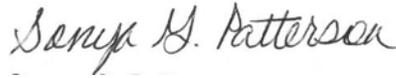


To: Caswell ECA Club Members



From: Sonya G. Patterson
Associate Extension Agent
Family & Consumer Sciences

Caswell County Center
126 Court Square
PO Box 220
Yanceyville, NC 27379
(PHONE) 336-694-4158
(FAX) 336-694-5930
<http://caswell.ces.ncsu.edu>
sonya_patterson@ncsu.edu



Some Food for Thought Newsletter November 2014

Greetings!



The holiday season is quickly approaching which means its time to do our holiday cleaning, decorating, cooking and checking off that holiday shopping list. Be sure to plan your time wisely so that you will find yourself doing less of the aforementioned chores, and spending more time relaxing and enjoying the festivities with your family and friends. If you have any questions please give me a call at (336) 694-4158 or visit our county website at caswell.ces.ncsu.edu for upcoming events and information. Also be sure to like us on Facebook at North Carolina Cooperative Extension-Caswell County.

ECA Achievement Night

The 2014 ECA Achievement Night program will be held on November 13th at the Senior Center at 6:00 pm. The theme for this year's program is "Living Green and Living Great!" If you are participating in the fashion show, please send a

description of your garments, the price you obtained them for at a thrift or consignment shop, and any other interesting details about your garment(s) into the Extension office no later than Wednesday, November 12th. Please invite your friends, family and all perspective ECA members to attend for an evening of fellowship, good food, education and fun. The cost to attend is \$10 per person.

ECA Holiday Program

The 2014 annual ECA Holiday Program will be held on November 20th from 12:00 – 2:00 pm in the kitchen of the Agriculture Building. There will be a cooking and crafts demonstration for all to enjoy! This is a great opportunity for you to invite friends that may be interested in joining ECA. Please remember to bring a delicious covered dish to share and a **wrapped** gift with a value of at least \$5 for the gift exchange.



[ECA 2015 Calendar Planning Meeting](#)



The 2015 ECA events calendar planning meeting will be held on December 4th at 10:00 am in the kitchen of the Agriculture Building. Please begin thinking about programs and events that you are interested in planning for 2015. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend this important meeting.

[Making Traditions Healthy](#)



Smart substitutions for your favorite holiday meals:

Baking

- Instead of butter, substitute equal parts cinnamon-flavored, no sugar added applesauce.
- Use a lower-calorie sugar substitute.
- Substitute low-fat or skim milk instead of whole or heavy cream.
- Instead of using only white flour, use half white and half whole-wheat flour.
- Instead of adding chocolate chips or candies, use dried fruits, like cranberries or cherries.
- Use extracts like vanilla, almond, and peppermint to add flavor, instead of sugar or butter.

Cooking

- Use vegetable oils such as olive oil instead of butter.
- Use whole-grain breads and pastas instead of white.
- Bake, grill or steam vegetables instead of frying.

- Instead of whole milk or heavy cream, substitute low-fat or fat-free/skim milk.
- Compare labels of your holiday ingredients, choose those with lower sodium.

Beverages

- Instead of alcohol in mixed drinks, use club soda.
- Mix 100% juice with water or use freshly squeezed juice, like lime instead of adding sugar to mixed drinks.
- Instead of using heavy cream or whole milk in dairy-based drinks, use low-fat or skim milk.
- Use spices and fruit, like cinnamon, cloves and cranberries instead of using sugar to sweeten cider.

Source: heart.org

[10 Smart Holiday Shopping Tips](#)



It's almost that time of year. The holiday season is literally right around the corner. That is all soon to come, but now is the time to begin to brace yourself for the bombardment of holiday advertisements.

Sometimes it can be difficult to deal with it all. All the attractive offers, sales, deals, coupons, bundles, BOGO's, is a lot. It's very easy to fall prey to the illusion of a "good deal" and to end up spending far more than you had expected to.

The best way to avoid this?
PLAN AHEAD.

10 Smart Holiday Shopping Tips

cont'd.

Here are 10 shopping tips for having a fun, frugal and stress-free holiday season:

- 1. It's never too early to start planning.**
You can check websites or call ahead to stores to see when their sales begin and end. This way, you'll have a good idea of how much things will cost and when/where you can get them.
- 2. Make a check list.**
Checklists are a great way to keep yourself organized. A physical piece of paper is a great way to make sure you don't end up forgetting things. A checklist can also help you plan ahead. Call a store, then put it on your list.
- 3. Make a budget.**
This may be easier said than done, but this is an amazingly powerful tool. Give yourself a budget, a set amount of money that you are prepared to spend. The creation of a budget forces you to keep track of your spending and aids in your decision-making process. When you have a budget, it allows you to say whether or not something is affordable.
- 4. Prioritize.**
This may be one of the most difficult of all these tips, but it's also one of the most important. Once you have a budget established, you can prioritize your spending. There may be great deals on certain things during the holidays, i.e., electronics, but others will be the same price just about everywhere.
- 5. Get started early.**
During the holidays, it's extra easy to procrastinate and put things off. Don't put off your shopping because it can pile up quick!
- 6. Shop around.**
Just because you find what you're looking for on your first trip to a store

doesn't mean you have to buy it right then and there. Even better yet, save yourself some time and stress and just call the store. Many times you can find the same thing at a couple different stores and, usually, one will have a noticeably lower price than another.

7. Check online.

Once you know which store you want to buy your item from, check its website before you go out. Many stores will have online coupons, web-only sales or free shipping. Sometimes you can even save money by ordering things online. Shopping online can save you time and the hassle of having to actually go to the store.

8. Think ahead before you go out!

It's very easy to go to a store with no idea of how much you plan to buy and end up grabbing every shiny thing you see on the shelves. Think ahead about what you really need to buy.

9. Get creative!

By no means does a good gift have to be an expensive one. You know your friends and family, so get them the kinds of gifts that they'll appreciate. Just because something isn't in a catalog doesn't mean it can't be a great gift. The best gifts are the ones that people value the most, not the ones the stores do.

10. Make what you can.

Not only can you come up with creative gift ideas, but you can also make creative gifts! You can make anything from artwork and food to a book of IOUs. A handmade gift can mean much more than anything you can get from a store.

Remember, the holiday season is what you make it!

Source: myclublife.com

Kitchen Safety Checklist:
Are You Equipped for a Healthy Feast?

Planning a big meal or family buffet? Make sure your kitchen is ready with the tools and resources you need before the big day.

- ✓ **Two Cutting Boards**
Keep one for raw meats and seafood and the other for ready-to-eat foods.
- ✓ **Food Thermometer and Cooking Temperature Guide**
Ensure foods have reached the safe minimum internal temperature with a food thermometer.
- ✓ **Shallow Containers**
Store leftovers in shallow, covered containers to reduce their temperatures faster and help them stay safer, longer.
- ✓ **Soap**
Have plenty of soap nearby so everyone helping in the kitchen can wash their hands thoroughly before and after handling foods. While lathering up, sing two choruses of "Happy Birthday" to make sure you wash your hands for 20 seconds.
- ✓ **Cookie Rookie Pledge**
Encourage kids to safely handle food in the kitchen with a pledge to not eat cookie dough containing raw eggs, which can cause food poisoning.
- ✓ **Keep It Cool: Food Storage Chart**
Locate the shelf-life of leftovers and other foods at Home Food Safety.org

- ✓ **"Is My Food Safe?" App**
This free mobile app offers tips for proper food handling to reduce your risk of food poisoning, including cooking temperatures, shelf life of foods and more.

Source: www.homefoodsafety.org



Recipe Corner
Cornbread Dressing

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 1 - 9 inch pan prepared cornbread
- 5 slices wheat or white bread (crumbled up in small pieces)
- 2 onions
- 2 bell peppers
- 1 stalk celery
- 4 tbsp sage
- 4 tbsp poultry seasoning
- 1½ tsp celery seeds
- 1 can cream of celery soup
- 1 stick margarine or butter
- 2 cans chicken broth or stock
- Seasoning salt to taste
- Pepper to taste
- 3 eggs

Directions:

Dice onions, pepper and celery. Add crumbled bread and cornbread, sage, poultry seasoning, celery seeds, cream of celery soup, butter, pepper, seasoning salt and chicken broth to the diced onions, pepper and celery in a large bowl and mix together. Add in 3 eggs to the mixture. Use ½ stick of margarine to greased 9 inch baking pan. Pour dressing mixture into pan. Bake at 325 degrees Fahrenheit until brown.

Serve with cranberry sauce.

Source: sweetiepies.com