



Family & Consumer News

Dear Consumers:

Summer has arrived with a heavy dose of heat. School is out and many of you are taking vacations and trying to stay cool. This newsletter contains information to help you with eating right and spending money to stay within your budget.

Don't forget to call our office when you have questions about preserving your summer garden. Enjoy the summer.

Sincerely,

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CELEBRATE NATIONAL DAIRY MONTH



It's National Dairy Month and the one thing you need to know is that you never outgrow your need for milk! Dairy foods supply 75% of the calcium in the American diet; it is a nutrient that plays an important role in maintaining healthy bones and teeth.

Eating habits have a profound impact on our overall health, eating habits are formed early in life and continue throughout a lifetime. That is why it is so important for kids to learn to eat a variety of foods.

Research shows that most kids do not get enough calcium in their diets. Calcium is a nutrient that helps make bones and teeth strong and healthy. It is used to build bone mass during childhood and early adulthood. Adults too, need to get an adequate intake of calcium and vitamin D.

Calcium needs are highest during the childhood and teen years due to the fact that bones are growing fast. Unfortunately, most children and teens do not meet calcium recommendations. National nutrition surveys show that only 19% of teen girls and 52% of teen boys get the recommended amounts of calcium. In fact, teenage girls only average about 740mg. of calcium per day, well below the amount needed for their normal growth and development.

For a number of years now, nutritionists have recommended adults over fifty get 1200mg. of calcium. Bones tend to lose density as we age, so this age group's recommended daily allowance of calcium is almost as great as the teenager. Researchers now know these levels help reduce the risk of osteoporosis.

If you are worried about the calories and fat in dairy food, look again. There are so many low fat and fat free dairy

foods on the market today you have a large selection at the grocery store. To boost your calcium intake try these suggestions:

Breakfast

- Low-fat or fat-free milk over your breakfast cereal
- Have a cup of yogurt
- Add low-fat or fat-free milk instead of water to oatmeal and hot cereal

Lunch

- Add low-fat or fat-free milk instead of water to soups
- Add cheese to a sandwich

- Have a glass of milk instead of soda
- Make mini-pizzas or macaroni and cheese

Snack

- Try flavored milk, like chocolate or strawberry
- Have a frozen yogurt
- Make a “smoothie” with fruit, ice and milk
- Dip fruits and vegetables into yogurt

Dinner

- Make a salad with dark green, leafy vegetables, such as spinach

- Serve broccoli or cooked, dry beans as a side dish
- Try pudding made with low-fat milk for dessert

Recommended Amounts of Calcium Per Day

Age	Calcium
1-3 years	500mg
4-8 years	800mg
9-18 years	1,300mg
Adults (19-49 yrs.)	1,000mg
Adults 50+	1,200mg

Source: Extension and National Dairy Council

READING FOOD LABELS HELP



To help you add up the amount of calcium each day, check out the food labels on packaging. Look at the % Daily Value (DV) next to the calcium number on the food label. Add a 0 to the number and you will get the amount of calcium in milligrams. For example, the Daily Value is 15% which translates into 150mgs., 25% would translate into 250mgs.

Source: Extension

JULY IS BLUEBERRY MONTH



Blueberries are abundant during the summer; in our area we see them as early as June although nationally, July is the official blueberry month. We have a number of local u-picks, so now is the time to gather a bucket or two. Enjoy fresh blueberries in your meals and preserve some for use throughout the fall and winter. Here are a few facts to know about this wonder summer fruit.

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Great Nutrition

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for a day. They are also a good source of fiber, needed for digestion and manganese which plays a role in bone development. In recent years, research has shown that blueberries are high in antioxidants called polyphenols, which are linked to reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease and some cancers.

Selecting Berries

Whether you are picking them off the bush or selecting them in the grocery store, look for firm, plump berries with smooth skins. The National Blueberry Council will tell you size isn't an indicator of maturity, rather look for a deep purple-blue to a blue-black; a ripe blueberry will also have a silvery cast to its deep blue color. If the color looks red, it's a sign of

immaturity. Berries that look shriveled are over mature and losing their taste and nutritional value.

Storage

Blueberries store well in the refrigerator for up to ten days. Keep them covered and wash them before eating. Blueberries are a great snack or they can be added to cereal and are a great addition to a salad. Cook berries to make a sauce for topping ice cream and other desserts. They also make a great pie, cobbler or crisp.

Preservation

Blueberries can be frozen or canned for future use. Freezing is easy, but don't wash them ahead of time or you will have berries as tough as shoe leather. A simple freezing method is to spread berries

on a cookie sheet and freeze, once frozen pour into a freezer safe container. When you are ready to use them, the berries pour individually and it's easy to measure the amount you need and then wash them before preparation. For canning directions, call the Extension Office at 973-4138 and we will send you a copy of the directions for safe food preparation.

Serving Suggestions

Blueberries are a great way to get more fruit into your family's diet. Be creative and add them to breakfast, lunch and dinner.

- For breakfast, add a ½ cup to a bowl of cereal or yogurt. For a quick meal on the run, make a smoothie in your blender by mixing orange juice, yogurt, blueberries, and ice.
- At lunch, add them to a salad or make a fruit salad with peaches,

blueberries, grapes and apple.

- Add blueberries to your favorite pancake or waffle recipe. Add blueberries to your cornbread batter for a surprising twist.
- For a cool summer snack, blend berries into vanilla yogurt and freeze in popsicle cups.

Reference: Communicating Food for Health & USDA

SAVE MONEY ON FOOD COSTS



With the cost of food going up every week, saving money at the grocery store might seem impossible. Yet, food is a flexible expenditure, meaning the cost can vary from week to week and with a few consumer skills under your belt, you can reduce the amount of money you spend at the grocery store.

Plan

First and foremost, plan what you intend to purchase. Take time to plan your meals for a week by looking at sale ads in the paper and incorporate weekly specials into your meals. If chicken is on sale, use it as the main dish for several meals. Set a dollar amount you are going to spend and spend no more.

Another proven strategy that helps you stay within a budget is to make a grocery list before going to the store. Keep it handy to add items throughout the week and remember to take it with you. Stick to your list, but do stay flexible if you encounter an unadvertised special.

Check your pantry and freezer to use what you have on hand. There

is no sense in buying canned tomatoes on sale if you already have four cans sitting on the shelf.

Coupons can save you money, but only if you normally use the product. Don't spend extra money purchasing food just because you have a coupon. Use coupons for foods you normally eat. Check websites of the products you use, there are often coupons to print. Pull the coupons you will need for your weekly trip before you head to the store.

Shop

Shop once a week to reduce the temptations to buy more than you need. Since everything looks good on an empty stomach, eat before you go. It is also a good idea to leave the kids at home since they seem to have different ideas about the foods that should go into the cart. For that matter, also leave your husband, they tend to add more to the cart than needed.

Don't go down every aisle, because you will tend to pick up more items. Stick to your list and check off items as you put them into your cart to keep you on track. If your schedule permits, shop early when the store isn't crowded, you will get through faster.

Compare prices of similar foods

and pick the best buy. Seasonal foods can be a bargain and are sometimes cheaper than their frozen version. Take advantage of super sales like \$1 per can of beans or fruit.

Coupons can save you money if you are purchasing items you normally purchase. Only clip coupons for items you use, buying something you don't need is not a savings. In the store, there are sometimes point-of-purchase coupons near an item, again, if it is for something that is on your list, take advantage of the offer. You realize a bigger savings if the item is on sale and you have a coupon that applies.

Storage at Home

Be sure the grocery store is your last stop and get the food home as quickly as possible. Put perishable food in the refrigerator immediately and be sure to put fresh fruits and vegetables in the proper storage bins. Potatoes and onions can be stored in a cool, dry place.

Rotate canned goods on the shelf, putting newly purchased items in the back. This allows you to use food before the expiration date is up.

Make a habit of using the food

you buy. Pay attention to food you end up tossing. Food that ends up in the garbage is wasted money. You may need to buy less or cook fewer servings. Plan meals to use leftovers from previous days, or freeze the food for a meal the

following week. Those ripened bananas freeze well and can be used in pancakes, banana bread or smoothies.

Reference: 101+ Ways to Save Food Dollars

SUMMER FUN ON A BUDGET



With summer's arrival, you may find yourself outdoor more often, taking

weekend trips or even a vacation. Given the recent downturn in the economy, recreational activities and trips need to take a back seat when it comes to family expenses. So, the question becomes — How do you have fun without spending too much money? Get the family together and brain storm ideas that are low or no cost. Here are a few suggestions from Extension educators around the country.

- ◇ Spend time together at a park or local community festival.
- ◇ go to a state park and hike or have a family picnic.
- ◇ Take an afternoon and go swimming at a local lake, spring

or beach.

- ◇ Take advantage of free programs offered by libraries, if you are willing to drive a short distance, larger communities often have community orchestra concerts and other events.
- ◇ Check out books, music and videos for free from the library. Make a habit of everyone reading at night, it is a great way to keep up reading skills during summer vacation.
- ◇ Start a family game night. Games create a powerful bond between family members and keep the brain exercised.
- ◇ Rent or borrow movies and have a family movie night at home. Check local listings for family movies during the week.
- ◇ Cook meals as a family. Grill food and let kids help prepare salads and set up the table.

- ◇ Grow a garden as a family project. Vegetables are nutrition and very low cost. If you grow too much, be sure to take some to the neighbors and elderly friends. When kids are part of feeding the community, they feel empowered. If flowers are your preferred crop, kids can help cut and deliver small bouquets to family and friends.
- ◇ Teach children craft skills you enjoy and spend time doing these together.
- ◇ Teach children about issues that are important such as the environment or local food pantry. Volunteer as a family for the causes you believe in.

Reference: eXtension

MAKE YOUR MONEY GO FURTHER THIS SUMMER



Do we ever have enough money? Even when you get a raise and you have more money, within

a few months it may be hard to make it until the end of the month. How does that happen? Problem is, you raise your level of spending without thinking about it. Think of it as mindless spending, you spend money without being aware of what

you are doing. You think that isn't possible? What happens when you break a 20 dollar bill? The change you get back seems to vanish very quickly. A perfect example of mindless spending!

You can make an effort to be more aware of your spending and take control of your money. Keep an eye on your daily spending and write down what you buy. You may be surprised at spending habits you didn't know you had. Those afternoon coffee drinks and daily

stops at the convenience store do add up. Once you identify those leaks, rearrange the way you do things. To change the habit and save money, you might choose to pack a snack each day and treat yourself to a specialty drink only once a week.

Keep track of your monthly expenses by using a simple record keeping system. You can use a computer program or a printed version of a spread sheet. We have a few copies of our Money Calendar

at the office, which is a simple method of recording income and expenses. If you run out of money before the end of the month, it's time to take action.

Look at flexible expenses, those that change every month and find ways to cut back. Don't make drastic changes, they seldom work; small changes are more successful. For example, if eating out is a regular habit, do it less and direct the money you would have spent toward paying a bill.

Involve the whole family in the effort. Kids have an endless list of wants and can be very expensive.

Encourage everyone to come up with ideas for spending less money. Write up a plan with everyone's input and start making changes.

At least once a month sit down with family members and see how the plan is working. If things are working, add one or two more changes you will make and work as a team to accomplish your goals.

When you've made progress and money is going further than it used to, decide on a way to celebrate your accomplishments. It might be a family pizza party or

a day trip to a lake or a local beach. Remember too, celebrations can be done on budget.

By paying more attention to where your money is going and developing a plan to change spending habits you can redirect money where it needs to go. Make it a family project and you will teach your children to be good money managers.

Reference: UF Extension

REDUCE TELEVISION TIME



Television watching takes time away from other activities and opportunities to read and learn. Over the summer months, many school age children will lose a portion of the knowledge they gained during the school year and TV is a contributing factor. What can we do in our own families to decrease the amount of television they watch? Here are some simple ideas developed by the National Extension Network.

- ✓ **Get the TV out of the bedroom**—According to the Faiser Family Foundation Report, 1/3 of 2-7 year olds and 2/3 of 8-18 year olds have a TV in their bedroom. Allowing a child to have a TV in their bedroom makes it easy to watch too much TV as well as watch it unsupervised.
- ✓ **Set clear limits and be a good TV role model**—Rules

like no TV on school nights or no TV after 8pm, etc. Enforce the rules, don't waiver. Be a good media role model and set limits for the adults in the house as well.

- ✓ **Plan how much TV you and your family are going to watch**—Let children have some input into the decision, but come to an agreement on how much TV, video watching, video games and computer use will be allowed. Post your planned schedule on the refrigerator.
- ✓ **Make a list of activities you want to do instead of watching TV**—Involve the kids and come up with things you can do as a family like riding bikes or a game of ball in the backyard.
- ✓ **Keep the TV off**—We often watch TV out of habit and flip around the channels never watching a show. Turn on music for background noise and turn the TV on only when

there is a specific show you are going to watch. Turn the TV on only when the show you want to watch is on.

- ✓ **Eat together as a family without the TV**—Some families now buy TVs or TV furniture before they buy a dining room table. Meals should be a time for family interaction, not silence while you watch a show.
- ✓ **Watch with your children**—When the children do watch television, watch the show with them. Talk with them about the characters they see on TV as well as the advertising they see (a great teachable moment about persuasive advertising).

References: eXtension and National Institute on Media and the Family