

THE Tyler County AGENTS' ADVICE

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- February 1st – 4H First Monday-Project Day (Photography)*
- February 5th – 2016 Jasper Women's Expo, Christus Hospital*
- February 8th - Commissioner's Court*
- February 10th-Chester Elementary, Healthy Heart Day*
- February 11th – Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet*
- February 11th-28th - San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo*
- February 12th-Colmesneil Elementary, Health Fair*
- February 12th –San Angelo Heifer Show*
- February 15th – President's Day – County Holiday (All County Offices are closed)*
- February 18th - 4H County Council Meeting 6:00pm*
- February 23rd - Tyler County Bee Keeper's Association Meeting, Nutrition Center*
- February 24th - Deadline for 4H District Photography Entries through 4H Connect*
- March 1st-Breakfast CEU's @7:00am, Extension Office*
- March 8th-When Sean Speaks presentation for all county 11th/12th graders. 8am-12pm*
- March 1st-20th - Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo*
- March 25th - Good Friday, County Holiday (All County Offices are closed)*

Tyler County Extension Agents



Kelly Jobe, Family & Consumer Science
Jacob Spivey, Agriculture/Natural Resource

Post Season-Deer Census

Now that deer season is over, many hunters pack up the deer feeder and don't think about their stand for several months. However, there are still a few things we can do to improve our hunting experiences for years to come. One of those things is conducting a post-season deer census. Much like the preseason deer census, it can be conducted in a variety of ways. But, the purpose is to evaluate the number of deer using your property and to estimate the buck to doe ratio. Since most of us are interested in large antlers, we should look at doing the things that are going to encourage our deer, as a herd, to grow larger antlers. There are three main factors that affect antler growth, age, nutrition, and genetics. Having a stable buck to doe ratio is one of the things we can do to increase the average age of our deer herd. Typically a buck's

largest antlers are going to be the set that he will grow between the ages of 5 ½ and 6 ½ years. However, many of our deer don't reach anywhere near that age, as they are harvested well before hand. When conducting a post season census, the general accepted goal, is to increase age that would in turn increase antler size and produce a buck to doe ratio of 1:1. Depending on management techniques and supplemental feeding programs, that may not be a real possibility. But until you know how many deer you have on your property, you won't know your ratio. So, instead of managing for deer, you are just hunting and hoping for a big one to walk out. I'd certainly encourage you to continue to use supplemental feed for your deer population to maintain body mass and

nutrition thru the rest of the winter months. Now is also a good time to plan for next hunting season. Once you know your ratio, you can discuss what your goals as a hunter should be for next season. I would think it's a good plan to know that everyone hunting on a given property has the same goals for that property. If the desire is to have big bucks in the long term, that may require a few seasons of controlling inferior deer while the herd ages. That can't happen unless everyone is on the same page. While we may think of taking a break from the woods, now is not the time to forget about deer entirely. Another plus of conducting that deer census... the next few weeks will be the perfect time to find an antler shed hiding in the thicket!



\$ Finding Great Buys at Dollar Stores \$

With the cost of food going up, many of us are looking for ways to save money on groceries. Planning meals in advance, comparing prices and shopping with a list are helpful tools. Also, more people are searching the aisles of dollar stores for food bargains. Here are a few Tips that can help you get the best food buys for your dollar-store buck.

- \$ Know the foods offered at your dollar and discount stores. \$ Don't be afraid to try brands you don't know.**
- \$ Know your prices. \$ Check the package size. \$ Watch for expiration dates.**
- \$ Read food labels so you know what you are buying.**

No doubt you will find some great deals, just make sure your bargain is worth the cost!

What's in Season? Chocolate!!

For more information on SNAP-Ed, contact your local county Extension office. Better Living for Texans is located in over 200 counties across the state.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Better Living for Texans programs are available to all without discrimination.

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With Valentine's Day approaching, a cup of hot cocoa or a bite of rich, dark chocolate seems that much more appealing. Chocolate actually has several health benefits, so read on to find out why it is okay to indulge your craving. #1- It is ALMOST a diet food.

Preliminary test tube research shows that Natural Cocoa, which is loaded in flavonols, MIGHT limit the number of calories you actually take in during digestion, thus preventing some fats and starches in other food from being absorbed! (We can only hope they find it works in humans!) #2- It's Heart Healthy- A large study out of Harvard (2010) found that women who ate 1 or 2 ounces of chocolate a week had a week had a 32% lower risk of heart failure women who didn't eat any chocolate. This is due to the antioxidant effects such as helping to prevent

artery-threatening LDL cholesterol from converting to a more lethal, oxidized form. #3- It makes you smile!! - Just the sight of chocolate can evoke a smile, according to a recent British survey. 60% of women ranked chocolate as the most smile-worthy experience, edging out loved ones and other smiling people. (FYI, the top pick for men was a Sunday Roast!!) #4- It Helps You See Better- Researchers found that participants who ate dark chocolate had significantly better night vision than when they ate white chocolate. They have linked this to the flavonols (antioxidants) present in dark chocolate. Now, please do not take these benefits as passport to OVER indulge in this luscious confection! There are cons. Here are a few things to take into consideration when choosing the chocolate that is right for you. #1- Not all chocolate is created equal. The key factor is the more processed the cocoa, the less health benefit it has. So, when

buying cocoa, look for Natural cocoa so that the beneficial antioxidants have not been stripped during processing. #2- Chocolate is High in Calories- Just 1 ounce delivers 160 calories, thanks to the sugar and cocoa butter that get added to it. So, choose Chocolate with a high cacao (pronounced ku-cow) content, 70% or higher. It is more intensely flavored, thus satisfying your craving in fewer bites. #3- Chocolate Contains Caffeine- If you are sensitive to caffeine or trying to limit your intake, keep in mind that 1 ounce of chocolate has 23mg of caffeine, but a whole bar delivers up to 100mg- the equivalence to a cup of coffee. Here's hoping your Sweetheart has your health in mind this year!



Monthly Recipe: Dark Chocolate Fondue

Ingredients

- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 stick unsalted butter
- 1 (12-ounce) package semisweet chocolate morsels
- 1 (12-ounce) package milk chocolate morsels
- For dipping: sliced apples, bananas, strawberries, crisp cookies, pretzels, and cubed pound cake



Directions

In a large saucepan over medium heat, combine cream and butter. Bring mixture to a simmer, stirring constantly. Remove pan from heat. Add semisweet and milk chocolate morsels. Stir until melted and smooth. Cool slightly. Transfer to a fondue pot, chafing dish, or ceramic bowl. Serve immediately with sliced apples, sliced bananas, strawberries, cookies, pretzels, and pound cake.

Source: foodnetwork.com