



*Buck moth caterpillar.*  
(AgriLife photo by Patrick Porter)

“I had the misfortune of getting an eastern buck moth caterpillar on my pants the other day and accidentally brought it inside,” said Keck. “When I rested my hand on my leg, I encountered the hairs/barbs and it didn’t feel good. It itched and left an uncomfortable feeling on my thumb for a couple hours.”

Keck said there isn’t much you can do about managing these caterpillars until they all pupate and go away. You don’t need to worry about harm to your garden however, as stinging caterpillars typically do not do enough feeding to harm plants.

If you have large populations of stinging caterpillars and decide you need to try to manage them, you can try *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki*, BTK. However, this will also kill all the non-stinging or “good” caterpillars, which are an important food source for songbirds. You may also look for a pesticide with active ingredients such as spinosad or azadirachtin, which are naturally derived products.

Merchant said puss moth caterpillars can also be controlled when they become abundant by spraying with a residual pesticide such as permethrin, cyfluthrin or similar sprays labeled for control of caterpillars on ornamental plants.

“The best solution to dealing with stinging caterpillars may just be educating adults and children on what these caterpillars are, what they look like, and the importance of not touching them with bare hands,” concluded Merchant.

*Orange County Livestock Association*

*Tag-In and Entry for October Show*

*Saturday, July 11th*

*8 am to 12 noon*

*OCLSA Barn, Arnell Road off Cohenour in Mauriceville*

*SWINE, LAMB and GOAT - \$25 entry fee per exhibitor*

*POULTRY - Entry and Order Birds - \$2 each in increments of 25*

*Rabbits will complete entry form in September.*

**Adult Leaders Association & County Council**

1st Monday @ 6 pm  
4-H Office

**Dusty Trails 4-H & Clover Kids Club**

1st Tuesday  
6pm @ 4-H Office  
Casey Trahan 409-988-4873

**Mighty Pirates 4-H**

2nd Tuesday @ 7 pm,  
Vidor Junior High Cafeteria  
Tammy Glawson 409-474-2811  
Sandy Byers 409-201-8523

**Clay Busters Shooting Sport**

Meetings—3rd Tuesday  
6 pm 4-H Office  
Tuesdays Shooting practice 6 pm  
Orange County Gun Club  
Robert Caffey 409-767-6222

**OC 4-H Judging Club**

Thursdays @ 6:30 pm  
4-H Office  
Melissa Pyatt 409-679-2441



**4-H Projects are held at the 4-H Office  
6 pm - 8pm**

**Equine Project**  
3rd Monday

**Robotics**  
4th Monday

**Food & Nutrition**  
3rd Tuesday

**Fashion & Interior  
Design**  
4th Tuesday



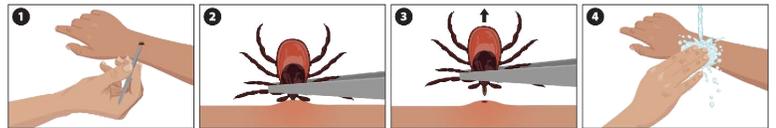
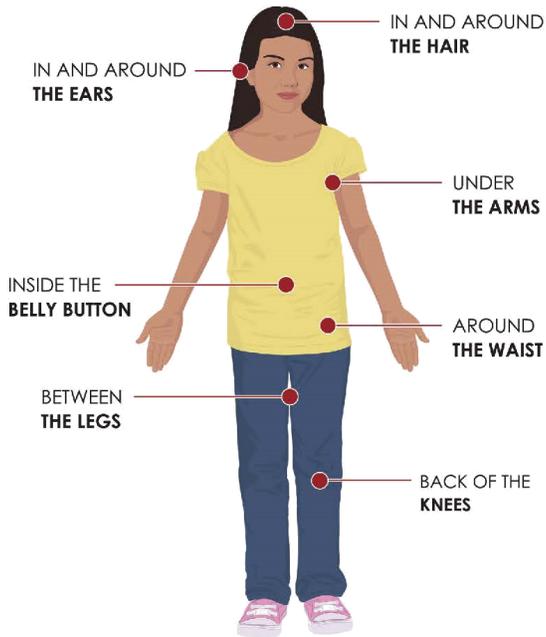
If you have any questions, please contact the 4-H office 409-882-7010.

*If you need any type of accommodation to participate in this program or have questions about the physical access provided, please Orange AgriLife Office 409-882-7010, at least 2 weeks prior to the program or event you are interested in.*

## Tick Bite: What to Do

Ticks bites can make people sick. Below are some steps that you can take after a tick bite to reduce your chances of getting sick and how to get treatment promptly if you do get sick.

### WHERE TO CHECK FOR TICKS



### Consider calling your healthcare provider

In general, CDC does not recommend taking antibiotics after tick bites to prevent tickborne diseases. However, in certain circumstances, a single dose of doxycycline after a tick bite may lower your risk of Lyme disease. Consider talking to your healthcare provider if you live in an area where Lyme disease is common.

Treatment for tickborne diseases should be based on symptoms, history of exposure to ticks, and in some cases, blood test results. Most tickborne diseases can be treated with a short course of antibiotics.



**American dog tick**

*(Dermacentor variabilis)*



**Brown dog tick**

*(Rhipicephalus sanguineus)*



**Lone star tick**

*(Amblyomma americanum)*



**Blacklegged tick**

*(Ixodes scapularis)*



**Gulf Coast tick**

*(Amblyomma maculatum)*

Avoid folklore remedies such as “painting” the tick with nail polish or petroleum jelly, or using heat to make the tick detach from the skin. Your goal is to remove the tick as quickly as possible—not waiting for it to detach.



## Veggie Migas

*Serving 4 Serving Size 1 1/2 cups*



- 1/2 small red onion ( finely copped)
- 1/2 red bell pepper (seeded, finely chopped)
- 1/2 cup grated carrots
- 1/2 cup grated zucchini
- 1/2 cup finely chopped tomatoes
- 1/4 cup finely chopped green onions
- 1 medium fresh jalapeno, seeds and ribs discarded, finely chopped
- 2 extra large eggs
- 3 egg whites
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/16 teaspoon salt (a pinch)
- 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 3 teaspoon canola oil, divided
- 3 (6-inch) corn tortillas, cut into 1-inch strips
- 2 tablespoons salsa (lowest sodium available)

1. In a small bowl, using a fork, whisk together the eggs, egg whites, water, pepper, and salt. Set aside.
2. In a medium skillet, heat 1 teaspoon oil over medium-high heat, swirling to coat the bottom. Cook the onion, bell pepper, carrot, and zucchini for 4 to 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Stir in the tomatoes, green onions, and jalapeno. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer the mixture to a plate.
3. In the same skillet, still over medium-high heat, heat the remaining 2 teaspoons oil, swirling to coat the bottom. Cook the tortilla strips for 3 to 4 minutes, or until golden, stirring constantly. Stir in the salsa. Cook for 1 minute. Stir in the egg mixture. Cook for 2 minutes or until the eggs are set, stirring constantly. Remove from the heat.
4. Stir in the vegetable mixture.

Nutritional info: Calories 136, Total Fat 6.5 g, Saturated Fat 1.0 g, Polyunsaturated Fat 1.5 g, Monounsaturated Fat 3.5 g; Cholesterol 104 mg, Sodium 177 mg, Total Carbohydrate 11 g, Dietary Fiber 2 g, Sugars 4 g, Protein 8 g.

American Heart Association



- What You Need:**  
 You can use the fruit of your choice, but here is what I used.
- 3-5 Nectarines
  - 2-3 Apples
  - 24oz. Blueberries
  - 2-3 Cups Green grapes
  - 4 Clementines ( I added after I mixed the cream cheese mixture in. )
  - lime juice from 2 limes

- The Cream Cheese Mixture:**
- 8 oz. Cream Cheese
  - 5.1 oz box vanilla pudding (Do not prepare the pudding.) Just pour the powder in the cream cheese mixture. Very easy!
  - 1cup sour cream
  - 2/3 cup orange juice

**What To Do:**

After you cut up your apples and nectarines squeeze the juice from 2 limes on top and mix well with your hands.

Add the rest of the fruit and carefully mix.

Blend, all the ingredients for the cream cheese mixture with an electric mixer until it gets as smooth as you can get it. I put the cream cheese and sour cream in the bowl and mix well, then add the other ingredients.

Now, simply pour the cream cheese mixture over the fruit and gently mix well. Easy and simple!

## Epsom Salt uses for plants and in the garden

By Sheri Bethard, Texas Certified Master Gardener, Orange County Master Gardeners

Occasionally, you will see a post on social media or in a magazine that someone has used Epsom Salt on their plants. Well, after some research, this is what I have found on Epsom Salt and gardening.

First and foremost, before using Epsom Salt, you should test your soil to determine if it is low in magnesium. If you have been using Dolomitic Lime, don't use Epsom Salt as it also contains magnesium and you will have over-compensated for this nutrient and it could cause harm to your plant(s). Your soil could also be lacking in other nutrients that are needed more than the magnesium. It is a part of the chlorophyll molecule which is needed for photosynthesis and vital for plants to grow.



Epsom Salt can enhance your plants green color and also helps with flower blooming along with growing bushier plants. I have found sites saying this does work and others saying it does not work. So, I will leave that up to you to make your own decision. If you do decide to use Epsom Salt, here are some guides to use when mixing.

You can use Epsom Salt as a foliar spray for your plants leaves by mixing 2 Tablespoons of Epsom Salt to one gallon of water. For soil drenching, use ½ cup per gallon.

For Roses, especially, you can mix 1 Tablespoon per gallon of water for each foot of height of the shrub. Apply in spring and then again after blooming has ceased.

For Tomatoes and Peppers, apply 1 Tablespoon around each transplant when you set them out or spray 1 Tablespoon per gallon on your plants while transplanting then again after the first bloom and fruit set.

For your soil or lawns before planting, broadcast 1 cup per 100 square feet mixing well with the soil then plant your sod.

Now, don't plan on using Epsom salt on a regular basis as this could cause too much salt build up in the soil. Epsom salts can rejuvenate tired plants and reduce stress or give them a kick in the pants. Personally, I would not use unless my soil test said I had a magnesium deficiency, but you may have had luck with it and go forward and grow.

Our Master Gardener Hot-Line is open Tuesday and Thursdays from 10AM – 2PM, call 409 882-7010 with your questions. If after hours, please send your question to our Contact Page at <https://txmg.org/orange> or reach us on our Facebook page Orange County Texas Master Gardeners and you will receive an answer within 24 hours.



15 MINUTE

### SUMMER BERRY CHEESECAKE SALAD

.....  
CakesCottages.com

- 1 box (3.4 oz.) cheesecake or white chocolate pudding mix
- 12 oz whipped topping
- 3 (6 oz) containers strawberry yogurt
- 2 cup fresh strawberries, sliced
- ½ cup fresh blackberries
- ½ cup fresh blueberries
- ½ cup fresh raspberries
- 3 bananas, sliced (add just before serving or they brown)
- 3 miniature marshmallows (optional)

1. Place the whipped topping, pudding mix and yogurt into a large bowl. Whisk together. Cover and refrigerate until just before serving (at least an hour).
2. When you are ready to serve, slice the strawberries and bananas.
3. Remove whipped cream/pudding mixture from refrigerator and gently fold in sliced strawberries, berries, sliced bananas and marshmallows, and stir gently to combine.

- Serve immediately.



convert recipes into  
**MULTIFUNCTION  
COOKER RECIPES**



If you love using your multifunction cooker, brand name Instant Pot®, but have recipes that don't have multifunction cooker directions don't worry! Convert your regular recipes into multifunction cooker recipes with these simple tips.

### Reduce your cooking time.

The whole point of a multifunction cooker is it's reduced cooking time. The pressure cooker functionality does cook food quicker than traditional methods. If you're trying to convert a recipe, first look for similar recipes using a multifunction cooker and use those as a guide. Or follow this rule of thumb: If you're using a recipe that requires the oven, lower the cook times for meat by one to two thirds. Always check the meat's minimum internal temperature to ensure it's reached safe temperatures.

### Use less liquid.

Because the lid on your multifunction cooker seals tightly, there is little to no evaporation while cooking. That means you won't lose any liquid, so be light-handed with broths and other liquids to avoid a dish that is too watery or lacking flavor. But make sure you have at least one cup of liquid before turning it on—it's necessary to

create steam inside the bowl and to avoid burning. Always follow your manufacturers instructions.

### Fill appropriately.

Your multifunction cooker needs room to build pressure (that's how it cooks the food, after all) so don't cram in your ingredients. Fill your pot two thirds to be safe and only half if you are making any type of grain, pasta, or legume, as they will grow in size while cooking. And whatever you do, do not add ingredients past the MAX fill line—it's there for a reason!

### Be wary of dairy.

Adding dairy products to your pressure cooker at the beginning can make them curdle because of the high temperatures. It's best to wait until the end (preferably once you've removed whatever you're cooking) to mix in any cheese, milk, or cream. The exception to this rule, of course, is when you're making yogurt with the appliance's specific yogurt function.

### Pick the right release.

A multifunction cooker has two different options for releasing pressure: quick pressure release and natural release. The natural release can be used for most recipes (pasta, meat, oatmeal, etc.) but, if you're dealing with something that you don't want to overcook like vegetables, the quick pressure is a better choice as it lets the steam out very quickly. Always follow safety protocols for both release methods.

\*Not all recipes can be converted to a multifunction cooker i.e. baked goods, other recipes may not retain certain qualities you are used to.

- For Vinaigrette:
    - 1/4 c. extra virgin olive oil
    - 1 small shallot, finely chopped (approximately 2 T.)
    - 2 T. white wine vinegar
    - 1 T. maple syrup
    - 1/2 t. salt
    - 1/4 t. freshly ground black pepper
  - For Salad:
    - 2 heads of Butter Lettuce (Romaine would be fine, too)
    - 10 oz. spinach
    - 1 c. pecans, toasted and chopped
    - 1/2 c. dried cherries (or raisins)
    - 1/3 c. crumbled blue cheese (or feta)
1. Whisk together ingredients for vinaigrette in a small bowl or measuring cup.
  2. Toss salad greens in a large bowl with vinaigrette, and sprinkle with nuts, dried fruit, and blue cheese.



**The Salad  
to Bring**  
(when they ask you  
to bring a salad)

thatsusanwilliams.com

## Spaghetti Salad

- 1 lb. Thin spaghetti, broken into thirds
- 1 (16-ounce) bottle Italian salad dressing
- 2 tablespoons McCormick's Salad Supreme Seasoning
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 1 (10 oz. package) cherry tomatoes, sliced in half
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1/2 red onion, diced
- 1 English cucumber, sliced and quartered
- 2 (2.5-ounce) cans sliced black olives
- 1 cup mini pepperoni



1. Cook spaghetti according to directions on the box to al dente. Drain, rinse in cool water.
2. When completely cooled transfer the spaghetti to a large bowl. Add the Italian dressing, Salad Supreme, and the parmesan cheese, stir until evenly distributed.
3. Add the tomatoes, red bell pepper, onion, cucumber, black olives and the pepperoni. Toss until all ingredients are coated.
4. Chill for 1 hour before serving.

[dearchrissy.com](http://dearchrissy.com)