



Geary County

K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS

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December 2022

Ask the Agent

Q: I am hosting my extended family Christmas gathering. I know some of those attending have food allergies, but I'm not sure what they are. Do you have any suggestions for menu ideas?

A: More than 170 foods have been reported to cause allergic reactions, according to Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE), but the vast majority are caused by the "Big Nine": milk, eggs, nuts, fish, crustaceans, shellfish, wheat, soy and sesame.

Check out the inside story about *Hosting with Food Allergies in Mind*.

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

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BAKING AS A FAMILY

December 2022

Some of my favorite childhood memories come from time spent in the kitchen cooking and baking alongside my parents. The youngest of four children, I know the love of cooking and baking was passed on to all of us. At some point in our work histories, both my sisters and my brothers, like myself, found us working as a cook in a restaurant. Why? Because we were raised in a family kitchen where everyone pitched in.



Looking for a family activity that provides opportunities to share traditions, recipes and fun? Try baking together using these helpful tips from the Home Baking Association:

Do some prep work. Prep by reading and trying the recipe first. Add 20 to 30 minutes to explain, show and guide beginners and 15 minutes for intermediates or experienced bakers. Divide this prep work into two sessions if needed, or pre-measure or prepare some steps beforehand.

Keep it clean. Remember to wash hands and countertops before starting and cleaning up after you're done. Provide separate towels for hands and dishes, and frequently wash pot holders. Aprons or large t-shirts are great for keeping clothes clean during the baking process.

Take it one step at a time. Read the recipe, gather ingredients, and make sure nothing was left out. When short on time, or working with beginning or young bakers, prepare some steps ahead or do some steps one day and complete the mixing or baking the next.

Use the right tools. Pour liquids—water, oil, milk, honey and corn syrup—in a clear liquid measuring cup placed on the countertop. Read the amount at eye level. Use standard dry measuring cups and spoons for dry ingredients—flours, sugar, cocoa, brown sugar and cornmeal. Also use measuring spoons for small amounts of any ingredient.

Do a safe kitchen checklist. Turn handles of pans toward the center of the stove so sleeves or people passing by won't catch on them and spill. Keep cupboard doors and drawers closed unless in use. Use only dry hot pads or oven mitts because heat goes through damp mitts. When stirring or checking for doneness, tilt the lid away from you so steam is released away from your face.

Oven ins and outs. Before preheating, make sure the oven racks are in the right place for the pans and recipe. Preheat the oven as the recipe directs. Place pans in the oven so they do not touch each other or the oven sides. Do not place pans on racks directly below or above another pan. Keep clean, dry oven mitts or pads close by.

Baking can be a learning experience. Children and adults learn a lot together in the kitchen. The results of cooking or baking together contributes to stronger relationships at home and in groups. Children also learn time management, teamwork, following directions and problem solving—all important life skills. And the memories made are invaluable!

Portions of this article originally authored by Lisa Franzen-Castle, Nebraska Extension.

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Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

Food & Nutrition

Hosting with Food Allergies in Mind

Just the thought of classic holiday menu items this time of year, such as eggnog, pecan pie, or homemade dinner rolls make your mouth water with anticipation. But for a person with food allergies, any of these items can become the source of a serious allergic reaction resulting in life-threatening illness.

Don't be dismayed. With a little bit of creativity, knowledge and modification know-how, you can tweak the menu to make it allergy-friendly, appetizing and delicious!

As you plan out the menu dishes, take a look at each course you will be offering and add variety with food allergies in mind.

Appetizers: Your first allergy win will be in offering a variety of flavorful favorites. In addition to having the standard cheese and crackers fare, try setting out rice crackers with a variety of toppings such as hummus, sunflower seed butter, or chutney. Use quinoa or rice as an alternative to grains containing gluten. For example, instead of bread stuffed mushrooms, prepare stuffed mushrooms with quinoa. Black Bean Salsa can be paired with rice crackers or veggie sticks. Be creative and think outside the "cracker box" and use sliced cucumbers as the base for your pre-meal tastings!

Side Dishes: Vegetables come to mind automatically when thinking of side dishes. The wide variety of preparation methods—steam, roast, smash or sauté add a lot of latitude to your options for serving vegetables on the side. For a simple flavor, you can drizzle whisked balsamic and Dijon mustard over vegetables before cooking. Mashed sweet potatoes are a nice alternative to the traditional white mashed potatoes. Use a splash of coconut milk in your mashed vegetables to avoid possible dairy, soy or nut allergic reactions.

Main Dish: Your best bet to avoid allergic reactions to the main course meat is to avoid purchasing meat and poultry that has been pre-seasoned or pre-basted. Instead, take the "naked" main course aside and baste with olive oil and sprinkle with fresh herbs such as rosemary, sage, thyme or marjoram. Or, consider adding the juice and zest of fresh fruit such as lemon, orange, or grapefruit for a fresh and light distinct flavor.

Desserts: There is nothing better about capping off a tasteful traditional holiday meal than to serve a variety of dessert options. There are all the traditional desserts to start that come to mind—pumpkin pie, banana nut cake, buttermilk brownies, and perhaps cream puffs. But there are many more ways to satisfy the dessert cravings without having to worry about food allergies. For example, use a gluten-free pie crust recipe and your traditional pumpkin filling to satisfy the pumpkin pie craving. Try baked apples for a dessert option instead of apple pie.

Once you've decided what to serve, create a shopping list based on your selected recipes or adjustments to ensure you have everything you need. Shop as early as your perishable ingredients will allow so that you avoid the last-minute crowds which also leads to empty shelves.

Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, Deb Andres, encourages you to prepare food safely and be aware of other's dietary needs. There is no such thing as a secret ingredient. An allergic reaction, resulting in hives, itching, swelling, stomach pain, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, sneezing, coughing or wheezing, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing or swallowing or swelling of airways is not how you want a get-together to end. Be alert, know symptoms, and call 911 if symptoms warrant.

6 TIPS FOR MAKING HOLIDAY COOKIES

Beth Waitrovich, [Michigan State University Extension](#)

Food safety is an important part of making holiday cookies. Holiday baking is a tradition for many families. Cookies are a favorite holiday treat. Whatever you bake, keep it safe by following six simple food safety tips.

- Wash counter tops and hands before preparing your recipe. Use only clean utensils such as mixing bowls, baking pans and measuring spoons.
- Wash your hands again after handling raw eggs.
- Do not eat raw cookie dough which contains raw eggs, including licking the spoon. Bacteria can be present in raw eggs. Salmonella is one example of bacteria sometimes found in raw eggs.

All purpose flour has been the target of a recent recall due to contamination with E. coli. Again, to avoid getting sick, do not eat raw cookie dough.

If you want your cookies to taste fresh longer than a few days, freeze them until you are ready to use them. Package your cookies in freezer quality bags, containers,

etc. to preserve the quality of the cookies. Label and date the cookies so you know what is in each package.

Do not prepare baked goods when you are sick. Save the holiday baking until you are feeling better to avoid spreading germs to others.

Another way to share your favorite cookies is to make gifts of your favorite cookie recipe and the ingredients. Mix the dry ingredients together and place in a clean jar. Wet ingredients should not be added until the recipe is prepared. Print the recipe on a decorative card and attach the card to the jar along with a ribbon and a colorful piece of fabric to place over the lid of the jar. Recipes for preparing baking mix gifts can be found on the Geary County K-State Research and Extension website at: [Food Mixes in a Jar](#).



Mixes should be used within 3 months.

Food & Nutrition

Food Allergy Friendly Recipes

Black Bean Salsa

Makes: 26 Servings
Prep Time: 15 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 can black beans, drained and rinsed (15 ounce can)
- 1 green bell pepper (diced)
- 1 red bell pepper (diced)
- 1 onion (diced)
- 2 cans diced tomatoes (canned, drained)
- 2 cloves garlic (diced)
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon dried cilantro
- 3 tablespoons rice vinegar (can use other vinegar such as red wine vinegar or apple cider vinegar)



Directions

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Drain and rinse beans.
3. Put beans and tomatoes into large mixing bowl.
4. Dice peppers, onion, and garlic. Add to mixing bowl.
5. Mix cumin, cilantro, and vinegar. Pour on top of beans and vegetables.
6. Stir well.

This salsa uses fresh and canned vegetables that are available year-round and add flavor and beautiful color. Kids and grown-ups alike can't resist how good it tastes and smells.

Source: Cornell University Cooperative Extension Service



Gluten Free Pie Crust

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup shortening
- 1 1/4 cup rice flour
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 3-4 Tbsp cold water

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 °F. Cut shortening into flour and salt until crumbly; add water. Work until soft ball is formed. Place dough in pie pan and press in bottom and up the sides. Prick with a fork to prevent buckling. Bake for 12-15 minutes before adding filling. Choose a filling of your choice. Makes one pie crust.

Source: Utah State University Cooperative Extension, Marlene Herron

Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup quinoa
- 1 teaspoon Vegetable Broth
- 1 teaspoon Rosemary Leaf
- 1/2 cup water
- 4 Portobello mushrooms
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1/3 teaspoon plus 1/4 teaspoon sea salt, divided
- 1 cup white beans (rinsed and drained if using canned)
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon Black Pepper
- 1 cup packed baby spinach
- 2 ounces feta (optional)

Directions:

1. To make quinoa, combine quinoa, vegetable broth, rosemary, and water in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer, cover, and let cook for 10 minutes. After 10 minutes, remove quinoa from heat and let sit, still

covered, for another 5 to 10 minutes or until water is fully absorbed.

2. While quinoa is cooking, preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Remove the mushroom stems and lightly rub with 1 tablespoon olive oil. Place cap side up on a baking tray covered with parchment paper and sprinkle with 1/3 teaspoon sea salt. Roast mushrooms for 5 minutes.

Remove from oven and flip over.

3. Place white beans in a medium bowl and mash with a fork until beans are in small pieces. Add garlic, lemon juice, 1/4 teaspoon sea salt and black pepper, stirring until combined. Cut spinach into small strips and add to bean mixture along with feta. Stir until everything is well combined.

4. Divide quinoa mixture among the mushrooms caps. Return the mushrooms to the oven and bake for 15 minutes until filling is lightly brown. Serve immediately.

Note: To make vegan, simply leave the feta out of the filling.

Geary County

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Upcoming Geary County Extension Programs

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

December

26 & 27

Office Closed for Christmas Holiday. Limited staff can assist you December 28-30. Enjoy the holiday season with your family & friends!

January

2

Office Closed for New Year Holiday. Happy New Year!

9

Live Well Geary County Communal Meals resumes service at the Professional Learning Center, 920 W 6th St, Junction City at 5PM. Free meal available to low resourced individuals and families.

16

Office Closed for Martin Luther King Day.

February

1

Registration opens for Dining With Diabetes Class facilitated by Deb Andres and hosted by Konza Community Health Clinic. First session of four is set for March 7, 2023. Contact Deb Andres at 785-238-4161 for more information. A registration link will be provided in the January FCS Connection newsletter.

March

7

Dining With Diabetes Class begins. More information to come.

26

Walk Kansas 2023 begins and will run (or walk) thru May 20, 2023! Start thinking about who you want to have on your team of 6. It will be here before you know it!



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