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# Geary County

K-State Research and Extension News

## Knowledge for Life

### Ask the Agent

**Q: I am trying to decide whether to use granite or laminate in my kitchen. What do you recommend?**

**A:** Although laminate may be a less expensive alternative than granite, the demands of a kitchen countertop requires a tougher surface. In the December 2015 Consumer Reports magazine, they explain that choosing countertops is very dependent on the use it will have and the room in which it is to be placed. Kitchen countertops need to be able to endure slicing and chopping while bathroom countertops have to endure makeup stains or hair color. Although CR reports that these two types of surfaces endure heat almost equally, they do not resist stains in the same manner. Generally speaking, granite outperforms laminate in the kitchen environment.



For more information call the Geary County K-State Research and Extension office at:

**785-238-4161**



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## Giving and Living Healthy

November 2015

Thanksgiving typically marks the beginning of the season for giving in American culture. As we sit down at our Thanksgiving meals, we are reminded of how much we have or for many, how little. Many organizations and communities rev up their efforts to collect clothing, health care items, and food to stock local pantries with.

Knowing that 14% of American households and 17.7% of Geary County residents do not have adequate access to food, I thought I would share some information and ideas about how each of us can help these families during the holiday season and throughout the year.



**Health & Food Donations:** Of the estimated 215,300 people in the Kansas Food Bank's service area who turn to food pantries and meal service programs to feed themselves and their families:

- 82 percent of households report purchasing inexpensive, unhealthy food because they could not afford healthier options.
- 66 percent of households report having to choose between paying for food and paying for medicine or medical care.
- 27 percent of households include a member with diabetes.
- 48 percent households have a member with high blood pressure

I realize that making healthy donations to a food pantry could cost more at the register than buying the inexpensive, unhealthy food. However, consider the costs associated with the healthcare for people with limited access to food. Healthcare costs far outweigh the difference you will pay for healthy foods at the register. As noted in the chart below, Kansans receiving charitable food assistance have a higher rate of diabetes and high blood pressure compared to Kansans as a whole:

	<i>Kansans Receiving Charitable Food Assistance</i>	<i>Kansas State Average</i>
<i>Diabetes</i>	27% (of 215,000 participants)	8.2%
<i>High Blood Pressure</i>	48% (of 215,000 participants)	31.3%

Eating healthy reduces the risk of having an illness or disease linked to a poor diet. As a result, this reduces healthcare costs. Making healthy donations can assist in promoting the health and well-being of those who rely on food pantries to keep themselves nourished.

**Smart & Healthy Donations:** When purchasing food items to be donated, take time to read the labels and make healthy choices. Look for phrases like "fresh", "whole-grain", "low-sodium", "natural", "low-fat", or "no sugar added", to name a few. These descriptors are regulated by the Food and Drug Administration and must meet strict guidelines in order to be in compliance with food labeling laws. By donating foods with these types of descriptors, you can be more assured that you are contributing healthier options than those foods found without any claims made. See the inside section of this newsletter for some specific healthy food pantry donation suggestions.

## 2015 National Family Week, November 22-28

National Family Week is an annual celebration observed during the week of Thanksgiving. The Alliance for Strong Families and Communities and its member organizations have annually promoted National Family Week for more than 40 years.

Join thousands of people and organizations across the United States to celebrate National Family Week November 22-28, 2015. See tips below how you can do this in your community.

- ◇ Blow the dust off those board games. When was the last time you played Monopoly anyway? Teach your family all the card games you know. If you don't remember any, get a hold of 101 Best Family Card Game!
- ◇ Have some friends over to watch a movie at home! Let the kids take every cushion off the sofa and build a fort. Crawl through once or twice yourself.
- ◇ Take the kids to the library and sign up for a library card! Show them how to check out books and experience the library and all it has to offer!
- ◇ Share a skill with your kids -- do you knit, sew, tie flies, play an instrument? Spend some time passing your knowledge on.

- ◇ Take a class together. Isn't there something you'd ALL like to learn to do?
- ◇ Have a family letter writing party. And no, not using e-mail, but pens, paper, crayons and markers. Grandma, Grandpa, and faraway friends will be thrilled. You could decorate all of your holiday cards with the help of your whole family this year!
- ◇ Have a dance party in the living room.
- ◇ Bake something -- even the youngest can help with simple cookie recipes.
- ◇ Put a puzzle together. This is something any age can help with!
- ◇ Cook dinner together. Have the entire family pitch in with setting the table, etc.
- ◇ Get crafty -- there are tons of books with terrific craft projects in them!
- ◇ Do something for someone else -- spend the evening working with a community group or charity to help families in need during the Thanksgiving holiday!
- ◇ Most importantly....include the entire family and have fun together!

*Source: City of Petersburg, Virginia Cooperative Extension Service*

## Managing Costs for Holiday Meals

Don't let the holiday season bust your food budget. With careful planning and perhaps a bit of creativity, you can make your holiday meals fun, filling, and frugal. Here are some tips to get you started:

- ◆ Keep it nutritious– The guidelines of MyPlate suggest that half of your plate should be filled with fruits and vegetables. This reduces the amount of meat you may need to purchase to make a meal that follows MyPlate recommendations. Avoid overspending by purchasing produce that is in season. During this time of year, consumers will find a variety of apples, pears, pumpkin and yams on sale at their local food mart. Canned or frozen fruits and vegetables that are low in sugar or sodium can be a nutritious and economical alternative to fresh produce.
- ◆ Take advantage of sales– Canned and frozen foods have a longer shelf life than fresh produce, so stock up during sales and buy things you know you will need for holiday meals. Some families think a holiday meal would not be a feast without meat. Look at different options to help you stay within your budget. Look for local meats, ham or turkey, and use recipes that include meat as an ingredient instead of a stand-alone dish. Grocery stores often promote meat sales by offering incentives through coupons or a points system based on what you have purchased to apply

toward a free turkey or ham.

- ◆ Avoid overspending – This is most commonly done with the meat dish. Being aware of the sales in grocery stores is a great start to limiting the amount of money you spend on meat. Avoid buying too much meat since it doesn't have a long shelf life and is usually the most expensive ingredient.
- ◆ Plan ahead – The most important factors for a successful holiday meal on a budget are planning and preparation. Making a plan for your holiday meal can save money and time. Determine how much you want to spend and create a menu with that budget in mind. Look at the grocery store ads carefully before you leave for the store. Most stores have their weekly sales ad posted online before they go into effect. You can use them to make a list that is both health and budget friendly. Finally, don't buy "extras", unless they will be for your holiday meal.
- ◆ Take inventory – Pull out the recipes for the menu items you plan to prepare and check off what you already have in your cabinet or pantry. Especially look at the spices, herbs, and seasonings you will need. These can add unnecessarily to your food expense if you purchase what you already have on hand.

Time with family is less stressful if you avoid putting yourself in a financial pinch. Budget holiday meals to ensure your resources and energy are being used wisely.

# Healthy Habits

## Healthy Food Pantry Donations

<p><b>Fruits &amp; Vegetables</b></p> <p>Fresh or canned vegetables, low- or no-salt added: carrots, sweet potatoes, corn, green beans, lima beans, green peas, tomatoes, asparagus, mushrooms, mixed vegetables</p> <p>Fresh or canned fruit in 100% juice, or no sugar added</p> <p>Applesauce, no sugar added</p> <p>Dried fruit, no sugar added</p> <p>100% fruit juice</p> <p>100% vegetable juice</p>	<p><b>Whole Grains</b> (first ingredient listed should say "whole" wheat, corn, etc.)</p> <p>Whole-grain and enriched pasta</p> <p>Brown or wild rice</p> <p>Whole-grain cold cereals with low sugar</p> <p>Whole-grain crackers</p> <p>Whole-grain hot cereals, oatmeal, Cream of wheat</p> <p>Corn or whole-grain tortillas, non-refrigerated</p> <p>Quinoa</p> <p>Barley</p> <p>Popcorn</p> <p>Whole-grain granola bars</p>
<p><b>Dairy</b></p> <p>Low-fat or non-fat shelf stable milk, powdered or UHT</p> <p>Low-fat soy milk, unflavored</p> <p>Low fat pressurized cheese made from milk, non-refrigerated</p>	<p><b>Protein Foods</b></p> <p>Fresh or canned meats and fish packed in water (chicken, tuna, salmon, sardines, etc.)</p> <p>Canned beans, low-sodium</p> <p>Dried beans/peas (black beans, black-eyed peas, chickpeas (garbanzo beans), kidney beans, navy beans, lentils, etc.)</p> <p>Nuts and seeds, low- or no-salt added (almonds, peanuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, pecans, etc.)</p> <p>Nut butter (peanut, almond)</p>
<p><b>Other Items</b></p> <p>Spaghetti sauce, tomato sauce, low- or no salt-added</p> <p>Canned and shelf-stable soups and broths, low- or no salt-added</p> <p>Vegetable oil</p> <p>Flour</p> <p>Sugar</p> <p>Spices</p>	<p><b>Please DO NOT donate:</b></p> <p>Rusty or unlabeled cans</p> <p>Homemade items</p> <p>Noncommercial canned or packaged items</p> <p>Open or used items</p> <p>Alcoholic beverages</p> <p>Outdated or expired product</p>

### Cinnamon Apple Cranberry Sauce

Serves 12

**Ingredients:**

- 2 cups cranberry juice
- 1 1/2 cups sweetened dried cranberries
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 apples, washed, cored and diced, with peel on
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch

**Directions:**

1. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, stir together the cranberry juice, dried cranberries, cinnamon and sugar. Bring to a boil, and let cook for 5 minutes.
2. Add apples and cook, stirring occasionally, until the cranberries have softened and apples are tender, about 5 minutes.
3. Pour 1 cup of the liquid from the apple mix into a small bowl. Whisk in the cornstarch. Slowly add the cornstarch-juice mixture back to the cranberry-apple mixture in the pan, stirring constantly. Cook for an additional 5 minutes.
4. Remove from heat and pour into a serving bowl. Refrigerate until thickened, about 30 minutes. Serve as a side dish for meat or poultry. Cover and refrigerate leftovers.

**Nutrition Information:** 1 serving (94g) equals 110 calories, 0 g fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 5mg sodium, 29g carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 0g protein.

Enjoy A Holiday Tradition  
with a Fruity **Twist!**



*Recipe adapted from the Food Network*



## Holiday Food Safety Tips

### **Plan Ahead**

Plan your menu several weeks before the holiday. Shopping early will ease the countdown tension for your Thanksgiving meal. Ask these questions to help plan your meal. Do you want a fresh or frozen turkey? Do you have enough space to store a frozen bird if purchased in advance; if not, when should you purchase a turkey? What size bird do you need to buy?

### **Fresh or Frozen**

If you choose to buy a frozen bird you may do so at any time, but make sure you have adequate storage space in your freezer. If you buy a fresh turkey, be sure you purchase it only 1-2 days before cooking. Do not buy a prestuffed fresh turkey.

Use the following chart as a helpful guide:

<b>What Size Turkey to Buy</b>	
<b>Type of Turkey</b>	<b>Pounds to Buy</b>
Whole bird	1 pound per person
Boneless breast of turkey	1/2 pound per person
Breast of turkey	3/4 pound per person
Pre-stuffed frozen turkey	1 1/4 pounds per person – keep frozen until ready to cook

### **Thawing in the microwave**

Microwave thawing is safe if the turkey is not too large. Check the manufacturer's instructions for the size turkey that will fit into your oven, the minutes per pound, and the power level to use for thawing. Cook immediately after thawing.

*Source: USDA Food Safety and Inspection Services*





## Holiday Food Safety Tips

### **Thawing**

#### **In the refrigerator**

Place frozen bird in original wrapper in the refrigerator (40 °F or below). Allow approximately 24 hours per 4 to 5 pounds of turkey. A thawed turkey can remain in the refrigerator for 1-2 days.

<b>Thawing Time in the Refrigerator</b>	
<b>Size of Turkey</b>	<b>Number of Days</b>
4 to 12 pounds	1 to 3 days
12 to 16 pounds	3 to 4 days
16 to 20 pounds	4 to 5 days
20 to 24 pounds	5 to 6 days

#### **In cold water**

If you forget to thaw the turkey or don't have room in the refrigerator for thawing, don't panic. You can submerge the turkey in cold water and change the water every 30 minutes. Allow about 30 minutes defrosting time per pound of turkey. The following times are suggested for thawing turkey in water. Cook immediately after thawing.

<b>Thawing Time in Cold Water</b>	
<b>Size of Turkey</b>	<b>Number of Days</b>
4 to 12 pounds	2 to 6 hours
12 to 16 pounds	6 to 8 hours
16 to 20 pounds	8 to 10 hours
20 to 24 pounds	10 to 12 hours



### Upcoming Geary County Extension Programs

\*\*Requires pre-registration.

#### November

- 1-30** Medicare Open Enrollment\*\* continues through December 7. Call the Geary County Extension Office to make an appointment with Deb Andres to review Medicare Part D Prescription Plans. Appointment times are limited, so call soon to get your appointment time reserved!
- 24** MPI Parenting Class\*\*—12th Street Community Center at 1002 W. 12th Street, Junction City, is a 6-session class open to any parents with children ages toddler to teens to help support and equip parents with the challenging task of raising children. Please call the Geary County Extension office to register for the program—785-238-4161. The class consists of 6 consecutive sessions held from 6-8 p.m. on Tuesday nights. A \$10/session registration fee is required before the class begins. The total cost for the class is \$60.00 per individual or \$90.00 for the parent and a support person. The class continues through November 24.

#### December

- 3** Knowledge at Noon\*\*— Moving More, Valley View Estates, 1440 Pearl Drive, Junction City, KS. Topic: Boosting Vitamin D naturally. This free program begins at noon and is open to the public. Call the Extension Office to reserve your seat at 785-238-4161. **Register by December 2, 2015**
- 4** Geary County Medicare Open Enrollment Event\*\*—Geary Community Hospital, Medical Arts I Conference Room, Junction City, KS from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm. Several SHICK counselors, including Deb Andres, FCS Agent and SHICK Counselor, will be available to counsel with Medicare beneficiaries about their prescription drug plan and other Medicare-related issues. Call the Geary County Extension office to make your appointment at this special event on Friday, December 4. 785-238-4161 **CALL NOW!** Appointments are limited and **reservations close December 1 at 5:00 pm!**
- 7** Medicare Open Enrollment\*\* concludes. Call the Geary County Extension Office to make an appointment with Deb Andres to review Medicare Part D Prescription Plans. Appointment times are very limited, so call now to get your appointment time reserved!

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