

SEPTEMBER 2014



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Disaster Preparedness Challenge

With National Preparedness Month in September, K-State Research & Extension invites you to participate in our Prepare Kansas Challenge. Throughout the month of September, complete activities to prepare your home or workplace ahead of a disaster.



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for the latest news and
events from Central Kansas
Extension District.

Many people have installed smoke detectors, fire alarms, and dead bolt locks in their homes and stocked extra food in the pantry. To be prepared, you should also have a household inventory, check your insurance coverage, and prepare a grab-and-go box. More information on how to prepare, as well as what to do after a disaster can be found in our fact sheet *Get Financially Prepared: Take Steps Ahead of Disaster* at <http://bit.ly/FinanciallyPrepared>.

Challenge activities will be announced each week via email and an extension blog. You will record your efforts online. **Sign up by September 6 at <http://bit.ly/PrepareKS>.**

Stop by the extension office in Salina or Minneapolis to pick up a Kansas Insurance Department Household Inventory booklet to help complete the activity for week 1 of the challenge. Participants will receive weekly emails from PrepareKS. For additional tips, follow Deb on Twitter at @debawood, and check our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/CentralKansasDistrict>.

Celebrate Family Day

Whether you're cooking a gourmet meal, ordering food from your favorite take-out place or eating on the go, rest assured that what your kids really want during dinnertime is YOU! Family meals are the perfect time to talk to your kids and to listen to what's on their mind.

Family Day is Monday, September 22. (Family Day is a national movement that informs parents that the engagement fostered during frequent family dinners is an effective tool to help keep America's kids substance free.)

9 Facets of Parental Engagement

1. Be there: Get involved in your children's lives and activities.
2. Open the lines of communication and keep them wide open.
3. Set a good example: Actions are more persuasive than words.
4. Set rules and expect your children to follow them.
5. Monitor your children's whereabouts.
6. Maintain family rituals such as eating dinner together.
7. Incorporate religious and spiritual practices into family life.
8. Get Dad engaged—and keep him engaged.
9. Engage the larger family of your children's friends, teachers, classmates, neighbors, and community.

<http://casafamilyday.org/familyday/>

K-State Family Day



K-State Family Day is a special tradition. The 2014 event will celebrate 86 years of welcoming families to the campus for a day of activities designed around family, togetherness, and pride. Participants enjoy a variety of activities designed to showcase the history, tradition, and special connection between K-State, the students, and their families.

This year Family Day will be held on Saturday, September 27. Check out the website for more information. <http://www.k-state.edu/familyday/>

Kansas State Fair - "Get on a Stick"

Dates: September 5 – 14

From animals to agriculture, crafts to cowboys, the Kansas State Fair has something for everyone. Stop by the K-State Research and Extension booth and say hello.

New to Medicare Workshop

Come learn the basics of Medicare, including eligibility, how and when to apply, what is covered by the various parts, and how to fill the gaps. Programs available to assist low income individuals will also be discussed. Anyone interested in learning more about the Medicare maze would benefit from the program, particularly those who are nearing age 65 or who help aging parents with insurance and financial matters.

Date: September 29

Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Place: K-State Salina College Center
Conference Room
2310 Centennial Rd., Salina, KS

Advance registration is requested, but not required, to help with room setup and to ensure we have sufficient materials available. Register by calling 785-309-5850 or by e-mailing dwood@ksu.edu.

Medicare Plan Finder and Part D

This class will help those new to Medicare select a prescription drug plan. Bring your Medicare card and a list of medications, including dosage and frequency. Participants will enter their medications into the Medicare Plan Finder and learn how to evaluate the options available to select the plan that best suits their needs.

Date: Monday, November 3

Time: 10 a.m. - noon

Place: Salina Public Library computer lab,
301 W. Elm, Salina, KS

Space is limited and advance registration required. Call 785-309-5850 to reserve your space.

Start School Mornings Smoothly

Has your family found a dependable routine for getting up and getting around in the mornings? If your mornings are still a bit hectic, try out some of these ideas:

Make lunches, pack school bags, set out clothes, and set the breakfast table the night before.

Anything you and your children can do the night before will help the morning activities move along more efficiently.

Wake up before your children so you are showered, dressed, and ready to go when they wake. For those of you early birds, this might be a great plan to help the morning congestion. The nice thing about getting up early and being ready before the children is that you can then tackle those last minute issues that tend to surface.

Limit conflict in the bathroom by staggering wake-up times. Pre-teens and teens, who take more time showering and grooming, should get up earlier. Younger children can bathe the night before. Keep in mind children generally require more hours of sleep than adults. The Mayo Clinic recommends that school age children get 9-11 hours of sleep per night.

Buy neat, comfortable clothing that young children can manage. Giving children some choice regarding clothing will reduce some resistance to dressing. Allowing children to help choose their outfit the night before is another time saver.

Don't turn on the television or permit playing unless children are completely ready for school. Limiting morning screen time is a good idea. Those precious morning moments are good opportunities to connect with your children.

Don't skip breakfast. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. A hungry child will be thinking about lunch – not about math or science. A healthy breakfast refuels your body and jump-starts your day.

Finally, kiss your children goodbye and wish them a good day. This gives your children a positive start to their day and is particularly helpful if you have had “one of those mornings.”

Keep Your Records Safe in Case Disaster Strikes

Some natural disasters are more common in the summer. But major events like hurricanes, tornadoes and fires can strike any time. The IRS offers these steps to help make your recovery easier by keeping your tax and financial records safe.

Backup Records Electronically. Many people receive bank statements by email. This is a good way to secure your records. You can also scan tax records and insurance policies onto an electronic format. You can use an external hard drive, CD or DVD to store important records. Be sure you back up your files and keep them in a safe place. If a disaster strikes your home, it may also affect a wide area. If that happens you may not be able to retrieve your records.

Document Valuables. Take photos or videos of the contents of your home or business. These visual records can help you prove the value of your lost items. They may help with insurance claims or casualty loss deductions on your tax return. You should store them with a friend or relative who lives out of the area.

Update Emergency Plans. Review your emergency plans every year. Update them when your situation changes. Make sure you have a way to get severe weather information. Have a plan for what to do if threatening weather approaches.

Get Copies of Tax Return. Visit [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov) to get Form 4506, Request for Copy of Tax Return, to replace lost or destroyed tax returns. If you fall victim to a disaster, you can call the IRS disaster hotline at 866-562-5227 for special help with disaster-related tax issues.

Does Peppermint Help Ease Pain in Gut?

Start steeping the peppermint tea. According to recent research, peppermint really could help ease the abdominal pain associated with irritable bowel syndrome, or IBS.

According to the International Foundation for Functional Gastrointestinal Disorders, IBS affects at least 1 in 10 people. Although they vary widely, symptoms commonly include abdominal pain and cramping, bloating, gas, diarrhea or constipation (or, surprisingly, both), and mucus in the stool. It's not a disease, but a "functional disorder," meaning the bowel simply doesn't function like it should.

IBS is a chronic condition. Some people have mild symptoms and never see a doctor about them; others experience a great deal of discomfort. Fortunately, IBS doesn't appear to damage the intestines or increase the risk of cancer or other disease.

Peppermint oil has been available in capsule and liquid form for years, and advocates of alternative medicine have sworn by its ability to relieve indigestion caused by irritable bowel syndrome. Now, scientists believe they have uncovered how it works.

A study published in the international journal *Pain*, was conducted by researchers in Australia's University of Adelaide Nerve-Gut Research Laboratory. They found that a compound in peppermint called icilin activates an "anti-pain" channel in the colon, soothing pain caused by inflammation that can be triggered by some foods, such as mustard or chili.

For most adults, peppermint oil appears to be safe in small doses. Heartburn has been identified as a potential side effect.

Whether or not you want to try peppermint, you should know there are other steps you can take for relief, too. The National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse offers other recommendations like avoiding foods that cause trigger symptoms.

These often include:

- Fatty foods, such as french fries
- Milk products, such as cheese or ice cream
- Chocolate
- Alcohol
- Caffeinated drinks, such as coffee and some soft drinks.
- Carbonated drinks, such as soda.

In addition, other foods — those high in fiber — could ease symptoms. They include fruits such as apples and peaches; vegetables such as cabbage, peas, broccoli and carrots; beans such as kidney or lima beans; and whole-grain breads and cereals. Gradually increase the amount of high-fiber foods you eat to avoid excessive gas and bloating.

Eating smaller meals also may help.



Kids with Food Allergies: It's No Joke

On top of the pressures of school expectations, kids with food allergies may also experience bullying from classmates.

A study conducted in 2011 with 251 families showed that more than one-third of the kids aged 8-17 were bullied mainly because they had a food allergy. In a recent follow-up study, these same families were asked the same questions as in the first study.

Bullying continued at a similar rate as in the first study. Any improvement was due to parental intervention. This included working with school personnel. In some cases, talking to the parents of the child doing the bullying helped ease the situation.

Parents must be proactive with their medical physician and with school personnel to help resolve bullying problems.

Preserve Home-Canned Salsa Safely

Don't want to throw out extra tomatoes? Making salsa is a great way to preserve them! But it is important to follow the guidelines for keeping your home-canned salsa safe.

Only use tested recipes when making home-canned salsa. A tested recipe assures there is enough acidity for safe processing in a boiling water bath. These resources offer tested recipes and tips for canning tomato products safely:

- Preserving Tomatoes, K-State Research and Extension publication:
<http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/bookstore/pubs/MF1185.pdf>
- The National Center for Home Food Preservation website offers recipes for traditional salsas as well as more unusual combinations, like Mango Salsa, Peach Apple Salsa, Spicy Cranberry Salsa, Spicy Jicama Relish and Tomatillo Green Salsa. These recipes can be found at
http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can_salsa.html.

If you are using a family recipe that has not been tested, the recommendation for safe preservation is freezing.

When using a tested recipe, there are some things you can change and some things you cannot change.

Never change the amount of acid in a salsa recipe. Acid in salsas helps to preserve them. It usually comes in the form of lemon juice, lime juice or vinegar. Use only vinegar that has 5 percent acidity and only bottled lemon or lime juice. The acidity in fresh-squeezed lemon or lime juice varies so you can't trust that the end product would have the needed amount of acidity for safety. It is OK to substitute an equal amount of bottled lemon juice for vinegar in salsa recipes, but it is not OK to substitute vinegar for lemon juice. Substituting vinegar for lemon juice results in less acid and could be unsafe.

The spiciness of salsa can be adjusted by substituting one type of pepper for another, or by adjusting the mix of hot and mild peppers. You should not, however, increase the number of pounds or cups of peppers in the recipe. The same goes for onions — you can substitute red, yellow or white onions for each other, but do not increase the amount.

Increasing the amount of peppers or onions can impact the acidity of the product, potentially making it unsafe.

Canned salsas should not be thickened with flour or cornstarch before canning. Thickening makes it harder for the contents to reach the right temperature during processing and impacts safety. If you desire a thicker salsa, just pour off some of the liquid when you serve it or thicken the salsa after you open the jar.

5 Tips for Saving for College

1. **Start Saving as Soon as Possible** – Even small amounts of saving will build up over time and will reduce the amount of loans you have to pay back later. Two popular ways to save are through 529 plans and savings bonds. There is a lot to know when choosing a savings option, so visit the links to learn more.
2. **Find Free Money** – This can be the key to saving you thousands of dollars in interest you would need to pay later. There are billions of dollars available to those who put in the effort to apply. Check out StudentAid.ed.gov, go.salliemae.com/scholarship, and <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college>.
3. **Work While You're in School** – Remember that any money you can save or earn before and during college will reduce the amount of loans you need to take and save you money you would pay later.
4. **Consider Your Options** – College costs a lot. You may have dreamt about going to that Ivy League school since you were young, but can you afford it? Compare the amount you will need to pay at the colleges you get into. You

may find that one school offers you more grants than another.

5. **Get Tips and Reminders to Save** – America Saves can help students and their parents keep college savings top of mind. Sign up for free text message tips and reminders by taking the Pledge to Save and choosing “Education” as your savings goal at <http://bit.ly/KansasSaves>.

Student Loan Calculator

One of the biggest decisions for those entering college is how to finance their education — and for more than two-thirds of those getting bachelor’s degrees, the answer involves taking on debt. The Student Loan Calculator at <http://bit.ly/StudentLoanCalculator> offers a guide to the borrowing picture at various institutions — and what it takes after graduation to repay the loans.



Honey or Sugar, Is One Better?

Honey and sugar have a lot in common, but there are some differences that appear to give honey an edge. However, that edge is very minimal.

First, let’s examine the similarities. Both honey and sugar are calorie-dense sweeteners. And, both are primarily made up of a combination of fructose and glucose, though their chemical structure differs. In sugar, the fructose and glucose are bound together. The combination is called sucrose. In honey, fructose and glucose are primarily independent of each other, although honey also contains a bit of sucrose.

Honey generally contains more fructose than glucose, and since fructose tastes sweeter than glucose, you might find yourself using less honey than you would sugar.

At the same time, honey is denser, and so it weighs more than sugar. Because of this, a tablespoon of honey has 64 calories, compared with 45 calories for the same amount of table sugar. So, even if you use less honey, the calorie intake might be a wash.

Honey does supply some nutrients that its granulated counterpart does not, but the amounts are practically imperceptible. Honey also contains healthful antioxidants, with darker types of honey generally containing even more of them.

That said, if you’re looking at honey as a source of nutrients in your diet, you’re in trouble. You should be getting vitamins, minerals and antioxidants from a healthy, well-rounded diet, including fruits, vegetables and whole grains, as well as low- or nonfat dairy, beans and lean meats. Despite its advantages, honey is an added sugar, just like granulated sugar, and should be counted as such.

Added sugars currently contribute about 16 percent of the total calories of the average American diet. But “added sugars” includes more than the sugar you put on your cereal or the honey you stir in your tea. It includes any sugars that are added during preparation or processing, such as the sugar in soft drinks, baked goods, fruit drinks, ice cream, candy, cereal, bread, and many other foods.

Watch ingredient lists for clues that the food contains added sugars, including: corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, fruit juice concentrates, lactose, molasses, sucrose, sugar, agave nectar and syrup.

Sugars naturally found in fruit and milk do not need to be limited. They are part of a very healthful package.



CALENDAR

September

5-14 Kansas State Fair

6 Prepare Kansas Registration Deadline

29 Medicare Basics 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.,

K-State Salina College Center Conference Room

