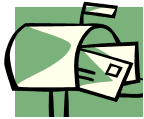


*There have been several warnings in the news lately about the dangers of being taken advantage of financially by fraudulent schemes. Obviously nobody wants to become a victim of fraud. This quarter's newsletter has an article and information from a fact sheet that can help you protect yourself from this. There is also an article about keeping our children safe during spring cleaning time along with ways to keep our body healthy with nutritious food choices and exercise.*

*Several classes being offered in the coming months include the Master Food Safety Advisor training, the StrongWomen™ program, and a variety of food safety and nutrition classes. I hope that you will be able to join us for one or more of them.*

Sheila Barry, FCS Agent



### Updating Newsletter Address List

Enclosed is a brief survey regarding the newsletter. It has been a year now since I put together the first one and mailed to you. I have used the address list that was on file in our office and realize that this needs to be updated. I do need your assistance with this task. **If you enjoy the newsletters and wish to continue receiving them quarterly, please call, e-mail or send in your survey with your address and any changes that you may wish to make. Unfortunately, if I do not hear back from you, I will assume that the newsletter did not reach its intended destination and will remove those names and addresses from the list.**

I really do appreciate your help with this and any feedback that you offer will help to improve the newsletter.

All names that are updated will be placed in a drawing and may win free books like the *High Altitude Baking* recipe book, gift certificates for free classes or items to help them with food safety or improving their nutrition.

*I look forward to hearing from you!*

Newsletters and Class Information  
is available on-line.

Please check out the website at  
[www.coopext.colostate.edu/elpaso](http://www.coopext.colostate.edu/elpaso)  
and click on Family and Consumer  
Science to access the information.

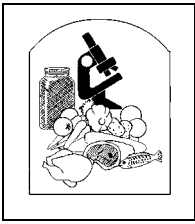


### Eggcellence of Eggs Class Offered

Eggs are nutritious and can fit into the daily diet for good health. They are also economical and easy to prepare. However, special care needs to be given to avoid the possibility of a foodborne illness whether consumers are preparing for an egg hunt or a special brunch. The most effective way to prevent an egg-related foodborne illness is to know how to buy, store, handle and prepare eggs safely. The class will be held on

**Tuesday, April 11<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.  
at the Extension Office**

Handouts, recipes and samples of tasty egg dishes  
will be provided. Call 719-636-8920 to register.  
Cost is \$5.00.



## Master Food Safety and Preservation Advisor Training Available

If one stopped to think about all of the foods that were eaten during the course of a day, many foods were probably frozen, canned, dried or pickled. These are not new or innovative methods of food preservation. In fact, our ancestors used these methods of food preservation thousands of years ago as a means of survival.

Today we often see home food preservation as a way to conserve the food dollar, to enjoy food prepared in a way that is most pleasing to the taste, to control the list of ingredients and reduce the number of additives found in commercially prepared items, pass along heritage to our families and friends and add convenience to our busy lives.

There are factors that need be considered when preserving foods, no matter what the reason for preserving, so that our efforts provide us with a safe food source. Since the Colorado Springs area is at a higher altitude, adjustments must be made in our recipes to ensure safety.

We need to add time to the directions for water bath canning and increase the amount of pressure when pressure canning. The concern when canning low-acid vegetables is that the clostridium botulinum spores naturally found in this area are destroyed during the processing. If not, a deadly toxin is produced and if consumed, the result is botulism. This type of food poisoning can be fatal and if the victim does survive, the road to recovery is long and costly.

It is recommended that at sea level 10 pounds of pressure per square inch be used. For elevation, we increase the pressure 1/2 pound per 1,000 feet of elevation. For example, at 6,000 feet, a low acid food needs to be processed at 13 pounds of

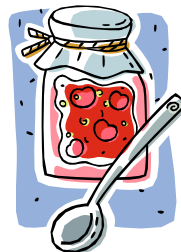
pressure. If the pressure canner uses a weighted gauge, use the 15 pound weight at all altitudes above 1,000 feet.

Recipes can also be modified for dietary reasons. People trying to reduce the amount of sugar and salt in their diets can reduce the sugar level in the syrup of canned fruit and the salt level can be reduced in items other than pickles. Always avoid using your own "made-up" recipe since testing hasn't been done for safety.

The Colorado State University Cooperative Extension Office in El Paso County is currently offering the Master Food Safety and Preservation Program for people who would like to learn more about canning, freezing, pickling, jams and jellies, dehydrating and food safety. Participants will be given food safety and preservation manuals and CSU publications with the latest information on home food preservation and food safety. The classes are designed with lecture and labs so that learning can be achieved with hands-on experiences.

**The cost is \$45 with a volunteer commitment of 35 hours.** Master Food Safety and Preservation Advisors may volunteer by answering consumer phone calls, providing information at local Farmer's markets, giving food safety and preservation classes, preparing educational displays or by making samples for classes.

Classes are scheduled for **May 5, 12, 19 and June 2, 9, 16, and 23.** All classes will begin at 9:00 a.m. and meet at the CSU Cooperative Extension Office located at 305 South Union Blvd. Call 719-636-8920 or go to [www.ext.colostate.edu/elpaso](http://www.ext.colostate.edu/elpaso) and click on family and consumer for more information and an application.



## Is now a good time to ask how YOU are doing on YOUR exercise program?

The US Dietary Guidelines recommend at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity most days of the week to reduce our risk of chronic disease. For most of us, greater health benefits are received with more physical activity (60-90 minutes daily), especially if you are trying to avoid weight gain.

There are really 3 types of exercise that are important for good health and they are cardiovascular, strength training and flexibility and balance.

**Cardiovascular exercise** can be any activity that uses large muscle groups continuously over a period of time. This type of exercise will build stronger and more efficient heart and lungs. Actually your heart, just like any other muscle in your body, becomes stronger and more efficient with exercise. A normal resting heart beat rate is probably about 70 beats per minute. Just think, that is about 100,000 times per day! Now, with exercise, a well-conditioned heart beats about 40 times per minute or only about 50,000 times per day, while doing the same amount of work! Also, cardiovascular exercise increases your metabolism. This increase can be 5 to 20 times the amount of calories burned during exercise compared to when one is sitting down.

A few examples of exercise and the amount of calories burned for a **150 pound woman in 30 minutes:**

Activity	Calories
Weight Lifting, light to moderate	100 calories
Bowling	100 calories
Walking, leisurely	120 calories
General Housecleaning	120 calories
Golfing	150 calories
Bicycling, leisurely	200 calories
Swimming	270 calories
Running	270 calories

You will also find that when one participates in an aerobic activity, the brain releases endorphins that give a sense of well-being. Yes, there really is such a thing as a “runner’s high”. Many people also report feeling this sense throughout the day. You add this increased positive attitude with the extra energy your body will have and the sum equals a healthy, happy YOU! I could go on and on about the side effects of exercising...sleeping better at night, stress-relief, preventing heart disease, diabetes and obesity...the list goes on and on! In fact, a new study from Tufts University has found a link between even small amounts of exercise and a lowered risk for developing Alzheimer’s disease and other forms of dementia. The thinking is that exercise improves blood flow to the brain, especially areas involved with memory.

**Strength Training exercise** is important, especially to reduce the risk of osteoporosis. You can do this by lifting weights or using resistance bands. If you haven’t done a lot of strength training, it is a good idea to have a personal trainer show you some exercises. The StrongWomen™ class offered through our office is also a great way to begin adding strength training to your exercise program.

**Flexibility and Balance exercises** will help to increase agility and range of motion. They can also help decrease muscle pain from cardiovascular or strength training exercises and prevent injuries. Our sense of balance often declines with age so this exercise can help to reduce the risk of age-related falls due to poor balance.

The 30 or 60 minutes of exercise doesn’t have to be done all at once. Try to be active throughout the day. If you start the day with a 20 or 30 minute walk and then take a walk around the block for 10 minutes when you get the mail, park at the back of the lot when doing some shopping and then do about 10 minutes of stretching for flexibility and then twice a week try some strength training, like StrongWomen™, you will have a wonderful exercise plan!

**During the summer, one class of the StrongWomen™ program will be offered at the Colorado Springs Senior Center. It will be held on Mondays and Thursdays from 8 to 9 a.m. and runs from June 5<sup>th</sup> through August 24<sup>th</sup>. Registration will begin May 23<sup>rd</sup>. You can call the Senior Center at 719-385-5933 or the Extension Office at 719-636-8920 for more information.**

LIFTING WOMEN TO BETTER HEALTH



## Money Lessons for Life

### Family Matters Newsletter

March 2006



How are you doing with teaching your children about money? Do you need some ideas on how to start?

Some of the reasons we have for not talking to children about money include our own lack of knowledge, the fear that we're not practicing what we ought to be preaching, and the fact that our parents didn't talk to us about money. Don't let these barriers stand in your way.

As soon as children can count, introduce them to money. Keep in mind the following guidelines when educating children about money or other subjects:

- Guide and advise rather than direct and dictate. Let children have responsibility for their decisions.
- Encourage and praise rather than criticize and rebuke.
- Allow children to make and learn from mistakes and successes.
- Use opportunities to include all family members in money management decisions and activities as appropriate for their age.
- Explain to children what they can and cannot do, and the consequences of going beyond their limits.
- As children get older, include them in discussions of limits and consequences.

### Age-appropriate lessons

Money lessons and your expectations need to be age appropriate. Concepts to teach and activities to provide to your children include:

- For young kids, spark interest in money by using the pictures of money. Work together to count money and make change.
- Set up a three-jar system, such as, "now, short-term and long term," or "spending, savings and sharing." All money earned or received as a gift should not be available for spending, but divided among the jars.

Sharing includes gifts or donations to others. When the jar is full, that money goes into a savings account or may be used for a purchase.

- Go with your child to set-up a savings account or to purchase savings bonds. When saving at home, pay interest on the savings, or provide a match with the requirement that your contribution stays in savings. To encourage saving, let your child make the decision on account withdrawals. Regular savings is the quickest way to a good credit rating.
- Eliminate the "I wants" at the store checkout by allowing them to spend only their own money when they go shopping with you.

### Lessons in life

- Create a lesson out of bill paying, for example the utility bill is a need, while satellite radio is a want. Help them figure costs per day, then subtract for account balances.
- Avoid criticizing when children make poor decisions. Focus on what happened and what was learned. Always try to recognize responsible behavior.
- Allowances help empower the child and provide money management lessons. It's also appropriate to expect all family members to perform unpaid, routine household chores appropriate for their abilities. Give a base allowance, which may be tied to chores. If chores are not completed, the penalty should be lost privileges. Always provide chore opportunities for additional earnings. Shift more spending decisions to your child, which reduces the need for the child to ask for money, and encourages wise spending.

**It is better that children learn money management under your guidance than alone in the real world.** Parental loans should come with

interest, terms and require some collateral. Let them learn that it is expensive to rent someone else's money for a period of time.

### Goal setting

Occasionally express your desire to have things you can't afford. They need to hear that you, too, have to tell yourself "no" to spending money. Delayed gratification should lengthen as the child ages, with goal setting for achievement or for items they want as their motivation. Delay spending by requiring comparison shopping, a list of pros and cons for the purchase and thrifty alternatives.

Teach the difference between wanting and needing. For an older child create a list with three columns- needs, wants and wishes. This comparison helps children see that the three do not go together. As they make responsible spending decisions, let them keep the money they saved. Teach them that spending is not a fix for a negative feeling.

### Ways to teach about money

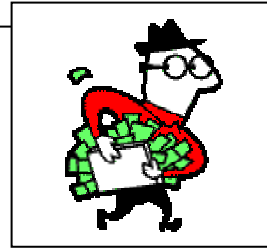
One important lesson is how to track earnings, spending, and savings in order to know how you're doing financially. Ask your child to write down transactions into specific categories each month.

Another method for learning about money is to use the grocery store as your classroom. Demonstrate how to plan a meal, use leftovers, shop by unit price, question coupon or sale values, figure costs of eating out (including tax and tip), and ways to create lower cost options.

Teach about ways to build a good credit rating, and if your older child does not have a regular full time income, do not give them a credit card as it sends the message to "SPEND." Co-signing means you're liable and does not help them establish a credit rating. Credit purchasing can have a far more negative impact on a financial future than any other money decision.

Establish a regular schedule for a family financial discussion. Report current balances and concerns and work together on coming up with solutions to reduce expenses, avoid credit debt and increase savings.

Sometimes the best motivation for wise spending is to plan how to do more with the money you save!



Learning how to make wise choices when it comes to our money doesn't end in childhood. Every age group needs to be cautious and make informed decisions about spending, saving and sharing financial resources. We especially don't want to become a victim of a fraudulent crime. Although any age group is at risk, older adults tend to be targeted more often by scammers, identity thieves and con artists.

Colorado State University Cooperative Extension has a fact sheet available through the Extension Office or on-line at <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/consumer/10254.html> which focuses on **Frauds That Target Older Adults no. 10.254**

This fact sheet has great information that can help you protect your money. It also includes important contact information of agencies that can assist you if you think you may be a victim of a fraud. The following are the **Quick Facts** but I encourage you to get the rest of the fact sheet and read.

- Frequently scam artists target older consumers believing that they have more money from life savings or they have valuable property.
- Never give out financial information and identification documents to those who initiate a telephone call, street solicitors, or door-to-door salespersons.
- Consumers who are over 60 years of age who play sweepstakes and contests are considered good prospects for repeated mailings or calls.
- Do not make agreements for home improvements over the Internet and do not send money or a credit card number in advance

## Cleaning the Kitchen Cupboard: Toss or Save?



The following storage tips are based on food stored at a room temperature of about 70 F. The times are those generally cited for maintaining best food quality. A range of times and the more conservative recommendations are given to allow for age of the product when purchased, how long it has been open, etc. **READ LABELS CAREFULLY** -- they often contain important storage information and recommended "use by" dates.

### **Baking Powder**

12 to 18 months or expiration date on container  
**Storage Tip:** Store tightly covered in a dry place. Make sure measuring utensils are dry before dipping into the container.

**Testing for Freshness:** Mix 1 teaspoon baking powder with 1/3 cup hot water. If it foams vigorously, it still has rising power.

### **Baking Soda**

12 to 18 months or expiration date on container  
**Storage Tip:** Store tightly covered in a dry place. Make sure measuring utensils are dry before dipping them into the container.

**Testing for Freshness:** Place 1 1/2 teaspoons in a small bowl. Add 1 tablespoon vinegar. If it fizzes, then it will still help leaven a food. If it doesn't fizz, use it as an odor catcher in the refrigerator.

### **Whole Wheat Flour**

1 to 3 months at room temperature; refrigerate whole wheat flour if you want to keep it longer  
**Storage Tip #1:** For longer storage, whole wheat flour should be stored in an airtight container or freezer bag in the refrigerator or freezer. It will maintain good quality for about 6 months in the refrigerator and up to 12 months in the freezer. The ground wheat germ in whole wheat flour contains oil that can become rancid at room temperature.  
**Storage Tip #2:** Generally, if measuring flour from refrigerated or frozen flour, allow your measured portion to come to room temperature before using it in baked goods. Remove the flour for your recipe a few hours before use, so it doesn't affect the action of other ingredients such as baking powder or yeast.

### **Honey**

12 months

**Storage Tip:** Honey stores best at room temperature. It tends to crystallize more rapidly, a natural process in which its liquid turns solid, in the refrigerator.

**Revitalizing Crystallized Honey:** The National Honey Board [www.honey.com](http://www.honey.com) recommends revitalizing crystallized honey by placing the jar in warm water and stirring the honey until the crystals dissolve.

### **Popcorn** (*other than ready-to-pop microwave popcorn*) 2 years

**Storage Tip #1:** Store in an airtight glass or plastic container in a cool place, such as a cupboard.

**Storage Tip #2:** The National Popcorn Board [www.popcorn.org](http://www.popcorn.org) recommends AGAINST storing popcorn in the refrigerator. The kernels are more likely to dry out in the refrigerator and do not pop as well. It's the water inside a popcorn kernel that expands when the popcorn is heated, causing the kernel to explode or "pop."

**Putting the "Pop" Back in Popcorn:** If popcorn is too dry and won't pop, the Popcorn Board recommends filling a one-quart jar three-fourths full of kernels and adding a tablespoon of water. Place an airtight lid on the jar and give the jar a "few good shakes every few minutes" until the water is absorbed. Store the jar in a cool place and in two to three days, test-pop a batch. If the kernels still don't pop, add a few more drops of water to the jar, shake some more and let it sit another few days.

### **Brown Sugar**

4 months to 6 months for maximum flavor

**Storage Tip:** It's VERY important to store brown sugar in an airtight container to retain its moisture and prevent it from becoming hard. Either store it in its original plastic bag, tightly closed, or transfer to an airtight container or a heavy moisture-proof plastic bag, such as a freezer bag.

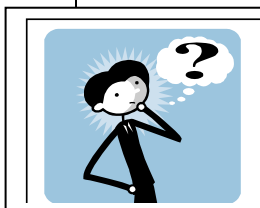
**To Soften Brown Sugar:** Brown sugar becomes hard when the moisture in it has evaporated. Several methods have been suggested to help

restore the moisture to brown sugar; here's an overview of those mentioned most frequently:  
**Oven Method.** Heat the brown sugar in a 250 F oven for a few minutes. Watch it carefully and as soon as it is soft, measure the amount you need. When the sugar cools, it will become hard again. Warning: the sugar will be very hot.

**Microwave Method.** Place brown sugar in a microwave-safe container and cover loosely with a clean, white, wet (but not dripping wet) paper

towel. Microwave on high (100 percent power) and check about every 30 seconds. When the sugar cools, it will become hard again. Warning: the sugar will be very hot.

More tips on "Cleaning the Kitchen Cupboard: Toss or Save?" by Alice Henneman, MSm RD, Extension Educator are available from the **COOK IT QUICK!, University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension** ([lancaster.unl.edu/food/ciq.htm](http://lancaster.unl.edu/food/ciq.htm))



## Questions and Answers:

Here are a few questions that I have received from callers during the past few months. If you have calls regarding food safety, nutrition or other family and consumer science issues, please call 636-8920 or e-mail me at [sheilabarry@elpaoso.com](mailto:sheilabarry@elpaoso.com). In addition, you can check out the Colorado State University Answerlink program at [www.answerlink.info](http://www.answerlink.info) and submit your questions. There are many questions and answers already posted, so perhaps you will find your questions already answered!

### **Q: I don't have any cream of tartar, what can I use as a substitute?**

A: According to CSU fact sheet no. 9.329 *Ingredient Substitutions* for every ½ tsp. of cream of tartar needed, 1 ½ tsp. of lemon juice or vinegar may be substituted in the recipe.

### **Q: Do I need to make any recipe adjustments for cookies at this altitude?**

A: Some cookie recipes work fine at this altitude, while others need a bit of adjusting. An increase in baking temperature (15-25°F), a small decrease (1/8 to ¼ tsp.) in baking powder and/or baking soda, and a small decrease in fat and sugar can be helpful (usually a tablespoon per cup called for in the recipe). Often times, you will need to try the recipe a couple of times to get the modifications for the perfect cookie. Several recipes are available in the *High Altitude Baking* recipe book which is for sale in the Extension Office.

### **Q: How can I freeze asparagus?**

Freezing is a quick and easy method of food preservation. Vegetables do need to be blanched before freezing to preserve quality. To blanch the asparagus, bring at least 1 gallon of water to a rapid boil in a large kettle with a lid. Lower a pound of the asparagus which has been washed and cut or sorted for size into the boiling water and cover with a lid. Start counting time as soon as the vegetables are in the boiling water. Keep heat on high for 4 minutes (medium stalks) with the stalks in boiling water. Remove stalks from boiling water and place in ice water (about 1 lb. of ice for each pound of asparagus) for 4 minutes to cool. Then drain dry the asparagus. Pack without headspace, alternating tips and stem ends of spears. Be sure to label the package and place in freezer. For more information on freezing, refer to CSU Cooperative Extension Fact Sheet no. 9.330 on *Freezing Vegetables*.

## Laws governing elder financial fraud in Colorado

By Barbara Martin-Worley, Gerontologist, Denver Extension Director  
Colorado State University Cooperative Extension, Denver County



Financial fraud against older Americans is a concern that is driving strict measures of enforcement nationwide. In the United States, 84 percent of crimes against the elderly go unreported. If current trends are any indication, financial exploitation against older Americans will rise precipitously as the bulk of Baby Boomers enter retirement. As we tackle the solvency issues of our nation's public and private pension systems, we must at the same time reinforce laws that protect older Americans from being defrauded of their retirement income.

The majority of people over the age of 65 live independently with little or no assistance. Many others must rely on the assistance of friends or family to manage their personal finances. Older individuals are frequently the victims of unscrupulous sales offers or illegal lottery scams. These factors place older Americans at particular risk of being financially exploited by others, including family members.

The mishandling of another's finances by a person of trust can be inadvertent, a crime of opportunity; or it might be willful, deliberate theft or deception. The degree of intent to defraud an elder/at-risk adult varies, and is defined by Colorado law.

The definitions that govern these laws are:

- **Elder and at-risk adult:** Any person 60 years of age or older, or any person who is 18 years of age or older and is a person with a disability.
- **Fraud:** Occurs whenever a person or business engages in unfair/deceptive practices, such as misleading advertisements, sales and substandard merchandise, or violation of regulatory guidelines by the insurance, health care or home repair industry (also defined as consumer fraud).

- **Exploitation:** The illegal or improper use of an elder/at-risk adult's resources for another person's profit or gain.
- **Financial exploitation:** The action or failure of action by an individual that causes substantial monetary or property loss to an at-risk adult, or causes a benefit to a person that should normally go to the elder/at-risk adult. Often, financial exploitation occurs in concert with other forms of exploitation, abuse and neglect, such as mismanagement of income or assets; signing of checks or documents without the elder/at-risk adult's consent; charging excessive fees for rent, home repair, in-home care or other services; stealing money or property; or obtaining money or property without authorization by threat or deception.

In cases involving suspected fraud or exploitation, valid consent must be given by an elder/at-risk adult to the person operating on his/her behalf. By law, valid consent requires that the elder/at-risk adult have the mental ability to understand what is happening. A consenting elder/at-risk adult who is confused and demented has not given consent. By these definitions, crimes committed against elder/at-risk adults are prosecutable offenses, subject to penalties under Colorado's Criminal Code. In recent years, Colorado has enacted and in some cases strengthened the following legislation to enforce penalties and to provide greater protection to individuals at greatest risk of financial fraud and exploitation.

**Colorado Criminal Code - At-Risk Adult Statute (Class 3 Felony Theft):** People convicted of a crime against an elder/at-risk adult can be subjected to penalties ranging from 10 to 32 years in prison, a fine up to \$750,000, or both. Prior to the reinforcement of this code, many

crimes against elder/at-risk adults typically brought only misdemeanor convictions.

**Colorado's Reporting Statute:** Colorado is one of only a few states that urges, rather than mandates, the reporting of suspected fraud or exploitation against elder/at-risk adults. This statute covers adults who are susceptible to mistreatment, primarily those who lack the sufficient understanding to make responsible decisions regarding his or her affairs. The Colorado Reporting Statute clearly specifies that institutions or people who report in good faith will not be held liable for making a report if the charges have proved to be unfounded.

**Colorado Telemarketing No Call List:**

Telephone subscribers of standard, fax or wireless telephone services are eligible to register under the Colorado No Call List to stop over-the-phone solicitations. This law applies to phone advertising done by businesses, but exempts charitable and political organizations. Telemarketers who violate this act face stiff penalties if convicted. Coloradans registered under the Colorado No-Call List are automatically included under the National No-Call List. To register, call 1-888-249-9097 or register online by going to [www.coloradonocall.com](http://www.coloradonocall.com).

Several other laws are in effect to protect consumers under Colorado's Consumer Protection Act. Statues regarding these laws are available through the Colorado Attorney General's Office or at their Web site at [www.ago.state.co.us](http://www.ago.state.co.us).

Laws exist to protect elder/at risk adults from exploitation, but there are many other safeguards we can take to reduce our own risks or those of older family members. For more information on elder financial fraud, contact AARP ElderWatch at 1-800-222-4444 or visit their Web site at [www.aarpelderwatch.org](http://www.aarpelderwatch.org).

Additional information on Healthy Aging is available on the Colorado State University Cooperative Extension web site at [www.coopext.colostate.edu](http://www.coopext.colostate.edu).



## Nutrition Classes Offered

The CSU Cooperative Extension Office in El Paso County does offer a variety of classes for people to learn about healthy eating, nutrition, and food safety!

Programs offer:

- \*Free Class Materials*
- \*Nutrition Information*
- \*Food Demonstrations*
- \*Food Taste-Testing*

At completion of the program, participants receive a certificate and an easy to follow cookbook.

Programs are **free** to those living on limited incomes OR qualify for any of the following: Food Stamps, WIC, TANF, Free or Reduced Lunches

For more information please call  
Michael Lucero, FSNE Agent  
(719) 636-8929

In addition, a series of Healthy Families Eating Smart & Being Active classes will be held in the Extension Office starting Tuesday, May 9<sup>th</sup> and will meet every Tuesday through June 27<sup>th</sup>.

For more information please call  
Doris Todd or Mary Fortman, EFNEP Educators  
(719) 575-8941 or 636-8927



## Brown Rice Basics

From the USA Rice Federation at [www.usarice.com](http://www.usarice.com)

The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend grains as the foundation of a healthy diet. In fact, the new Dietary Guidelines and MyPyramid recommend **at least three servings of whole grains daily, or making half your grain servings whole**, with the other half coming from enriched or whole grains. Yet currently, less than 10 percent of Americans eat three servings daily and most eat an average of less than one serving per day.

**Brown Rice is a 100% whole grain food** that consumers are familiar with that can help fulfill these guidelines. This healthy grain contains the nutrient-dense bran and inner germ layer where the majority of the bioactive compounds are found as well as the starchy endosperm. It's the fiberful bran coating that gives brown rice its light tan color, nutlike flavor and chewy texture. The fiber is believed to reduce heart disease and aid laxation and may reduce the risk of certain cancers and potentially aid in weight maintenance.

In addition to the fiber, whole grains like brown rice are good sources of many vitamins and minerals as well as fermentable carbohydrates, lignans, phytoestrogens and phenolic compounds. The bioactive components of whole grains appear to work synergistically, which explains why whole-grain consumption provides health benefits beyond what would be predicted if the individual compounds were simply additive.

Like white rice, brown rice is also gluten-free and contains no trans fats or cholesterol and only a trace amount of sodium.

Red, black and purple whole grain rice varieties are increasingly popular in the US, and all offer the whole grain goodness of brown.

*There appears to be little nutritive difference between whole grain brown rice and parboiled brown rice so if time is a factor, don't feel guilty about using quicker cooking brown rice.*

*Did you know?*

*The Chinese word for "meal" translates as "eat rice".*

Here are a few tips to make brown rice a healthy part of your diet:

The shelf life of brown rice is about six months, although that time can be extended if rice is refrigerated.

Brown rice is available in short-, medium-, and long-grain. When cooked, long grain rice produces a light, dry grains that separate easily. Short-grain rice has a higher starch content and the grains stick together when cooked.

Brown rice can be cooked into a hearty and nutritious hot cereal. Make with raisins, dried fruits and a touch of cinnamon or sweeten with a teaspoon of honey and add fresh fruit. For lunch, make a pilaf like the Confetti Rice Pilaf, below, and for dinner, use brown rice as a healthful filler in meatloaf, burgers or other ground meat dishes.

### Confetti Rice Pilaf

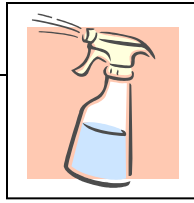
2 tsp. olive oil  
½ c. diced or julienne carrots  
½ c. diced or julienne zucchini  
½ c. diced or julienne yellow squash  
1 clove garlic, minced  
**3 c. cooked brown rice\***  
¼ tsp. ground black pepper  
¼ tsp. minced rosemary leaves or favorite herb

\*To cook brown rice: **Combine 1 c. uncooked brown rice with 2 to 2 ½ c. broth and 1 tsp. butter or margarine and bring to a boil. Stir and reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 45-50 minutes** or until rice is tender and liquid is absorbed. Fluff with fork. (In microwave, combine ingredients in 2-3 qt. microwave dish and cover. Cook on high for 5 minutes. Reduce setting to medium and cook for 30 additional minutes.

Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add carrots, zucchini, squash and garlic; cook until vegetables are tender crisp. Stir in rice, pepper and rosemary. Cook until heated through. Yield: 6 servings. **Each serving: 99 calories, 2 grams fat, 2 grams fiber, 0 mg. cholesterol**



## Prevent Poisonings While Spring Cleaning



A survey from The Soap and Detergent Association found that 60% of Americans agree that springtime is the best time to rid their homes of dirt and clutter. We need to take extra precautions however when using cleaning supplies, especially when young children are present in the home.

***Children Act Fast...So Do Poisons!*** Was the basic theme for Poison Prevention Week last month. It only takes a few minutes for children to grab and swallow something that could be harmful and the average home is full of cleaning supplies, medications and other potentially hazardous items.

Here are a few tips from the *Soap and Detergent Association newsletter on Poison Prevention* to help reduce the risk of unintentional poisoning when doing your spring cleaning.

- Schedule routine cleaning around the kids' routines, such as nap time or when they aren't at home.
- Don't be distracted when you're cleaning. Keep your attention on the tasks at hand and the children around you. Save activities like talking on a cell phone, conversing with another adult in the room or "listening" to the TV for another time.
- Don't leave children unattended around cleaning products. If you need to answer the doorbell or the phone, take the child with you.
- Don't leave cleaning buckets containing liquid unattended. Besides the obvious chance of spilling, slipping and sipping, there's the fact that toddlers are "top heavy." If they topple into a bucket, even one with a very small amount of liquid, they could drown because they can't pull themselves up.

Because children are naturally curious, the danger doesn't end when the cleaning is finished.

- Close cleaning product caps securely. Even child-resistant packaging doesn't work if the container isn't properly closed.
- Lock products up. Store them in a location that's away from children, pets and food. Install child-resistant locks on cabinets and doors.
- Keep cleaning products in their original containers. If an accident occurs, the label should provide information concerning the product's contents and advice on what immediate first-aid to perform.
- Carefully dispose of empty cleaning containers. Replace the caps, then discard in a sealed recycling bin or garbage container that's safe from exploring children and pets.



If there is a poison-related emergency, call the Poison Control Center's hotline:

**1-800-222-1222.**

Post this toll-free number, which operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, next to every phone in the house.