

# Kansas Currents

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS

## Central Kansas Extension District

*centralkansas.ksu.edu*

**June 2018**

*District Extension  
Agents:*

**Debra Wood**

Family Resource  
Management

**Leah Robinson**

Nutrition, Food Safety  
and Health



'Like' us on Facebook at  
*facebook.com/CentralKansasDistrict*  
for the latest news and events from  
Central Kansas Extension District.

**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

K-State Research and Extension is an equal  
opportunity provider and employer.

*ksre.k-state.edu*

## Salina Office Open House

The Central Kansas District Salina office moved from the City-County building in downtown Salina to the K-State Polytechnic campus last December. We would like to invite our patrons and the community to join us Tuesday, July 10 between 2 and 5:30 p.m. for an open house to see our new space and visit with our agents. Please join us when you can for this come-and-go event at 2218 Scanlan Ave. Refreshments and door prizes will be available.

A map to our new office space is found at the URL below, and was also printed in our January and February newsletters. We are in building #13 on the map. Look for a purple K-State Research and Extension sign on the end facing the street, as well as next to the door you enter on the south side of the building. The easiest way to get here will be to turn west on Tony's Road, then south on Scanlan Avenue. There is visitor parking in front of the building that does not require a parking permit (Lot A-4). Additional parking is available during the event in Lot A-2 or A-9 without a permit. If you have questions, please call 785-309-5850.

<http://polytechnic.k-state.edu/admissions/CampusMap.pdf>

Come and bring a friend. We hope to see you there.



## Plan Now For Summer Canning

Prepare now for the upcoming canning season. It's frustrating to get fresh produce in the kitchen and then find out you will have to run to the store for new lids, or you forgot to get your pressure canner gauge checked. Make your to-do list early and be prepared when the produce is ready for picking and preserving.



### Check your canning jars for nicks and cracks.

Jars should be cleaned before canning. Make sure you have an adequate supply of canning lids. Canning lids should never be reused. The sealing compound or gasket is intended for one-time use only. Once purchased, the gasket in an unused lid should last for at least five years.

**Get your pressure canner dial gauge checked for accuracy.** Pressure canners with a dial gauge should be checked for accuracy every year. This is very important as the safety of your canned foods depend on being processed at the correct amount of pressure. It is also important to time the canning process after venting the canner. You can have your dial gauge tested for free in Central Kansas Extension District's Salina 785-309-5850 or Minneapolis 785-392-2147 offices.

### Use research-based canning recipes.

Always follow an up-to-date tested recipe from a reliable source. This is perhaps the most important step in preparing for home food preservation. Research based recipes can be found by contacting Central Kansas Extension District, the National Center for Home Food Preservation, or the USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning. Cookbooks and old family recipes are not reliable sources of tested recipes

that meet current food safety recommendations. If you want to check the safety of a recipe you preserve with, contact Leah Robinson in the Minneapolis Office 785-392-2147 for more information.

Planning ahead, checking your equipment, and purchasing what you will need, will ensure you have a safe and successful canning season.

## What's the Safest Method of Preserving Homemade Pesto?

Gardens are brimming with fresh herbs, especially basil! A tasty way of using basil is to make pesto, but is it safe to home can? NO! The



National Center for Home Food Preservation does not recommend this process, but does have researched recommendations for freezing. You can freeze prepared pesto in small freezer containers or in ice cube trays (2 tablespoons per cube). Another option is to freeze pesto in a square pan, covered with plastic wrap. When completely frozen, cut the pesto into cubes and transfer them to a resealable plastic freezer bag. Frozen pesto will store for up to six months. Thaw pesto cubes for 15 minutes at room temperature or at 30-second intervals in a microwave oven until they're soft. Mash with a fork before using the pesto in recipes.

So why can't we home can pesto? Herbs and oils are both low-acid, and together could support the growth of disease-causing *Clostridium botulinum* bacteria. Also, given the thickness of the mixture of basil, garlic, oil, pine nuts and cheese, there is a high risk that heat will not penetrate to the center of the jar as safe canning requires.

## Canning in Half-gallon Jars

Half-gallon sized canning jars are available, but they are not recommended for canning many foods. In fact, the only products recommended by the manufacturer to can include apple juice and grape juice ONLY in a boiling water bath canner.



There are no other research-tested processes for half-gallon jars. Boiling water processes for other foods for jars larger than those published with recipes (usually pints and/or quarts) cannot be extended by any formula to a larger jar.

Historical canning resources may reference the use of half-gallon jars. However, these are not currently accepted or endorsed by the USDA, Cooperative Extension, or U.S. canning jar manufacturers.

## New Food Preservation Resources

The University of Georgia has added a couple new resources to the National Center for Home Food Preservation website.

Onions are a popular vegetable to grow in the garden. Preserving them for later use can be done several ways including freezing, drying, pressure canning or using in a relish. For more information, see <http://nchfp.uga.edu/tips/summer/onions.html>.

Do you enjoy the tangy taste of oranges? Try this easier and faster recipe for Orange Marmalade. Read through the recipe. Do you

know the definition of “albedo?” It is the white pith or tissue just under the outer orange layer.

The albedo contains natural pectin so this recipe does not require added pectin. When cooking the marmalade, use the “jellying point” technique to determine when the marmalade is sufficiently cooked. The recipe is located at [http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can\\_07/orange\\_marmalade.html](http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can_07/orange_marmalade.html).

## Why is Liquid Lost During Canning?

There are three things that can cause liquid to be lost from the jar during processing.

1. Food packed into a jar raw is more likely to lose liquid as the raw food contains air that is driven from the jar during the heating/canning process. The recommendation is to heat most foods before packing into jars.
2. Rapid fluctuation of the temperature in the canner can also cause loss of liquid. When a boiling water canner comes to a rapid boil, adjust the temperature of the stove to maintain a steady boil, but not a ferocious boil. When a pressure canner reaches the designated pressure, reduce the temperature of the stove to maintain that pressure without making sudden changes in the pressure.
3. Removing jars from the canner too quickly after processing can cause stress that sends liquid out of the jar. In a water bath, remove the cover and let jars sit 5 minutes in the canner before removing; in a pressure canner, once the canner returns to 0 psi and the weight is removed, let jars sit in the canner for 10 minutes before removing.

## Pickled Three-Bean Salad

**Yield:** About 5 to 6 half pints

- 1½ cups cut and blanched green or yellow beans (prepared as below)
- 1½ cups canned, drained, red kidney beans
- 1 cup canned, drained garbanzo beans
- ½ cup peeled and thinly sliced onion (about 1 medium onion)
- ½ cup trimmed and
- thinly sliced celery (1½ medium stalks)
- ½ cup sliced green peppers (½ medium pepper)
- ½ cup white vinegar (5 percent)
- ¼ cup bottled lemon juice
- ¾ cup sugar
- ¼ cup oil
- ½ teaspoon canning or pickling salt
- 1¼ cups water

Procedure: Wash and snap off ends of fresh beans. Cut or snap into 1- to 2-inch pieces. Blanch 3 minutes and cool immediately. Rinse kidney beans with tap water and drain again. Prepare and measure all other vegetables. Combine vinegar, lemon juice, sugar and water and bring to a boil. Remove from heat. Add oil and salt and mix well. Add beans, onions, celery and green peppers to solution, and bring to a simmer. Marinate 12 to 14 hours in refrigerator, then heat entire mixture to a boil. Fill clean jars with solids. Add hot liquid, leaving a half inch of headspace.

Adjust lids and process in half-pint or pint jars in a boiling water canner for 15 minutes at an altitude of 0–1000 feet, and for 20 minutes at an altitude of 1,001–6000 feet.

## Using Natural Pectin in Fruit Pie

Some fruit pie recipes need help to get the filling just right. One solution is to add a peeled, grated, and squeezed dry Granny Smith apple which is full of natural pectin.

Apples contain high amounts of high-methoxyl pectin and makes a great gel. In combination with two tablespoons of instant tapioca, the gel should have a pudding consistency. Crush some of the other fruit and combine with the grated apple. This helps release the natural pectin within the fruit cell walls to achieve a good gel.

A tip for tapioca: Grind or crush the tapioca to minimize the “pearl” look in the filling.

## Beyond the Trash Can

Think twice before tossing that unfinished meal or imperfect food. Each day, U.S. consumers toss about one pound of food. That is equivalent to one-third of the daily calories each person eats.



Some of the healthiest foods that are wasted are fruits and vegetables and mixed fruit and vegetable dishes followed by dairy and meat and mixed-meat dishes.

Food waste happens in many other points of the food chain besides at home. When foods are wasted, losses are also felt in the environment, farmers time, land and other resources used to grow and raise food.





## Elder Abuse Awareness Month: How Can Elder Abuse be Prevented?

The risk of death for elders who have been abused is 300 times greater than those who have not been victims of abuse. For that reason, prevention of elder abuse is critical. If you are able to identify and spot risk factors and warning signs, you'll be more likely to identify and prevent abuse. Here are some things you should keep in mind:

- If you are a caregiver, ask for help when you need a break.
- Remain involved in your loved one's care at hospitals, long-term care or rehabilitation facilities, adult day services, and at home.
- Be mindful of sudden or unexpected changes in mood, appearance, and health — especially if your loved one is experiencing a decline in mental ability (such as dementia).
- Educate your loved ones on common or local scams and schemes, and instruct them what to do if they feel uncomfortable on a strange phone call or receive an unusual email.



## What are the Warning Signs of Abuse?

The warning signs of abuse can be different for individuals depending on the type, frequency, and magnitude of abuse. Some common signs that someone is being abused are as follows:

**Physical.** Bruises (especially those in the shape of certain objects or fingers, or are of different colors), welts, pressure marks, unexplained broken bones, the use of restraints, improper use of medications, untreated bedsores, cuts, or burns.

**Emotional or Psychological.** Unexplained withdrawal from normal activities, unusual depression, unusual nervousness or fearful behavior, frequent arguments, hesitation in speaking openly in the presence of caretakers or others, or changes in sleep patterns or appetite.

**Sexual.** Bruising or unexplained bleeding near genitalia, unexplained sexually transmitted infections (STIs), torn or stained underwear, or unexplained depression.

**Neglect.** Unexplained or extreme weight loss, poor hygiene, malnutrition or dehydration, unsanitary or unsafe living conditions, untreated medical issues, breakdown of the skin, or lack of needed medical aids (walker, hearing aids, or glasses, for example).

**Abandonment.** Unexpected absence of a caregiver, frailty, malnourishment or dehydration, poor hygiene, or unexplained depression or loneliness.

**Financial/Exploitation.** Sudden change in financial situation, late or unpaid bills, unusual purchases, withdrawals, or transfers, suspicious changes in bank accounts, wills, or powers of attorney, lack of knowledge of financial status, new “best friends,” documents signed under duress, unexplained disappearance of valuables or money, or anxiety about personal finances.

Even though the warning signs can be different for everyone, it is best to listen to your instincts. If you notice changes in personality, behavior, or health, you should report it.

## Want to Lower Your Utility Bills?

By changing the way you consume energy, you can decrease your utility bills and reduce your carbon footprint. Here are 10 ways you can save



energy and money in your home and on the go:

### 1. Replace your light bulbs with energy efficient ones.

One of the easiest ways to reduce your energy use is switching to light emitting diode bulbs, commonly known as LED lights. According to a recent Consumer Federation of America cost analysis, switching at least 20 lights to LED bulbs could save you \$1,000 or more in a decade.

### 2. Program your thermostat.

If you have a thermostat in your home, use it to control the temperature and save money. You can save more than \$100 each year by programming your thermostat to air condition your home only when you need to.

### 3. Do you really need all that water?

Reduce your water usage by installing low-pressure water faucets. You can replace your kitchen and bathroom sink faucets along with your shower head. If you have a leaky faucet, fix it as soon as possible. Otherwise, you'll continue to pay for every drop of water wasted if water is one of your utilities bills. In addition to reducing your water bill, using less water will help preserve water in the environment.

### 4. Change your air filters.

The slightest bit of lint in your air filter reduces your energy efficiency. Replace your furnace, heat pump and AC filters regularly to prevent wasting energy or damage to your equipment. Having a clean air filter also helps quality control the air you breathe.

### 5. Be a star with Energy Star.

When you need new appliances, look for items that have the Energy Star label which indicates that the product meets certain energy efficiency guidelines that will reduce your utility bills. For example, an Energy Star washing machine uses 45 percent less water than regular washers and 25 percent less energy. Now that's good saving!

### 6. Don't go above the speed limit.

Don't speed, for your safety and fuel economy. Did you know most cars begin to lose fuel economy after reaching 50 mph? This means the more you speed, the more gas you burn. Try to drive within speed limits. Slamming on your breaks and accelerating quickly also uses a lot of gas, so try your best to drive carefully.

### 7. Walk, bike, carpool or use public transportation when you can.

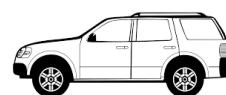
The most efficient way to save money and energy with your car is by not using it. Cars emit carbon monoxide, which contributes to global warming. In addition, driving a lot requires a lot of gas. Save money on gas and reduce your carbon footprint by limiting the amount of time you spend on the road.

### 8. Combine your trips.

Another way to limit the amount you drive is combining your errands into as few trips as possible. Need to buy groceries, hit the gym and buy a new light bulb? Go to a plaza that has the grocery store and a gym. This will save you time, energy, gas and car mileage.

### 9. Keep your tires in good condition.

Believe it or not, under-inflated tires reduce your car's performance and require more gas. Keeping your tires properly inflated can improve your gas mileage. Keep a gauge in your car so you can check your tire pressure if things start to feel a little odd.



## **10. Get your car tuned up regularly.**

Get regular tune-ups and oil changes to keep your car healthy and running efficiently. Changing your oil and replacing the oil filter will improve fuel economy. Keeping your car tuned up will save money by preventing any major, unexpected issues with your car. It's better to spend about \$35 for regular oil changes than to be hit with a major \$1,000 repair because your engine knocked.



## **Did You Receive a Letter from Social Security?**

Every May and June the Social Security Administration mails its annual letters to individuals who may be eligible for, but not enrolled in, the Part D Low Income Subsidy (LIS, or 'extra help' program) and Medicare Savings Programs (MSP). If you receive one of these letters and have questions, or think you may be eligible and would like assistance with the application, give Deb a call at the extension office (785-309-5850 in Salina or 785-392-2147 in Minneapolis).

The Medicare Part D Extra Help program helps pay your Part D drug plan premium and saves you money on medications at the pharmacy. If you qualify for extra help, you will pay no more than \$8.25 for your prescriptions for each drug your plan covers.

The Medicare Savings Program pays your Part B premium each month. It also may help pay for other costs in Medicare, such as your Part B deductible and co-pays at the doctor's office. If you received a letter it is because you are enrolled in Medicare and, based on your monthly Social Security benefit, you appear to have an income that qualifies you for these programs. Getting this letter does not mean

you automatically qualify for these programs. You still need to fill out an application for each program.

Social Security does not have access to information about your other income and resources, such as any pension or retirement account you may have. They also do not know what assets (things you own) you have. If you apply for Extra Help or MSP, you will be asked for more information about your overall finances and must meet income and asset requirements to be approved.

## **Spring Cleaning for Your Freezer**

If you freeze garden produce in the summer and fall, spring is a great time to clean out your freezer to get ready to store the upcoming season's harvest. If you have a manual-defrost freezer, you must defrost it at least once a year, or when there is more than a quarter inch of frost over a large area of the freezer surface. A frost-free freezer does not need defrosting, but it still should be cleaned once a year or more often if dirt or food residues are visible. To clean, turn off the power source( unplug), empty the freezer and wipe it with a cleaning solution of one tablespoon of baking soda per quart of water. Rinse it with a cloth dipped in clean water, towel it dry and replace the food. Use a refrigerator or freezer thermometer, and check it often to ensure that the freezer temperature stays at or below zero degrees F. Foods lose quality much more quickly at higher temperatures.



Frozen fruits and vegetables are best when used within eight to 12 months of storage at zero degrees F. After these times, the foods should be safe, though lower in quality.

**Central Kansas Extension District**

**Salina Office**

K-State Polytechnic  
2218 Scanlan Ave  
Salina, KS 67401-8196

Address Service Requested

The enclosed material is for your information. If we can be of further assistance, feel free to call or drop by the Extension Office.

Sincerely,



**Debra Wood**  
District Extension Agent  
Family Resource Management  
dwood@ksu.edu

**Salina Office**  
K-State Polytechnic  
2218 Scanlan Ave.  
Salina, KS 67401-8196  
785-309-5850  
Fax: 785-309-5851



**Leah Robinson**  
District Extension Agent  
Nutrition, Food Safety and Health  
lmrobins@ksu.edu

**Minneapolis Office**  
Courthouse  
307 N. Concord, Suite 190  
Minneapolis, KS 67467-2140  
785-392-2147  
Fax: 785-392-3605