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Geary County

K-State Research and Extension News

Knowledge
for Life

Ask the Agent

Q: What is the shelf life of infused water?

A: Some infused water recipes will give you a storage guideline to use, but many do not. The rule of thumb is 3 days in the refrigerator. If you create your own recipe, you may have to play with the storage time by determining when the beverage seems to have lost its rich and tasty appeal. As my dad always said, "When in doubt, throw it out!"



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

785-238-4161



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Make Mine Water—On the Rocks!

April 2016

As our temperatures warm and we find ourselves spending more time outside mowing lawns, gardening, or following kids around to ball games, we need to remember to stay hydrated. I'm not talking about keeping our coolers stalked with soda and fruit juices, either. I am talking about staying hydrated with water. All too often we think we are drinking a lot of liquid, but the liquid we choose actually has the counter effect of hydration.



Water is a critical nutrient for our body and makes up the majority of our body's composition. Without adequate water levels in our body, all of our body systems will fade in their capacity and eventually fail. Water transports essential nutrients, lubricates our joints, aids in the digestion of the food we eat, controls our body's temperature, and so much more. Amazingly, you can live 3 weeks without food but only 3 days without water.

The average American drinks only 3.5 cups of the recommended 8 cups per day. Some explain that they don't like the taste of water, while others are concerned about our water treatment systems. Still yet others simply don't think about it and are in the habit of reaching for a soda, or in my case, an iced tea.

If you fall into anyone of these groups of these reasons for low intake, don't give up on yourself. There's a simple solution: infused water.

Infused water is the combination of water with fresh fruits and herbs. Infused water is also sometimes called spa water. It is not a new discovery, but for many this trendy beverage choice is catching their eye and teasing their taste buds. Infused water is refreshing and healthy! Developing your own twist to some basic recipes not only adds new flavors to your palate, but also can provide some nutritional perks that you may not have thought of.

Danielle Hairston-Greene, a Program Specialist with the Cooperative Extension Program wrote in her "**What's on My Plate**" blog that, "There are many health benefits of infused water including appetite control, hydration, immune defense, heartburn prevention, blood sugar regulation and weight management."

Infusion	Health Benefits
Green Tea, Mint, Lime	Fat burning, digestion, headaches, congestion, and breath freshener
Strawberry and Kiwi	Cardiovascular health, immune system protection, blood sugar regulation, digestion
Cucumber, Lime, and Lemon	Water weight management, bloating, appetite control, hydration, digestion
Lemon, Lime, and Orange	Digestion, vitamin C, immune defense, heartburn (should be room temperature)
Lemon and Ginger Root	Healthy skin, digestion, liver cleansing

Hairston-Greene, 2014

Preparation of infused water is relatively easy, but does require some planning and advance preparation. Once you decide on a recipe, you need to purchase your ingredients, clean them carefully before preparation then add them to filtered water and place in the refrigerator to chill. Check out the recipes on the inside of this newsletter and start enjoying the health benefits of infused water!

Maintaining Strong Families / Strong Relationships

Even though Valentine's Day is long past, it's still important for maintaining relationships. In a recent magazine article, Psychology Today offers these suggestions for showing love and affection to the important people in your life.

Express Gratitude: Tell someone how much you appreciate their presence in your life.

Send Flowers: For no special reason say "Thank you for being you!" to someone in your life.

Set Aside Time: Give the gift of listening. Make it a date, if you need to!

Keep Anger at Bay: Stressful times can ignite our anger. Don't let stress damage your relationship with angry words or actions.

Be Generous: With gifts, with time, with your compliments—you can't go wrong with generosity.

Order Fortune Cookies: Purchase ones with love sayings or words of encouragement at set them at their work space or on the dinner table.

Offer Kindness: Ask your loved one "What can I do for you today that would make your life less stressful or easier?"

Money and Family

Managing money can be one of the most stressful part of adult and family life. But it doesn't have to be. There are some steps you can take to diffuse the stress caused by handling the finances in your home.

First, recognize that each person handles money differently and begin by asking each member of the family to complete the quiz below and then discuss everyone's responses as a family:

First, rank your family's spending habits:

Family Spending Habits	YOU	YOUR PARTNER	KIDS
Too thrifty			
Reasonable			
Easy going			
Spend every cent			

Other questions to respond to:

1. What do you enjoy spending money on?
2. What does our family enjoy spending money on?
3. What causes the most discussion about money in our household?
4. What would you like to change about how family money is spent?
5. Within a few dollars, how much does our family spend each month on: Eating Out; Utilities; Entertainment; Purchases as discount stores; Snacks; Gas?

6. How much do you put aside each month for emergencies or long-term goals?
7. Do you feel any of our monthly expenses are too high? Which ones?
8. If our family had to cut spending, what would you cut? What would my partner cut?
9. How would you pay an unexpected expense of \$150?
10. If someone gave you \$1,000, what would you do with it?
11. What would you like to change about your financial situation?
12. How much does our family put into savings each month? How much does our family have saved for emergencies?

Starting the conversation is perhaps the most difficult part of establishing family financial goals and working through the daily decisions needed to achieve those goals. However, keeping the lines of communication respectful, honest, and open will help your family get on track.

Include a conversation about wants versus needs as part of this formative step to financial security. Sometimes the lines get blurred and each person will have varying perceptions about what a need is and what a want is.

When the family can come up with a shared understanding of needs vs. wants, it becomes easier to establish a budget and spending habits that reinforce good money management practices.

Source: K-State Research and Extension: *Essential Living Skills: Money Management (publication S134G)*



Healthy Habits

Infused Water—A tasty and healthy option!

Blackberry Mint

- 40 blackberries
- 40 mint leaves

Tear mint leaves in half and smash blackberries to release flavors before adding to water.

Blueberry Orange Basil

- 30 to 45 blueberries
- 3 oranges
- 9 basil leaves

Squeeze the blueberries, quarter the oranges, and tear the basil leaves in half before adding to the water.

Citrus

- Slice your choice of oranges, lemons, and grapefruit.
- Use one of each fruit for every gallon of water.
- Chill overnight in the refrigerator.

Pineapple Orange

- 1/4 fresh pineapple
- 1/2 orange

Slice the pineapple. Leave the peel on the orange slices. You may be able to add water 2 to 3 more times before the flavor is gone.

Watermelon Rosemary

- 1/4 seedless watermelon
- 2 springs rosemary

Scoop watermelon directly into container. Add rosemary and fill the rest of the way with water. Refrigerate overnight before serving.

Raspberry Lime

- 40 raspberries
- 4 small limes

Smash raspberries and remove rind of limes before adding to water. Refrigerate overnight for maximum flavor.



Recipe source:
www.ext.wvu.edu
"Stay Hydrated" bulletin



First lady Grace Coolidge receives a May basket from young children in 1927.

What Happened to May Baskets?

This nearly lost celebration was prevalent in the 19th and 20th centuries. May Basket Day celebrations were common across our nation. As explained in 1871 by a reporter for the Gazette newspaper in Sterling, Ill., "A May-basket is — well, I hardly know how to describe it; but 'tis something to be hung on a door. Made of paper generally, it contains almost anything, by way of small presents you have in mind to put in it, together with your respects, best wishes — love, perhaps. It is hung after dark at the door of anybody the hanger fancies. — Which done, the said hanger knocks and scampers."

But like dancing around the May Pole, this once widespread celebration of spring has all but swept away into the past. Perhaps this is your year to help reverse the trend. Spend some time with your kids or grandkids and make May Baskets for you neighbors and friends. Perhaps create your own note cards to share the history of this nearly lost tradition. This is a great way to share your time, creativity, and history with the younger generation!

Source: www.npr.org/sections/npr.history



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Upcoming Geary County Extension Programs

**Requires pre-registration.

Walk Kansas...

Mighty Monday - New to Geary County Walk Kansas this year, we are hosting a weekly walking activity at Homer's Pond on Eisenhower Street in Junction City. Get your Walk Kansas week off to a great start and join us each Monday at 5:30 p.m. for a fun and fitness focused walk around Homer's Pond. Walk as far as you like or as long as you like. Join us each Monday of Walk Kansas for Mighty Monday!

May

- 6 Geary County Ag Day—Designed for area 3rd graders, this all day program hosted at the 4-H/Sr. Citizens building teaches kids about the food they eat, how it's produced, and how conservation and other practices are put in to place to protect and preserve our food supply. We appreciate all those who volunteer to make this an exciting day for our area 3rd grade students!
- 24 MPI Parenting Class**—Junction City YMCA, 1703 McFarland Road, Junction City, is a 6-session class open to any parents with children ages toddler to teen 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 5:30—7:30 p.m. on Tuesday evenings. 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 partner/support person. The class continues through June 28.
- 28 Walk Kansas Ends**—Check us out at the Geary County Walk Kansas Facebook page! Post your success story to encourage others.

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