



UNIVERSITY OF  
FLORIDA

EXTENSION

Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

# Living Well in Baker County

Dear Extension Friend:

March 2007

Things have been busy here at the office over the last few months and we've got many things planned. If there are some family and consumer science related issues that you might want a class on or more information about please contact our office and I'd be happy to work with

you and see what we can get set up.



May you have the luck of the Irish as you begin to Live Well in March!

If you have any questions about the information in this newsletter please contact our office or see the UF/

IFAS Extension website at [Solutionsforyourlife.com](http://Solutionsforyourlife.com) and, if you'd like to sign up a friend or neighbor to receive this newsletter you can do so at the Baker County Extension website:  
<http://baker.ifas.ufl.edu>.

Heather M. Futch

Multi-County FCS Agent  
Baker/Bradford Counties

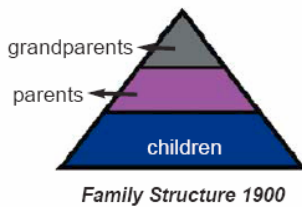


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## Relationships: Changes in the Structure of Families

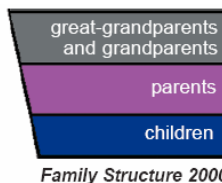
In the 1900's it was very common for families to have many children. It was also common for the grandparents to die before their grandchildren reached adulthood. The family structure looked like a pyramid with a large number of children and parents and very few grandparents. Today, however, the family model is



more like a lop-sided rectangle. There are a more generations alive at the same point in time. Families have fewer children, but more living grandparents and great-grandparents. By 2030 the boomers

will be grandparents and great-grandparents making the top of the pyramid quite broad; there will be fewer parents and children. These changes are

important for families and society. More members in the older generation may help families raise children. But, older members may require care and support. Policy makers must consider these changes as they plan for schools and healthcare. Our families must also remember this in planning for



retirement and care of their elders. Will you be able to afford to take care of your parents when they are unable to care for themselves?

## Special points of interest:

- *March is National Nutrition Month*
- *March is National Kidney Month*

## Money Matters: Are you getting ALL of your refund?

The time for filing your taxes is quickly arriving! The Internal Revenue Service has begun to urge taxpayers to check to see if they qualify for the telephone excise tax refund.



In the first release of this year's weekly filing season statistics, about 30 percent of all taxpayers did not request the telephone tax refund. The government stopped collecting the long-distance excise tax last August after several federal court decisions held that the tax does not apply to long-distance service as it is billed today. Federal officials also authorized a one-time refund of the federal excise tax collected on service billed during the previous 41 months, stretching from the beginning of March 2003 to the end of July 2006. The tax continues to apply to local-only phone service. To make the refund easier to figure, the government established a standard refund amount, based on personal exemptions, ranging from \$30 to \$60. If taxpayers have phone bills and other records, they can request the actual amount of excise tax paid. Though using the standard amount is optional, it is easy to figure and approximates the eligible amount for most individual taxpayers. Taxpayers only have to fill out one line on their return, and they don't need to present proof to the IRS. Out of the tax returns filed through Feb. 16,

more than 10 million taxpayers did not request the telephone tax refund. And nearly half of those returns — more than 4.8 million — were completed by a tax preparer. This tax season, try some of the pointers listed here to make things a little less stressful.

**File electronically.** Electronic-filing software flags often overlooked tax breaks and helps you figure them accurately and report them properly. If you use a professional tax preparer, ask that person to e-file your return.

**E-file for free.** If your income is \$52,000 or less, use the Free File link on IRS.gov to connect to a private-sector company offering free e-file services.

**Choose direct deposit.** Whether you file electronically or on paper, you can get your refund at least a week sooner by having it deposited directly into your checking or savings account.

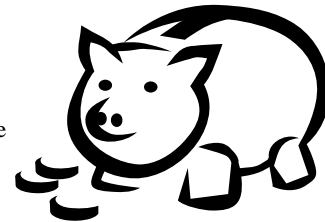
**Consider using the standard-refund amount for the telephone-tax refund.** Though using the standard amount is optional, it is easy to figure and approximates the eligible amount for most individual taxpayers. You only have to fill out one line on your return, and you don't need to present proof to the IRS. The standard amount, ranging from \$30 to \$60, is based on the number of exemptions you can claim on your return.

If you paid more than the standard amount, you may figure your refund using the actual amount of tax shown on your phone bills and

other records. Base your refund request on the three-percent federal tax paid, not the total phone bill. Do not count tax paid on local-only service. You must have the phone bills or other records adequate to support the amount you are requesting. These documents should not be sent along with the refund request but should be retained in case the IRS questions the amount requested.

**Do not file duplicate requests.** If you file a regular income-tax return, do not file Form 1040EZ-T. Designed exclusively for requesting the telephone-tax refund, this simple form is for people who don't need to file a regular income-tax return. If you want to take advantage of the earned income tax credit for low and moderate income workers, the child tax credit or other tax breaks, file a regular return and include your telephone-tax refund request on that return.

Stay away from **tax preparers** who falsely



claim that many, if not most, phone customers can get hundreds of dollars or more back under this program.

**Use the Telephone Excise Tax Refund**

section on the front page of IRS.gov. Here, you can download forms, find answers to frequently-asked questions and link to participating Free File partners.

Source: *IRS Newswire*

## Healthy Lifestyles: Am I at Risk for High Blood Pressure?

High blood pressure, or hypertension, can cause serious health problems. It makes your heart work harder and damages your blood vessels. That's why it's important to have your blood pressure checked regularly.

You are at higher risk for high blood pressure if you:

- Have a family history of high blood pressure
- Are a man over age 40
- Are a woman past menopause
- Are African American
- Are obese
- Are physically inactive

You can decrease your risk of getting high blood pressure by following some guidelines in your life.

They can help you control your blood pressure and reduce your health risks: aim for a healthy weight, be physically active each day, choose and prepare foods with less salt, eat at least five fruits and vegetables every day, drink alcoholic beverages in moderation. Following these guidelines will help keep you healthy. Your



family will benefit if they follow these guidelines.

**Why worry about body weight?** As body weight increases, blood pressure tends to rise. If you are overweight, you can reduce your risk of high blood pressure by losing weight. Even losing a few pounds can help prevent high blood pressure. If you are overweight and already have high blood pressure, losing weight can help lower it. There are charts that you can use to see if your weight is in a healthy range. You can also think of a healthy weight as one at which you feel good, and you are at low risk for disease. A healthy weight for you is one that you can maintain with a positive lifestyle. For more information on high blood pressure, weight management, or physical activity, contact: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Information Center, (301) 592-8573, [Http://www.nhlbi.gov](http://www.nhlbi.gov);

Healthfinder, from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services,

[Http://www.healthfinder.gov](http://www.healthfinder.gov); National Stroke Association, (800)

STROKES, [Http://www.stroke.org](http://www.stroke.org); 5 A Day Website:

[Http://www.5aday.com](http://www.5aday.com)

Source: *Bobroff, UF Extension*

# Food Safety: Salmonellosis - Updates on the Outbreak in Peanut Butter

Public health officials in multiple states, with the assistance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S Food and Drug Administration (FDA), are investigating a large multistate outbreak of Salmonella serotype Tennessee infections. FDA has advised consumers not to eat any Peter Pan peanut butter purchased since May 2006 and not to eat Great Value peanut butter with a product code beginning with 2111 purchased since May 2006. Peter Pan peanut butter is made in a single facility in Georgia. Great Value peanut butter with a product code beginning with 2111 is made in the same facility as Peter Pan peanut butter; Great Value peanut butter made by other manufacturers is not affected.

As of February 21st at 12 PM EST, the last time when numbers were updated, 329 persons infected with the outbreak strain of Salmonella Tennessee have been reported to CDC from 41 states. Among 249 patients for whom clinical information is available, 51 (21%) were hospitalized. No deaths have been attributed to this infection. Onset dates, which are known for 224 patients, ranged from August 1, 2006 to February 2, 2007, and 60% of these illnesses began after December 1, 2006.

FDA officials and the peanut butter manufacturer are working collaboratively to learn more about production of peanut butter to determine how it may have become contami-

nated.

Persons who think they may have become ill from eating peanut butter are advised to consult their health care provider. Persons who have Peter Pan peanut butter purchased since May 2006 or Great Value peanut butter with a product code beginning with 2111 purchased since May 2006 should discard the jar. Local health departments no longer need to collect jars for testing. Most persons infected with Salmonella develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps 12 to 72 hours after infection. The illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days, and most persons recover without treatment. However, in some persons the diarrhea may be so severe that the patient needs to be hospitalized. The elderly, infants, and those with impaired immune systems are more likely to have a severe illness.

The states that have reported cases are Alaska (1 case), Alabama (10), Arkansas (3), Arizona (5), California (3), Colorado (10), Connecticut (2), Florida (4), Georgia (18), Iowa (6), Illinois (7), Indiana (14), Kansas (8), Kentucky (9), Massachusetts (5), Maryland (2), Maine (1), Michigan (7), Minnesota (5), Missouri (16), Mississippi (5), Montana (2), Nebraska (2), Nevada (1), New Jersey (6), New Mexico (1), North Carolina (16), New York (34), Ohio (7), Oklahoma (10), Oregon (2),

Pennsylvania (25), South Carolina (6), South Dakota (5), Tennessee (18), Texas (14), Virginia (23), Vermont (4), Washington (4), Wisconsin (6), and West Virginia (2).

Salmonellosis leads to many illnesses and deaths each year in the United States. Many salmonella infections are the result of negligence and unsanitary processes on the part of farmers, ranchers, food packagers, food processors, restaurants and grocery stores. Salmonella live in the intestines of animals and humans. While most salmonella is traced to foods from animal sources such as meat, dairy and eggs, the bacteria can also contaminate vegetables if feces comes into contact with the vegetables during farming, processing or packaging. ConAgra has recalled these products from stores and ceased production in their Syl-vester, Georgia processing plant until the exact cause of contamination can be identified and eliminated. FDA is continuing to work closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and with state and local officials to identify how the contamination occurred in order to prevent similar foodborne illness outbreaks. For more information on the Salmonella Outbreak, visit the Food and Drug Administration's Website: [FDA.gov](http://FDA.gov) or the USDA's Website at [USDA.gov](http://USDA.gov).

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and [fda.gov](http://fda.gov)



## Events for March:



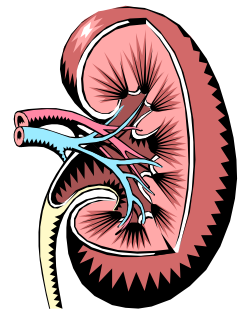
Healthy nutrition is definitely a cause with great importance to everyone. For this reason, March is recognized by the American Dietetics Association (ADA) as National Nutrition Month.



National Nutrition Month is an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of healthy eating and to also offer information about what steps can improve total health through healthy eating.



Kidneys filter your blood. They remove wastes and extra water. When the kidneys are diseased, they stop doing these jobs and wastes build up, damaging the body. If not treated, kidney disease can lead to kidney failure. But you can prevent kidney failure.



Early kidney disease has no symptoms. Most people don't know something is wrong until their kidneys are about to fail. The only way to tell if you have kidney disease is to get tested. Simple blood and urine tests are used to detect kidney disease.

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## ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

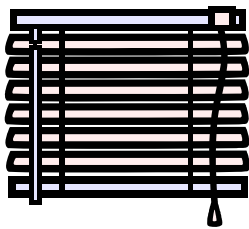
Extension programs are open to all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, handicap, or national origin. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person needing a special accommodation to participate in any activity, should contact the Baker County Cooperative Extension Service at 1025 West Macclenny Avenue, Macclenny, FL 32063 or telephone (904) 259-3520 no later than seven (7) days prior to the event. Hearing impaired persons can access the foregoing telephone by contacting the Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8770 (voice) or 1-800-955-8771 (TDD).

## House & Home: Window Management for Energy Conservation

Windows can provide light, ventilation and an enjoyable view. However, they also can make heating and cooling your home more difficult. On a hot day, more energy will come through just one square foot of clear glass than through an entire insulated wall. Between 20 to 50 percent of the total energy loss in a well-insulated structure occurs through and around the windows and doors.

The key to the problem is window management -- using windows to provide heat or coolness when needed, and covering them when they allow too much hot or cold air to enter. Heat always travels to a cooler surface, so you must block the flow of heat. You can be energy conscious and still create an aesthetic and efficient plan to manage windows.

Florida's long air-conditioning season and short heating season increase the importance of protecting windows, walls and sliding glass doors during hot weather.



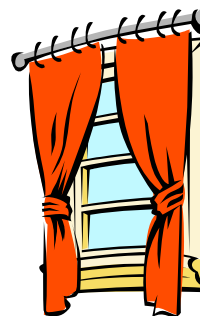
However, you still will want to allow solar heat to enter your home during cold weather, so you need flexible window treatments. According to the Florida Solar Energy Center, good shading strategies can save 10 to 20 percent of your cooling and heating energy.

The most effective method of preventing solar energy from entering windows is by shading from the outside. The effectiveness of the various treatments varies with the method of construction, window type and method of installation.

Consider how much sun enters each window. Good management of all types of window treatments is the key. For summer, east and west windows need greater protection from sunlight than north and south windows. In winter, south windows can capture solar heat and reduce heating loads, so the window treatments should be open during the day, and closed when the sun goes down. Color affects heat absorp-



tion. Dark colors absorb more heat than light colors. Shiny surfaces reflect more light than flat or dull surfaces. Loosely woven fabrics allow light to enter but provide privacy. However, they will also allow more heat to enter during the summer and more heat to be lost during the winter.



Reducing solar heat gain by a specific percentage, such as 50 percent, does not mean that your energy costs will be reduced by that percentage. The heat that is

added to a room by sunlight is only one factor of heat gain. Other factors affecting the amount of heat in a room include: warm air entering through the cracks and air spaces; heat carried through walls and ceilings; heat generated by lighting, equipment, the number of people and activities in the room; and the amount of humidity present. All these factors need to be considered and controlled to help reduce total energy costs.

*Source: Hammer, UF Extension*