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Kansas Currents

K-State Research and Extension News

*Knowledge
for Life*

**Central Kansas
Extension District**

District Extension Agents:

Lisa Newman
Family Development

Debra Wood
Family Resource Management

Leah Robinson
Nutrition, Food Safety & Health



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MAY 2014

Food Preservation Workshop

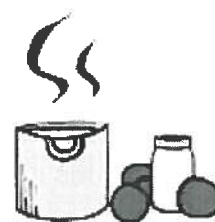
Date: Tuesday, June 24

Time: Noon – 4 p.m.

Place: Christ the King Lutheran Church
111 W. Magnolia Rd., Salina

Cost: \$15 per person

Pre-registration and payment due: June 17



It's time for another Food Preservation Workshop this summer! The workshop is an excellent learning opportunity for those interested in canning. It is a hands-on class that will focus on the basics of pressure canning. Topics of discussion will include: boiling water (water bath) and pressure canning methods, plus freezing and drying food preservation. All participants will have the opportunity to can and take home an item.

Registrations will be accepted in the Salina extension office, 785-309-5850. Class size is limited and often fills quickly. To reserve your seat, payment must be received in the Salina office by June 17. For more information, contact Leah Robinson, 785-392-2147.

Older Americans Month

Older Americans Month 2014 – "Safe Today. Healthy Tomorrow." Join in recognizing older adults for their contributions and sacrifices by helping them stay safe and active as they age.



Regular exercise can help protect the body from injuries. During Older Americans Month and throughout the year, help the older Americans in your life prevent falls and increase their strength and mobility – attend a yoga, water aerobics, or dance class together.

Garden Tour Coming Up

The Central Kansas District Extension Master Gardeners will hold the 2014 garden tour, "Garden Retreats", in Salina, Kansas on Sunday, June 1, 2014 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. This year's tour features another wonderful set of 6 amazing gardens that will have something everyone will enjoy. Also, don't miss the special features included on this year's tour including composting worms, inspiring artwork, bee boxes, Iron Man Joe's custom metal work and more. Tickets are \$8 in advance or \$10 at the gardens. Tickets can be purchased from any Extension Master Gardener, the K-State Extension Office, Dillons stores of Salina, Ace Hardware, Waters True Value/Earth Care, and Stutzman's Greenhouse. Children ten years & under are free.

Anyone interested in food preservation should stop by the Reynolds garden at 825 S. Santa Fe from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. to visit with Leah Robinson, the Central Kansas District Family & Consumer Science agent. Leah will be available to answer food preservation questions as well as test your pressure canner for proper functioning for this year's use. Bring the lid, gauge, or full unit for a safety inspection if you have canning to do this summer.

Drink Milk to Save Your Knees

Consuming milk has always been linked to better bone health. Now there's more evidence showing how milk can possibly slow osteoarthritis in women's knees.



Researchers at Brigham & Women's Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts found that drinking an eight-ounce glass of low-fat or fat-free milk per day can minimize the progression of joint space width loss. The joint space width is between the medial femur and tibia of the knee. Other factors adjusted for in this research included baseline disease severity, body mass index, dietary intake and other possible factors.

It is estimated that 27 million people in the United States have osteoarthritis.

Know Your Credit

Credit is a tool used by millions of Americans to accomplish their short- and long-term goals. When managed successfully, a home mortgage, car or student loan, and credit card account can bring many benefits, such as home ownership, a college education, or landing the job of your dreams. Poor management of credit can result in higher costs, lost opportunities, and added stress.

Come learn why managing one's credit is an important life skill; what a credit score and a credit report are, and how to obtain each; and the 5 factors that affect one's credit score. Techniques will be presented to manage financial behaviors to positively impact one's credit report and score.

Date: Friday, June 6

Time: 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Place: Golden Wheel Senior Center

114 South Concord Street, Minneapolis

Date: Tuesday, June 10

Time: 12:10-1 p.m.

Place: Room 109, City-County Building

300 W. Ash, Salina

What Makes a Family Strong?

Although every family is unique, researchers agree on some traits of strong families.

Strong families:

- Communicate honestly, openly and clearly.
- Listen carefully, accept and appreciate what others say and avoid interrupting.
- Work together to solve problems.
- Adapt to change and loss.
- Help members view the world positively.
- Spend time together by choice, sharing meaningful rituals and traditions and enjoying activities and events together.
- Balance togetherness with individual activities.
- Encourage every member's growth, self-esteem and mental health.

Storing and Using Rhubarb



Rhubarb season is almost here!
Here's some tips on storing rhubarb.

- Remove and discard the leaves.
- Stored unwashed in plastic bags in the refrigerator. Use within one week.
- To use, wash, remove blemishes, and trim the ends. Slice stalks into pieces. If needed, peel the outer layer if it is tough and stringy.
- Freeze cleaned and cut pieces for up to 6 months.

Getting Ready for Retirement: Retirement Timetable

Thinking ahead to retirement, it's important to keep some critical ages in mind:

55: You can retire early. If you retire, quit or are fired from your job beginning in the year you turn 55, you might be able to withdraw from tax-deferred savings plans without owing a 10 percent tax penalty, as long as you qualify for one of the exceptions spelled out in the federal tax code. You may also be eligible for pension benefits from some employer plans if you have enough years of service.

59½: You can generally withdraw money from your personal tax-deferred savings plans (IRAs, annuities) and from your employer-sponsored savings plans if you've retired from the job without owing a 10 percent tax penalty.

60: You can receive Social Security benefits if you are a widow or widower.

62: You may be eligible for full pension benefits from your employer, depending on the plan. You can begin to receive reduced Social Security benefits if you choose. Your Social Security benefits will increase, however, with every year you wait to collect them.

65: You can receive full pension benefits from most employers, as well as full Social Security benefits if you were born in 1937 or earlier. If you are a widow or widower, you can receive full Social Security benefits if you were born before January 2, 1940. If you were born later than 1937, when you reach what's called full retirement age and are eligible for full benefits depends on the year of your birth. For those born between 1938 and 1942, it's during the year after you turn 65. For those born between 1943 and 1954, it's 66. For those born between 1955 and 1960, it increases annually from 66 and 2 months to 67. If you were born in 1961 or later, your full retirement age is 67. At 65, you normally also qualify for Medicare benefits.

70: You should begin to collect your Social Security benefits if you haven't already, because your benefit has reached its maximum.

70½: You must begin withdrawals from your traditional IRAs, but not from Roth IRAs. You must also begin withdrawals from employee-sponsored retirement plans, such as a 401(k), unless you're still working.

Smart Tip: Allow Three-Months Lag Time When Applying for Social Security

The Social Security Administration (SSA) recommends applying for retirement benefits three months before you want your benefits to begin. You can get an estimate of your future benefits at any time at <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount/>. For more information, see the SSA's Web page, 'How should I prepare for retirement?' at <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/retirement/>.

Listen Attentively

Sometimes, people have to consciously practice how to communicate with another person with whom they want to build or maintain a good relationship. Listening is often more difficult than talking. What are some ways to truly listen to another person who is speaking? Focus on that person by:

- a) Maintaining eye contact in a manner that is culturally appropriate for you;
- b) leaning forward;
- c) making non-verbal gestures like nodding your head;
- d) giving simple and positive responses;
- e) not interrupting even when you disagree or have something to share; and
- f) showing positive expressions, such as reaching out and gently touching the other person on the arm in a non-invasive, comfortable and supportive way.



The second part to listening is making sure you understand the message correctly. Simply say to the other person, "Now, let me tell you what I heard you saying, and the feelings you seemed to be expressing. Am I correct?" If not, the speaker can repeat the message with different words until the listener has correctly understood the message and the feelings attached to the message. This is not easy to do if you disagree with the message you heard. It takes patience and determination to hold your opinion until you reverse roles and have the opportunity to be heard.

Retrieved and adapted from *PeopleTALK: Enhancing Your Relationships* fact sheet

Get a Head Start on The Summer Food Preservation Season



Spring is in full swing and eventually there will be a summer bounty of all your favorite salsa or dill pickles this summer. Take advantage of this slower time and to get ready for summer canning season.

The first item on your to-do list should be to enjoy your last summer's produce, including frozen and canned items. Check the seals prior to consuming. It is important to use up your home canned foods

within a year of preserving. Enjoy those delicious tomatoes you preserved last year!

Your next plan should be to examine your equipment and make sure it is safe for use this year, starting with your canners. Boiling water canners are used for canning all high acid foods like fruits, pickles, jellies/jams and acidified tomatoes. There isn't maintenance needed on this unit, but make sure you have all of the pieces of equipment; the canner, lid and rack. Your pressure canner is the only safe way to can low-acid foods like vegetables, meats, fish and poultry. Check the rubber gaskets for flexibility; it shouldn't be brittle or cracked. If you have a dial gauge, it will need to be checked for accuracy. Central Kansas Extension District offices in Salina & Minneapolis can check your dial gauge's accuracy.

Another key piece of canning equipment is jars and bands. Examine your jars for any chips or nicks along the rim. Any damage to the glass may cause your jars to either break during processing or cause seal failures. Replace bands that are rusty or distorted from use or storage. Remember to replace your lids each year. You cannot reuse lids after use.

A final step in getting ready for food preservation season is to check your resources to make sure you are using up-to-date and research-based resources. The [National Center for Home Food Preservation](http://nchfp.uga.edu/) (<http://nchfp.uga.edu/>) and your local extension offices have accurate recipes and instructions. Double check your processing times and methods for the foods you wish to preserve with recipes from these trusted sources. Maybe you would like to try to preserve something new this year. If so, read the current recommendations to make sure you have the necessary ingredients and supplies. Also, it's important to make sure you adjust for altitude. Most of our surrounding areas are above 1,000 ft. elevation. Many recipes are originally wrote for 1,000 ft. Make sure your canning recipe is appropriate for altitudes above 1,000 ft.

Home food preservation is a wonderful way to preserve the local bounty to enjoy during the cold, winter months. If you are an experienced or novice food preserver, you can get a head start on your summer food preservation by verifying your resources and checking your equipment.

Planning for Your Digital Afterlife

Many of us spend a good part of our days online. We email our grandkids, catch up with old friends on social media, pay bills—even watch movies. According to a report from Microsoft, the typical web user now has 25 different online accounts.

But what happens when we die? Though it's hard to think about, what happens if we *don't* think about it may be worse. The legal status of our “digital assets” is still being worked through in the court system. For now, the fate of online property is uncertain. Unless you make specific plans for your digital assets—just like you should your physical assets—they could be mismanaged, or disappear altogether.

Steps to Protect

Here are some ideas on how to protect your digital afterlife.



1. Make a complete inventory of your online accounts. Write down the names and URLs for all websites that you visit every day, month or year that require you to login. Then write down your user name and password for each of those sites.

Make sure to keep this private information secure. Otherwise, you could fall victim to an identity thief, or another online criminal. Don't include it in the will, since that's a public document.

2. Back up your financial data. The information that's most crucial to your heirs may be the hardest for them to access. If you can, make sure to let your financial institutions know who your beneficiaries are. Often, you can provide that information via their website. You also may want to get in the habit of downloading or printing out your account statements every month, or quarter. That way, you've got a hard copy, which can provide information if your online accounts prove difficult to access.

3. Check out your email and social media accounts. Remember all that legal fine print you had to agree to before opening an email or social media account? Yes, lots of us sign off without actually reading it. That fine print is your online service provider's Terms of

Service, or TOS. It's time to read the TOS for your various accounts now, since they likely contain information about what happens to your accounts when you die.

Service providers vary in their TOS with regards to an account holder's death. Some email providers, like Yahoo!, consider your account terminated upon your death. But Google recently allowed account holders to name an “Inactive Account Manager” and name what you want to happen to your Gmail account and other Google data when you pass. And social media network Facebook allows a deceased account holder's page to become a memorial site on which family and friends can share memories of their loved one.

4. Consider your music and e-books. When you buy a paperback book, or a music CD, you own those items as your personal property. However, when you download music from iTunes, or buy an e-book for your e-reader (like a Kindle), you *don't* actually own the item. Instead, you're buying a license to use the download during your lifetime. So you may not be able to transfer the rights to those materials to your heirs. As with your email and social media, make sure to read the TOS of the site from which you purchased the digital media to find out what's allowed.

Planning as an Act of Love

Your **digital assets** have sentimental, historical and financial value. And just as planning for how to distribute your physical assets after you're gone is an act of love for the people you'll leave behind, so is planning for the fate of your digital assets.

Because of the uncertain legal status of digital assets, you may want to consult a lawyer to see what else might be needed to make sure your assets are protected. Keep in mind that the laws governing online property differ based on the state in which you live, and will no doubt keep evolving over time.

Source: Medicare Made Clear

Play is Beneficial for Everyone

In today's busy world, sometimes it can be hard to find time to play. I encourage you to carve out time for fun activities. Playing and having fun with friends and family can help our stress levels and make us feel more connected to our loved ones.

Parents, make time each day to play with your child:

- Sit down and play a board game
- Sing in the car
- Paint or draw together
- Run and jump
- Read a book out loud



Follow your child's lead in choosing what to play.

Children are natural players and know it is most fun to do "what feels good." Pat Tanner Nelson, Ed.D., with the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension offers these tips for following your child's lead:

- Start with what your child is good at and help her build other strengths as you play. If your child is a good reader but needs help drawing, read a story with her and then draw a picture about the story together.
- Praise her for her efforts. Remember, this is about fun, not being perfect. Perhaps, start by drawing a silly picture so that she knows it is OK to make mistakes.
- The more fun you make learning, the more likely your child is to learn.

What Makes Yogurt "Greek"?



Sales of Greek yogurt have grown from 4 percent in 2008 to 44 percent today. But what is Greek yogurt?

There is no standard of identity defined by the Food and Drug Administration. Simply put, it is standard yogurt made with the cultures *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and *Streptococcus thermophiles* and then thickened either by straining off the liquid whey or by adding other ingredients.

These manufacturing differences result in nutritional differences in sugars, fat, sodium and total calories. Some Greek yogurt brands are likened to liquid candy.

Greek yogurt is thick and can be used as a substitute for mayonnaise, cream or sour cream. The high acid content makes it a good substitute for buttermilk. It also works well in marinades and dips as well as a leavening boost to quick breads or muffins.

Greek Frozen Yogurt

Frozen yogurt has a healthy halo with the live and active cultures and lower fat content.

Frozen Greek Yogurt is now available in the freezer as bars and in cartons. Some flavors include fruits but also indulgent Greek-style flavors such as baklava.

Frozen Greek yogurt is higher in protein than traditional frozen yogurt and ice cream, giving consumers a bit healthier choice.

Frozen yogurt sales have increased 74.2 percent from 2011 -2013.

Tis the Season: Be on the Lookout for Brown Recluse Spiders

Kansas State University researchers provide 10 facts about the well-publicized spiders.



1. Brown recluse spiders are mostly only active from March through October, so trying to control them from October through March is generally not necessary or useful.
2. They are found outdoors in Kansas and other Midwestern states, as well as within structures. They tend to thrive in the same environments that humans do. They enter structures either by crawling in from the outside or are brought in on furniture and boxes from other infested structures.
3. They readily feed on prey that is dead, so are attracted to recently killed insects. However, they can and will also attack live prey.

4. Brown recluses build small, irregular webs in out-of-the-way places but do not use these to capture prey. They tend to hide in the dark and move around at night searching for prey.
5. A brown recluse is tiny when it first emerges from the egg case and takes several molts to reach adulthood, 6-12 months. Remember, they are only active from March to October so this may take one to two years. Then they may live 2-3 years as adults. Females can produce 2-5 egg cases during this time (two or three is most common) and each may contain 20-50 spiderlings.
6. Brown recluse spiders are venomous but bites do not always result in large, necrotic lesions where surrounding tissue dies. Often, the bite goes unnoticed and only results in a pimple-like swelling. However, some people develop a necrotic wound (with blood and pus) which is slow to heal, with the potential for a secondary infection. If you know you've been bitten, catch the spider if safely possible, and show it to medical personnel for clear identification.
7. Sticky traps for spiders and other insects, available at most hardware and garden stores, work well to trap brown recluse spiders. They may not significantly reduce the numbers, but definitely help, and are a great way to detect and monitor the spider populations.
8. Insecticides labeled to control brown recluse spiders kill the spiders, but must be sprayed directly on them, or the spider needs to come into direct contact with the treated area while it is still damp. Otherwise, little control is achieved.
9. Brown recluse spiders are better controlled with insecticides on non-carpeted surfaces.
10. Preventative measures like sealing cracks in foundations and walls, clearing clutter in and around the home, moving woodpiles away from the house, placing sticky traps in low traffic areas and spraying pesticides can help eliminate brown recluse populations within the home.

More information and photos of brown recluse spiders are available in a K-State Research and Extension publication online at:
<http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/bookstore/Item.aspx?catId=526&pubId=17481>.

Zapping Salmonella in Eggs



Eating raw eggs has a high risk of consuming *Salmonella* bacteria. Cooking eggs properly can eliminate this risk.

Some grocery stores sell pasteurized shell eggs. These eggs are pasteurized by hot-water-immersion process. This method can change raw egg qualities making them unsatisfactory for some cooking uses.

The Agricultural Research Service has developed a new two-phase pasteurization process using radio frequency (RF) waves and a hot water bath.

The RF process sends radio waves through the rotating egg while being sprayed with cool water to prevent over-heating. The RF heating warms the egg from inside out to heat the yolk more than the white.

A hot-water bath maintains the yolk heat while heating the white to complete the pasteurization without overheating.

The process takes 20 minutes, which is three times faster than current methods. It kills 99.999 percent of *Salmonella*.



CALENDAR

MAY

12 New to Medicare Workshop, Salina Public Library, Prescott room, 6:30-8 p.m.

JUNE

1 Garden Tour, Salina, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

6 Know Your Credit, Golden Wheel, Minneapolis, 10:30-11:30 am

10 Know Your Credit, Rm 109, Salina, 12:10-1 pm

17 Food Preservation Registration & Money DUE

24 Food Preservation Workshop, 111 W. Magnolia Rd., Salina Noon-4 pm