



Family Living IDEAS

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August/September 2009

Greetings!

First I would like to thank each of you who participated in the Grant County fair with your exhibits. In food preservation, clothing, baked foods and knitting we had many more entries than in previous years. I know food preservation entries were almost doubled over last year! Clothing entries were more than double last year's exhibit numbers! Thank you again for your participation.

I will be meeting with our fair superintendents in the next few weeks to review the 2009 County fair event. At this time we will also be discussing potential volunteers for next year. If you would like to be involved with the fair exhibit area organization, display set-up, or have the credentials to judge within a specific department, please let me know! We are always looking for new volunteers. The fiber arts division had wonderful displays and educational, hands-on activities for the public. These are also great additions for our exhibit area.

There were a number of disqualified food preservation entries. This designation occurs when an incorrect processing was used for the item entered. It is my hope that these individuals get correct information for the correct preservation processing of their food. Please call the Extension office to make an appointment to have your pressure canner tested or to discuss your food preservation process.

Sincerely,

M. Christine Price, County Director
 WSU Extension Grant/Adams Area
 Family & Consumer Science Educator

Economic perspective: Spending on the essentials

Traditionally, when we think of consumer essentials or necessities, we think of food, housing, clothing and transportation. Over time, has it become harder or easier for us to afford these must-haves?

Mike Walden, North Carolina Cooperative Extension economist in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at N.C. State University, responds:

"Well, let's take a trip down memory lane. In 1950, 83 percent of consumer spending was just on those four items: food, housing, clothing and transportation.

"By 1975, it had fallen to 77 percent, and today it's a little over two-thirds, 68 percent. So we have made progress, if you will, in being able to afford the essentials. But there are dramatically different trends. If you look at the individual necessities, what we spend on food and clothing has come way down. However, what we spend on transportation and housing is up. Now does that mean transportation and housing is more expensive? Not necessarily.

"Economists who look into this find that the main reason that we're spending more relatively on transportation and housing is that we're consuming more of those items or goods. We have more cars. We have better cars. And housing, we have more square footage with more amenities. So overall, I think the picture on spending on the essentials looks very good."

www.eXtension.org. *Economic Perspective: Spending on the Essentials*. August 2009.

How does avian influenza spread?

There have been nine reported cases of transmission of avian influenza virus from infected birds to people over the past 50 years. In cases caused by the H7 strain, infected people developed conjunctivitis while H5 cases experienced respiratory illness and flu-like symptoms. To date, the largest AI outbreak involving bird to human transmission is the one caused by the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N1 strain. This outbreak started in Hong Kong in 1997 with 18 human cases and 6 deaths but subsided. It resurfaced in 2003 and has affected more than 440 people (262 of whom have died) in 15 countries in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East as of August 31, 2009. Most of these cases have been linked to direct exposure to live or dead poultry infected with HPAI H5N1. Transmission has occurred when bird owners gather birds for transport to market, children play with a backyard flock of infected birds, or when infected birds are handled or butchered and consumed. At this time, this HPAI H5N1 strain has not yet gained the ability to spread from person to person.

How does avian influenza spread from birds to people? <http://www.extension.org>. Sept 09.

Shopping-cart virtue

According to a story in the book *Hugs for Dad* by John William Smith, a father asked his son after grocery shopping to return their cart to the retrieval area. Although it would have taken only a minute, the son protested.

"C'mon, Dad," he said, "there are carts all over the lot. None of those people returned theirs. No one expects them to."

Then Mom chimed in. "For heaven's sake, they pay people to collect the carts. Returning one more won't change the history of the world. Let's just go."

Dad was about to surrender when he saw an elderly couple walking together to return their cart. After a moment, he said to his wife and son, "We're not responsible for what other people do, but we are responsible for what we

do. There are two kinds of people: those who put their carts away and those who don't. We put our carts away because that's the kind of people we are."

This story isn't just about grocery carts. It's about putting principles above convenience and doing the right thing in a world that seems to promote rationalizations and excuses that demean or trivialize simple acts of virtue. There are two kinds of people: those who find the strength to do what they ought to and those who find excuses not to.

People of character do the right thing even if no one else does, not because they think it will change the world but because they refuse to be changed by the world.

Michael Josephson Commentary. *Shopping-cart virtue*. Charactercounts.org. August 2009

What is the best cooking method to preserve the nutrients in fruits and vegetables?

How foods are cooked can have a big impact on their nutrient content. That's because many vitamins are sensitive to heat and air exposure (vitamin C, the B vitamins, and folate in particular). Loss of nutrients increases as cooking time increases and with higher temperatures.

Cooking methods that minimize the time, temperature, and amount of water needed will help to preserve nutrients. Steaming is a great way to cook vegetables quickly and retain valuable nutrients. Microwave cooking is also good because it uses minimal water, and the cooking time is very short. Stir frying is another way to quickly cook a variety of vegetables.

Here are a few other tricks you can use to preserve nutrients:

Leave vegetables in big pieces. That way fewer vitamins are destroyed when they are exposed to air.

Always cover your pot to hold in steam and heat. This will also help to reduce cooking time. Use any leftover cooking water for soups and stews, sauces, or vegetable juice drinks.

Eat fruits and vegetables raw whenever possible in salads and smoothies or as whole fruits and vegetables.

Cook vegetables until crisp. Don't overcook. Use as little water as possible when cooking. All of the tips above will help you retain the maximum amount of nutrients in your fruits and vegetables. The most important factor, however, is to eat LOTS of fruits and vegetables each day; cooked and raw.

Extension.org. *What is the best cooking method to preserve fruits and vegetables.* May 2009.

Test Taking tips for your young student

Do you sweat, chew your pencil, and feel butterflies in your stomach as your teacher hands out a test? A lot of people (adults included) get freaked out when it's time to take a test. It's natural to feel some stress about taking tests. In fact, sometimes a little adrenaline (a hormone made by your body during times of excitement or stress) is a good thing to jump-start you. Here are some tips for taking tests:

First, be sure you've studied properly. It sounds like a no-brainer, but if you're sure of the information, you'll have less reason to be worried.

Get enough sleep the night before the test. Your memory recall will be much better if you've had enough rest. In a scientific study, people who got enough sleep before taking a math test did better than those who stayed up all night studying. Listen closely to any instructions. As the teacher hands out the test, be sure you know what's expected of you.

Read the test through first. Once you have the test paper in front of you, read over the entire test, checking out how long it is and all the parts that you are expected to complete. This will allow you to estimate how much time you have for each section and ask the teacher any questions. If something seems unclear before you start, don't panic: ask.

Focus on addressing each question individually. As you take the test, if you don't know an

answer, don't obsess over it. Instead, answer the best way you can or skip over the question and come back to it after you've answered other questions.

Relax. If you're so nervous that you blank out, you might need a mini-break. Of course you can't get up and move around in the middle of a test, but you can wiggle your fingers and toes, take four or five deep breaths, or picture yourself on a beach or some other calm place. As we all know, it can be easy to forget things we know well — like a locker combination. The difference is we know we'll remember our locker combination because we've used it hundreds of times, so we don't panic and the combination number eventually comes back. During a test, if you blank out on something and start to get tense, it suddenly becomes much more difficult to remember.

Finished already? Although most teachers will let you hand a test in early, it's usually a good idea to spend any extra time checking over your work. You also can add details that you may not have thought you'd have time for. On the other hand, if you have 5 minutes until the bell rings and you're still writing, wind up whatever you're working on without panicking.

Teens health from Nemours. *Test taking tips.* Kidshealth.org. November 2008

Fall planting

It is possible to extend the gardening season well into fall by planting crops which mature in cooler weather. Second and third plantings of carrots, beets, and others will provide fresh, homegrown vegetables in the fall and are excellent for canning, freezing, and storing. Many vegetables actually do best when they mature in cooler weather. Consider cold-weather crops such as broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, and cauliflower. Because they take a while to reach maturity, it's better to find transplants than grow them from seed. Topping the midsummer planting list are greens of all kind, such as lettuce, spinach, and radicchio. Heat sensitive crops like lettuce and spinach may be sown in an area shaded by the taller summer crops, protected from the hot

summer sun. Root crops such as turnips, radishes, carrots and beets grow especially well during fall. These root vegetables can survive temperatures several degrees below freezing. Carrots can be left in the ground during winter if protected with a heavy layer of straw mulch.

Some of the other most common midsummer vegetable plantings are bush green beans, zucchini squash, and cucumbers. Some of the flower seeds to consider are cosmos, zinnias, and marigolds. To determine when to plant your fall garden take the typically first frost date in the fall, which in the Basin is considered to be October 15. Count back eight to 12 weeks. If you want to cut the time a little more, start with transplants. Soil dries out faster in the summer than in the spring. To help keep the soil from drying out too rapidly apply a light layer of mulch, or dry grass clippings can be used.

Mona Kaiser. *Fall planting of vegetables and flowers*. WSU Grant/Adams Master Gardeners.

Tips to tame the tube

These days, TV is one of the main things families talk about. Families plan evenings around TV watching. They talk about TV shows during dinner. Almost half of all interactions between brothers and sisters are about TV. This may sound all too familiar to you.

To bring your family back from TV addiction, here are some methods to help tame the tube:

Reduce TV time. Limit the time your family spends watching TV by making a plan and sticking to it. If there is a favorite program everyone likes to watch Monday at 8 p.m., turn the TV on when the show starts. Then turn the TV off again when the show is over.

Make a TV budget for each member of the family. Children under the age of 2 shouldn't watch any TV. Children over the age of 2 should watch no more than 1 to 2 hours of TV per day. Parents are the best role models for children, so make a TV budget for yourself. Show your child(ren) you are sticking to it.

Hide the tube. Rearrange the furniture so the TV is in the corner instead of in the center of the room. Put the TV in a cabinet with doors, or cover it with a tablecloth when turned off. This will hide it from view, and the family will be less tempted to watch.

No TV in bedrooms. Over half of all children have TVs in their bedrooms. Keep the TVs out of bedrooms to encourage everyone in the family to do more TV-free activities. When someone does want to watch TV, it can become a family activity in the living room rather than something done alone. If TV time is a family activity, talk with your child about what is on TV.

Try new activities. Select a new hobby, like doing puzzles, art projects, or putting together models. Researchers have found that when the parents play with children and share activities they enjoy, their children are less likely to watch TV. Instead, the children learn there are more fun activities to choose from than just TV.

Reducing time away from the TV will benefit everyone in your family. There are strong links to show that those who watch less TV spend more time doing physical activity. This leads to longer, healthier lives for your whole family. Once you tame the tube, you'll discover the wonder of spending time with your family.

Extension.org. *Tips to tame the tube*. May 2009.

*A baby is born with a
need to be loved -
and never outgrows it.*

How to build community

This is taken from a poster entitled *How to build community*, presented by the Simple Living Network, a locally owned resource website for building community and environmental awareness. The website was launched in response to the developers' participation in the WSU Extension Horizons community building program. You can visit the website at www.simpleliving.net.

Turn off your T.V. – Leave your house – Know your neighbors – Look up when you are walking – Greet people – Sit on your stoop – Plant flowers – Use your library – Play together – Buy from local merchants – Share what you have – Help a lost dog – Take children to the park – Garden together – Support neighborhood schools – Fix it even if you didn't break it – Have pot lucks – Honor elders – Pick up litter – Read stories aloud – Dance in the street – Talk to the mail carrier – Listen to the birds – Put up a swing – Help carry something heavy – Barter for your goods – Start a tradition – Ask a question – Hire young people for odd jobs – Organize a block party – Bake extra and share – Ask for help when you need it – Open your shades – Sing together – Share your skills – Take back the night – Turn up the music – Turn down the music – Listen before you react to anger – Mediate a conflict – Seek to understand – Learn from new and uncomfortable angles – Know that no one is silent though many are not heard – Work to change this

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Layout and design provided by Jenelle Kerner, a member of the WSU Grant/Adams Extension team.

World Class. Face to Face.

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