



Geary County

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS

geary.k-state.edu

April 2020

Ask the Agent

Q: I have made my family some homemade face masks. What is the best way to clean them and how often should they be cleaned?

A: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Guidance recommends that you wash your face masks regularly depending on how much they are used. If you are out in public settings for an extended period of time, I recommend to wash the mask when you get home. You don't need to treat the mask with anything before you wash it with your regular laundry detergent. I recommend that you air dry your mask rather than using your clothes dryer. My colleagues at Oklahoma State University have developed a 5-video series outlining how to make and care for homemade face masks. You can view all five brief videos from their online play list at:

<https://bit.ly/3ajA1vA>

For more information call the
Geary County K-State
Research & Extension office
at: **785-238-4161**

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Same Song, Second Verse

April 2020



Perhaps you have heard this phrase before "Same Song, Second Verse" which has dual meanings. My favorite is the meaning the phrase had in the old Herman's Hermit song from the mid-60's titled "Henry the VIII". If you know the song, I bet the melody is already floating through your head and you have repeated the first (and only) verse multiple times.

If you don't know the song, then let me offer a common explanation for the phrase. It represents the frustration or exasperation one might feel when hearing the same phrase over and over such as: Wash your hands often, stay healthy, and stay home.

Anyone who has listened to the news over the last several weeks, read the newspaper, followed online news feeds, or talked to public health officials has been getting these same messages, but I really want to emphasize how important they are to follow if at all possible.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified the two populations that are at highest risk of severe illness based on the current data being reported:

- People aged 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility.

However, according to the CDC, there are others who also are at a higher risk that you may not have heard much about. People of ALL ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled are also at a greater risk including:

- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma.
- People who have serious heart conditions.
- People who are immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids (a group of drugs used to treat a variety of diseases/illnesses including rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, asthma, allergies and many other conditions where medication is prescribed to lessen swelling, redness, itching, and allergic reactions) and other immune weakening medications.
- People with severe obesity.
- People with diabetes.
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis.
- People with liver disease.

How many members of your immediate family suffer from one or more of these conditions? If you are fortunate to have none that do, you likely have people in your close circle of friends who fit into one or more of these conditions.

You don't want to carry the COVID-19 virus into your home. I know my 86 year old mom who has chronic emphysema and COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) has little to no chance of surviving the disease with all her health issues. As much as it pains me to talk over the phone or from the parking lot of her apartment, I know that I can't get close enough for a hug or step into her apartment for a quick visit. I feel healthy, I have no fever or cough, but I do go to the grocery store to get food and make trips to the gas station to refuel my car.

Even if you are not in one of the higher risk populations, your efforts to keep your hands clean, stay healthy and stay home protects the others that you live with and/or love.

So, listen to the message again and again—even if seems to be the "Same Song, Second Verse!"

Family Finance

The Economic Impact Payments (aka rebate checks) began arriving in U.S. taxpayers account the week of April 13, 2020. There have been rumors and late-night skits that have added some confusion to the purpose, the distribution, and the tax credit impact they will have on our personal finances. The Tax Foundation, the leading independent tax policy non-profit, offers these FAQs to help consumers have a better understanding of how the rebate checks work. Here are a few of the FAQs listed on their website at: <https://taxfoundation.org/federal-coronavirus-relief-bill-cares-act/#17>

Q: Are the recovery rebates just an advance on the tax refund I would get anyway when I file my 2020 tax return?

A: No. The recovery rebates are an additional refundable tax credit that will be applied to 2020 tax returns, but estimates are paid out to taxpayers based on 2019 or 2018 adjusted gross income (AGI). This is an additional credit for the taxpayer on top of whatever refund or tax is owed for the 2020 tax year.

Q: Is there any minimum income amount to qualify for the rebate and claim dependents?

A: No, even filers with \$0 of income can file for the rebate. However, they must file a tax return to ensure the IRS can process the rebate. Additionally, they must have a Social Security Number and not be claimed as a dependent on another person's return.

Q: How many dependents can I claim?

A: The CARES Act does not provide a maximum number of children that can be claimed. However, for each dependent to qualify they must be claimed by the taxpayer on their tax return.

Q: What if I am divorced? Does each parent receive a \$500 check for each of their dependents?

A: Only the parental taxpayer claiming the child as a dependent will receive the \$500.

Q: What if I have not filed my taxes for 2019, is there still an opportunity to get my money?

A: Yes, the IRS will look at your 2018 tax return to check for rebate eligibility but has also advised all taxpayers expecting a refund to file their 2019 tax return as soon as possible. Social Security beneficiaries will still receive rebates even if they have not filed tax returns for 2018 or 2019; their

Facts About Rebate Checks

rebates will be sent to the bank account associated with receiving benefits.

Q: If my income drops in 2020, can I get an additional rebate if I got a lower rebate based on 2019 income?

A: Yes, if a taxpayer's income drops in 2020, they will be eligible for any remaining rebate credit they were not able to claim using their 2019 or 2018 return.

Q: If I make more income in 2020, do I have to pay any amount back?

A: No, if the amount of credit a taxpayer qualifies for in 2020 is less than it was based on their 2019 return, it does not have to be paid back and it is not considered taxable income.

Q: Will those receiving Social Security benefits still receive a rebate check?

A: Yes, all taxpayers are eligible for the rebate, including those receiving Social Security benefits, subject to the same eligibility rules as other taxpayers. U.S. Treasury Secretary Mnuchin announced that these beneficiaries will not have to submit a separate tax return to receive a rebate. The payment will be sent directly to their bank account associated with those benefits.

Make the best of your Economic Impact Payment by following the smart choices recommended on the Financially Speaking podcast you can listen to that is posted on the Geary County K-State Research & Extension website at:
<https://www.geary.k-state.edu/health-home-family/family-resource-management.html>



FINANCIALLY SPEAKING

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION FAMILY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

How much is my stimulus check? 

\$1,200 For Individuals	\$2,400 For Married Couples	\$1,200 For Heads of Household
whose adjusted gross income (AGI) is \$75,000 or less	whose AGI is \$150,000 or less	whose AGI is \$112,500 or less
+ \$500 per child under 17 claimed as dependent		

The check amount decreases by \$5 for every \$100 in income above these income thresholds.

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K-State Research and Extension has developed a designated website to assist Kansas individuals, families, ag producers, and agencies during these unprecedented times with the COVID-19 pandemic: <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/news/stories/about-us/covid-19-extension.html>.

To reach Geary County K-State Research and Extension, call our office at 785-238-4161 or by email at ge@listserv.ksu.edu

Families and Food



Whether we planned to or not, many of us are spending more time at home because of the new coronavirus outbreak, and that likely means more time in the kitchen.

Now may be the best time to learn or review safe food handling practices and the reasons behind them, aimed at keeping foodborne illnesses at bay.

Kansas State University food safety specialists say the four main concepts include:

- 1) Clean. Wash hands and surfaces often.
- 2) Chill. Refrigerate promptly.
- 3) Separate. Don't cross-contaminate.
- 4) Cook. Cook to proper temperatures.

"Wash your hands often," said Karen Blakeslee, K-State Research and Extension food safety specialist. "Use water and any soap, rub your hands together for at least 20 seconds, rinse with water and dry with a clean towel. The soap bubbles and rubbing are your best defense for clean hands."

Looking for a quick and easy recipe you can give to your children or grandchildren to make? This recipe is a tried and true classic. Don't forget vegetables to add to the nutritional value!



mini pizzas

are fun for lunch or snack!

Arrange the ingredients on a plate.
Let your child make his own pizza.

1. Toast english muffins.
2. Top english muffins with pizza sauce.
3. Sprinkle with shredded mozzarella cheese.
4. Decorate your pizza!
5. Bake mini pizzas in a 375° oven for about 5 to 10 minutes.

Refrigerator biscuit dough can also be used for mini pizzas. Roll or press out a biscuit for each pizza, layer on the toppings and bake!



Make a happy face on your pizza!

Ham or turkey strips - eyes, nose or mouth.
Green or black olive slices - eyes.
Tomato, green or red pepper slices - smiles.
Shredded carrots, shredded cheddar cheese, or chopped spinach - hair.
Mushrooms - eyes, nose or mouth.



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Do you have an older family member or neighbor that is staying at home to avoid becoming ill with COVID-19? They are making a wise choice for their health but that doesn't mean they are doing well. More than ever, it is important to stay "in touch" with older residents in our communities and in our families. Take a moment to drop a card or note in the mail or pick up the phone to connect with them. Social distancing does not have to be social isolation. Check in with those you care about weekly and help them feel socially connected!



Geary County
P.O. Box 28
119 E. 9th Street
Junction City, KS 66441

Upcoming Geary County Extension Programs

Requires pre-registration. Call 238-4161 to pre-register

UPDATED INFORMATION:

In following the Kansas State University's CORVID-19 protocols, all Geary County K-State Research and Extension face-to-face programs have been suspended through July 4, 2020. Look in future newsletters for rescheduled program dates and times.

Listen for our continued local radio programs and newspaper articles. Then, check out our Facebook page noted below.

We look forward to our continued work with— and for— the residents of Geary County. Stay safe and healthy!



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