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# *Family & Consumer Sciences*

*newsletter*

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*Food for Thought*

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*It's been a while since I've published a newsletter so I'm excited for you to know that this is the first issue in an all new format. I hope all of you have had an enjoyable summer and are looking forward to this beautiful change of season!*



## ECA

**Change of Date!!!** The next **ECA County Council** meeting will be held on Thursday, October 5<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am, as opposed to Thursday October 12<sup>th</sup> as originally scheduled due to an unforeseen schedule conflict. I apologize for the inconvenience.

The 2017 **ECA Achievement Night** program will be held on Thursday, November 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm at the Agriculture Building. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.

The 2017 **ECA Holiday Program** will be held on Thursday, December 7 beginning at 12:00 pm. All is welcome to attend!



## **Welcome Fall!!**

Our responses to the crisp, cool days of fall can vary pretty widely. Some of us discover a renewed burst of energy, while others are like bears, a little grouchy and wanting to sleep more as the nights get longer and the days get cooler, while others just get plain blue when the sun backs off and winter looms ahead.

No matter how the fall affects you, here are some cozy, homey, and just plain heartwarming ideas for bringing more warmth and light into this beautiful season.

### **Light Candles**

When dusk falls, we can make it an occasion of celebration (instead of despair!) by lighting a special candle with a sweet honey scent . It will be like bringing a little sun indoors. Some of us have to get up in the morning when it's still dark, too, and the same candle can add a little warmth and encouragement to the darkest morning.

### **Tea Ritual**

You can institute a very simple tea ritual to welcome children home from school, or to signal the end of a busy working day, or to make a pause between daytime activities and the rest of the evening and night. If caffeine keeps you awake at night like it does me, there are thousands of relaxing and restorative herbal teas on the market. Just boil some water, fetch a pretty teapot or some brightly-colored mugs, and make you and your family a cheering cup of tea. On cool evenings, it becomes a pleasure to hold a warm cup, inhale the soothing steam, and take sip after delicious sip.

### **Soothing Bath**

A warm bath, especially scented with just a few drops of essential oil, can be a perfect way to warm up and unwind after a chilly day. You can add honey for a sweet skin-nourishing treat, or fill a small muslin bag with oatmeal and rub it all over. Oats are very soothing to the skin.

### **Comfort Nook**

Make sure you have at least one cozy, comfy place in your home where you can curl up in a golden circle of warm lamplight with a good book and a soft blanket to throw over your feet. Creating a little sanctuary of warmth and comfort is a must when the temperatures drop.

### **Fireside Pleasures**

If you're lucky enough to have a fireplace, it can become the focal point for family gatherings now that it's chilly enough to want a fire burning indoors. My mom use to dip small pinecones in melted beeswax and then roll them in cinnamon and cloves. They smelled fabulous sitting in a basket on the hearth, and they made great fire starters.

*Source:www.care2.com*

## **Tips to Prepare your Home for the Winter Season**



It is not too early to get your home prepared for the winter. Homeowners should take action now while the weather is still nice. The last thing you want to do is to have to fix any problems after the temperature has dropped below the freezing point. The financial benefits of winterizing your home are also worth it.

You can easily insulate any exposed pipes with inexpensive foam covers from any local home improvement store. As an added precaution, make sure everyone in the house knows how to turn off the water at its source. This will be very handy in the event you do have a pipe freeze and break. Water damage can be costly to repair, so the faster you can get the water turned off, the better.

For those with fireplaces, make sure it is in tip top shape before lighting that first match. Have the chimney cleaned and inspected by a professional before the weather gets cold. In addition, have a professional give your heating system a thorough check. Be sure to clean or replace any filters on the unit, and be sure to vacuum the vents.

Another way to conserve energy and save money is to install a programmable thermostat. There's no need to keep your home toasty warm while no one is there and you can set the thermostat back a few degrees. Program the system to come

back on shortly before you arrive home. You can also roll the thermostat back a few degrees while everyone is sleeping.

Other energy wasters are drafty windows and doors. Add or replace worn weather stripping around doors and windows. Be sure to caulk any gaps. Also, if any pipes or ducts travel through an exterior wall, it is a good idea to use caulking and weather stripping around all entry points. These steps will help block potential entry points for cold air.

Reversing your ceiling fans is another simple way to save energy. When running in reverse mode, the fan produces an updraft and will push the warm air down into the room. This is especially helpful in rooms with high ceilings.

The last place you want to find yourself is on your roof during a winter storm. Take advantage of fall's mild weather to check over your roof. Look for damaged, loose or missing shingles that may leak during a winter storm or from melting snow. Check and repair breaks in the flashing seals around vent stacks and chimneys while you are on the roof. Be sure to give your gutters a thorough cleaning too.

None of these tasks will take very long to complete, but they'll sure save time and money when winter rolls around. It'll be much nicer sitting inside by the fireplace this winter instead of trying to make repairs.

## **Food Safety Tips for the Holidays**



**Feasting with family and friends is part of many holiday celebrations. Follow these simple tips to keep safe from food poisoning, or foodborne illness, during the holidays.**

- **Wash your hands.** Be sure to wash your hands with soap and water before and after preparing food, after touching raw meat, raw eggs, or unwashed vegetables, and before eating or drinking.
- **Cook food thoroughly.** Meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs can carry germs that cause food poisoning. Use a food thermometer to ensure these foods have been cooked to the [safe minimum internal temperature](#). Roasts, chops, steaks and fresh ham should rest for 3 minutes after removing from the oven or grill.
- **Keep food out of the "danger zone."** Bacteria can grow rapidly at room temperature. After food is cooked, keep hot food hot and cold food cold. Refrigerate or freeze any perishable food within 2 hours. The temperature in your refrigerator should be set at or below 40°F and the freezer at or below 0°F.
- **Use pasteurized eggs for dishes containing raw eggs.** *Salmonella* and other harmful germs can live on both the outside and inside of normal-looking eggs. Many holiday favorites contain raw eggs, including eggnog, tiramisu, hollandaise sauce, and Caesar dressing. Always use pasteurized eggs when making these and other foods made with raw eggs.
- **Do not eat dough or batter.** Dough and batter made with flour or eggs can contain harmful germs, such as *E. coli* and *Salmonella*. Do not taste or eat [unpasteurized dough or batter](#) of any kind, including those for cookies, cakes, pies, biscuits, pancakes, tortillas, pizza, or crafts. Do not let children taste raw dough or batter or play with dough at home or in restaurants.
- **Keep foods separated.** Keep meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs separate from all other foods at the grocery store and in the refrigerator. Prevent juices from meat, poultry, and seafood from dripping or leaking onto other foods by keeping them in containers or sealed plastic bags. Store eggs in their original carton in the main compartment of the refrigerator.
- **Safely thaw your turkey.** [Thaw turkey](#) in the refrigerator, in a sink of cold water that is changed every 30 minutes, or in the microwave. Avoid thawing foods on the counter. A turkey must thaw at a safe temperature to prevent harmful germs from growing rapidly.

### Pregnancy and Food



**While everyone wants to keep food safe during the holidays, it is especially important for pregnant women to do so because they are at increased risk of food poisoning.**

[Pregnant women are 10 times](#) more likely than others to get [listeriosis](#), a rare but deadly foodborne infection caused by the bacteria *Listeria*.

[Learn how to protect yourself from \*Listeria\* food poisoning.](#)

- [Avoid raw or unpasteurized milk and products made with it, such as soft cheeses.](#) Raw or unpasteurized milk and products made with it can contain harmful germs, including [Listeria](#). Avoid drinking raw milk and eating [soft cheeses, such as queso fresco\[2 MB\]](#), Brie, Camembert, feta, goat cheese, or Roquefort, if they are made from raw or unpasteurized milk. Do not eat or drink other raw or unpasteurized products, such as juice or cider.
- [Be careful with seafood.](#) Do not eat refrigerated smoked seafood unless it is in a cooked dish, such as a casserole, or unless it is canned or shelf-stable.
- [Be aware of holiday beverages.](#) To reduce the possibility of fetal alcohol syndrome, watch out for alcohol-containing holiday punches and eggnogs. Avoid eggnog entirely unless you know it contains no alcohol and is pasteurized or made with pasteurized eggs and milk.

source: CDC

## Recipe Corner



Crockpot Chicken:

4 boneless chicken breast, 1 can cream of celery soup, 1 small jar mushrooms, 1 packet onion soup mix. Pour all ingredients into crockpot and cook on low for about 6 hours. Serve over noodles, rice or stuffing.

Source:cooks.com

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