



UNIVERSITY OF
FLORIDA

EXTENSION

Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Living Well in Baker County

Dear Extension Friend:

September 2007

The month of August has come and gone and in its path brought several changes to the Baker County Extension Office. Two new Extension Agents began their employment on August 10, 2007. Renee Gore has fulfilled the role as the 4-H Agent and I (Melanie Thomas) have been given the opportunity to be your new Family and Consumer Sciences Agent. I am very excited to be working here in Baker County and I look forward to meeting each and every one of you.

In this month's Newsletter I will be discussing several topics I hope you enjoy and find infor-

mative. In *Children* I will discuss ways to help curb those afternoon hunger pains. *Food Safety* will deal with the issues of battling bacteria and I hope you get moving after you read the *Healthy Lifestyles* article on being active. Living in Florida we all know it's hurricane time. I have included a page with Hurricane preparedness tips and *Money Matters* will discuss ways you can avoid becoming a victim of a con artist after an emergency situation and how to lower your monthly electric bill. *House & Home* will give you tips on how to keep those important family documents safe.

If you have any questions for me or have any ideas you would like to see in upcoming Newsletters please feel free to contact me at the Extension office.

Sincerely,

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Children: After School Snack Attacks

This time of year is always busy and a little crazy for most families with school aged children. As we all know school is back in session. Planning for this time of year can be very overwhelming. With that being said, have you thought of everything? What do you plan on doing about those afternoon hunger pains your child may experience?

Those hunger pains, what we like to call "Snack Attacks", typically hit children in the mid afternoon immediately after school. Make it a point to have ready-to-eat healthy snacks available.

Studies show that most people (especially kids) are not eating the recommended amount of fruit. MyPyramid recommends whole fruit, rather than fruit juice, for most of your fruit

choices. Fruit juices can contain high amounts of sugar and does not contain the fiber like whole fruit. Listed are a few tips on how you can increase your intake of fruit on a daily basis.

- Keep whole fruit such as grapes, peaches and plums in the fridge.
- Add a bowl of apples, oranges or bananas in the middle of your table.
- Have fruit such as pineapple, watermelon or cantaloupe already cut up and stored in the refrigerator.



- Keep single servings of applesauce, raisins or mixed fruit purchased in cans, cartons, or plastic containers. (Remember to make sure canned fruits are packed in the fruits natural juice or light syrup)

Remember to keep all cut fruit refrigerated. Talk to your kids and find out what they like and dislike. Keep those fruits you know they enjoy on hand and slowly introduce them to new fruits. You'll be surprised on what they may try, and actually like, if readily available. Another great way to get your child involved is to allow them to pick out the fruit they like at the grocery store. Teaching your child healthy eating habits now will create lifelong healthy eating habits.

Food Safety: Just Say No To Bacteria

A healthy diet should consist of a variety of different types of foods. However, we must all take proper care to prevent food-borne illnesses resulting from bacteria. Specific kinds of bacteria can make people very ill and can even cause death. However, we all have the ability to fight bacteria and keep our food bacteria free by following four simple rules of cleaning, separating, cooking and chilling.

Clean:

Start your fight with bacteria by washing your hands thoroughly with warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food. Try to use paper towels to dry your hands off. If you use a dish towel make sure it is fresh and clean. Kitchen dish towels should be frequently washed in your washing machine on the hottest cycle possible. Clean fruits and vegetables under running tap water, even if the skin will not be eaten. For those fruits and veggies with firm skins remember to rub firmly with your hands or a vegetable brush.

Separate:

Always keep raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs separate from ready to eat foods to avoid cross contamination. Before handling any raw meats wash your

hands again before you touch any ready to eat foods. Try and work with two separate cutting boards, one for raw meats and one for fruits and veggies. If you only have one cutting board available make sure you wash and sanitize it between uses. You can sanitize by mixing one teaspoon of chlorine bleach with one quart of water and then allow the mixture to sit on the surface for at least



one minute. Be sure and rinse the surface with hot running water. Never place ready to eat foods on the same unclean surface that raw meat, poultry or seafood has touched.

Cook:

Cooking foods to their proper temperature is the only way to insure all harmful bacteria has been killed. Use a food thermometer to make sure the internal temperature of all meats, seafood and egg dishes are cooked properly. Cutting the food open and looking at the color is NOT a good source of doneness. The internal temperature of roasts and steaks should be 145F. Poultry should reach a temperature of 165F, ground meat 160F and seafood 145F. It is recommended that eggs always be cooked until the yolk and white are firm and not runny.

Chill:

Cold temperatures slow the growth of harmful bacteria. Refrigerate food quickly. As soon as you get home from the grocery store, immediately refrigerate or freeze the meats, poultry, seafood and eggs. Cooked food and cut up fruits and vegetables should never be left at room temperature for more than two hours. Refrigeration should occur within one hour if the room temperature is above 90F. Never defrost or marinate your food at room temperature. Defrosting should be completed under cold water, in the refrigerator or in the microwave. Marinating should always be completed in the refrigerator. If you have a very large amount of food, divide it into several smaller containers and refrigerate to allow quicker cooling time.

Following the guidelines above will help significantly reduce the chances of becoming sick from a food-related bacteria illness. Many consumers do not think about food safety practices until they themselves, or a family member, have been affected. Just remember to clean, separate, cook and chill and you'll be on the path to safety. For more information on food safety contact your local Extension Office.

Healthy Lifestyles: Lets Get Physical

If you think physical activity is limited to exercise classes and sports, think again! Physical activity is any body movement that uses energy. It includes not only sports, but also daily activities such as house or yard work and walking. Regular physical activity not only keeps the heart, lungs, bones, muscles, and joints healthy, but it can also decrease stress, heart disease, high blood pressure and obesity.

So you may be asking yourself, how much physical activity do I need? Aim for at least 30 minutes (60 minutes for kids) of moderate-intensity activity most days of the week. Moderate-intensity activity should slightly increase your breathing and heart rate. Try walking briskly or climbing stairs. At least twice a week, do some stretching exercises. Stretch after your moderate-intensity activity, when your muscles are warm. Look for any chance to be active during the day. Play tag with your kids, take the stairs instead of the elevator, or park

a few blocks from the store and walk. It all adds up! If physical activity sounds overwhelming, don't despair! If you haven't been active, start slowly and increase your activity gradually. Remember, doing something is better than doing nothing!

You say you don't have enough time and energy to exercise or, you're just not motivated because it's boring. Listed below are just a few tips to help you beat those barriers.

Not enough time

The goal is at least 30 minutes of activity during the day. It doesn't have to be all at once! Try to get up early for a short walk, climb the stairs during your lunch break or ride a stationary bike while watching TV.

If you have time to watch TV, you have time to be physically active!

Too boring

Choose activities that you enjoy and

invite a friend along. Vary your activities and routines--try a different walking path.

Not motivated

Set realistic short and long-term goals. Reward yourself when you reach them! Keep an activity log so you can look back and see how far you've come. Find an exercise partner!

Not enough energy

Physical activity actually increases your energy level. Be active for 5 minutes and if you're tired after that time, stop. But chances are you'll feel like continuing!

Your body will tell you if you're doing too much. Pay attention to early warning pains and don't push yourself so much that your activity is no longer enjoyable. Seek medical advice if you become dizzy or have an injury, severe muscle soreness, or chest pain. It's easy to get started and make regular physical activity a lifelong habit!

House & Home: Protecting Important Papers From A Disaster

Disasters are a part of life. Unfortunately, all of us living in Florida deal with natural disasters all too often. Whether the disaster is a hurricane, tornado or a terrorist attack preparation is the key to survival and to clean up after the event. Knowing where your family's records and valuable documents are can save critical time in an evacuation.

Keep your important documents in a folder, brief case or other carrying case. Place the case in a secure but easily accessed location in your home. Then if you need to evacuate you can just grab and go.

In order to save space in your carrying case, you may want to scan photographs to a computer disk. You may also want to videotape the contents of your home to supplement your household inventory. If you use a software package to keep track of your finances keep a back-up copy with your "on the go" papers and monthly update the back-up disk.



Why Should You Be Concerned About Important Papers?

In case of a disaster, it would be difficult to remember or identify exactly what you lost. Valuable time and money could be lost while you try to remember

what possessions you owned or replace lost documents. Therefore it is much better to protect valuable papers than to replace them.

Important papers to keep in your evacuation case include:

- Birth, adoption, marriage and death certificates
- Passports
- Deeds
- Leases
- Insurance policies
- Social Security records
- Wills
- Titles and other ownership papers.
- Credit card information
- Bank Account information (name, account #, phone #, etc)
- Driver's License

Source: Turner, University of Florida

“Then if you need to evacuate you can just grab and go.”

Events for September:

National Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Month

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has named September National Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Month. The Recovery Month effort aims to promote the societal benefits of alcohol and drug use disorder treatment, honor the contributions of treatment providers and promote the message that recovery from alcohol and drug use disorders in all its forms is possible.

September marks the beginning of National Apple Month. Originally founded in 1904 as National Apple Week, it was expanded in 1996 to a 3 month promotional window from September to November. National Apple Month's mission is to increase industry sales and consumer awareness and usage of apples and apple products. For more information on National Apple Month visit www.usapple.org.



Hurricane Preparedness Tips:

Before a Hurricane:



To prepare for a hurricane, you should take the following measures:

- Prepare a disaster kit with water, food, first aid supplies, clothing and bedding.
- Make plans to secure your property.

Permanent storm shutters offer the best protection for windows. A second option is to board up windows with 5/8" marine plywood, cut to fit and ready to install. Tape does not prevent windows from breaking.

- Install straps or additional clips to securely fasten

your roof to the frame structure. This will reduce roof damage.

- Be sure trees and shrubs around your home are well trimmed.
- Clear loose and clogged rain gutters and downspouts.
- Determine how and where to secure your boat.

During a Hurricane:

If a hurricane is likely in your area, you should:

- Listen to the radio or TV for information.
- Secure your home, close storm shutters, and secure outdoor objects or bring them indoors.
- Turn off utilities if instructed to do so. Otherwise, turn the refrigerator thermostat to its coldest setting and keep its doors closed.
- Turn off propane tanks. Avoid using the phone, except for serious emergencies.
- Secure your boat if time permits.
- Ensure a supply of water for sanitary purposes such as cleaning and flushing toilets. Fill the bathtub and other large containers with water.

You should evacuate under the following conditions:

- If you are directed by local authorities to do so. Be sure to follow their instructions.
- If you live in a mobile home or temporary structure—such shelters are particularly hazardous during hurricanes no matter how well fastened to the ground.
- If you live in a high-rise building—hurricane winds are stronger at higher elevations.
- If you live on the coast, on a floodplain, near a river, or on an inland waterway.
- If you feel you are in danger.

If you are unable to evacuate, go to your safe room. If you do not have one, follow these guidelines:

- Stay indoors during the hurricane and away from windows and glass doors.
- Close all interior doors—

secure and brace external doors.

- Keep curtains and blinds closed. Do not be fooled if there is a lull; it could be the eye of the storm - winds will pick up again.
- Take refuge in a small interior room, closet, or hallway on the lowest level.
- Lie on the floor under a table of another sturdy object.

For more information on how to prepare for a hurricane contact the local Extension office or you can visit the FEMA website at <http://www.fema.gov>



Money Matters: How To Lower Your Electric Bill

With the temperatures soaring into the mid to upper 90s we've all seen an increase in our electric bills. Some have seen a much higher increase than others. I would like to take the opportunity to give you a few tips in how to reduce your monthly usage and save the precious dollar.

Do you know what uses the most electricity in your home? You guessed it, it's the heating and air conditioning. According to Clay Electric heating and air conditioning consists anywhere between \$25—\$250+ towards your monthly bill with the water heater and refrigerator/freezer coming in second and third. Believe it or not your lights only make up about five dollars of your monthly bill.

What can I do to keep the bill down?

- Set your thermostat to 78 degrees or higher when air conditioning and 68 degrees or lower when heating.

The operating costs increase approximately 5% per month for every degree below 78 and above 68.



- Change your filter monthly. (change the filter every time you get your bill in the mail)
- Keep your doors and windows closed.

- Use your ceiling fan only when your in the room. Do not leave it on at all times.
- Run your bathroom exhaust fan for 20 minutes after bathing or showering to remove the humidity in the area

Humidity in the home increases the operating cost of the air conditioning and decreases comfort levels.

- Give your water heater a break. Set your thermostat to 120 degrees and use cold water when washing clothes.

For more information on how to conserve energy contact your local Extension office or visit www.soultionsforyourlife.com

Don't Miss The Chance to Jump Into The New 4-H Year

You are invited to attend the

Baker County

Fall 4-H Kickoff



4-H has programming for youth ages 5 thru 18

on Thursday, Sept. 6th, 2007

at 6:30 till 8:30 pm

in the Ag Center Auditorium.

(Drop by as you please)

Please bring your family and friends to sign up for the New 4-H Year.

Hotdogs and Chips will be provided.

RSVP, if possible, to 904-259-3520 by 9/3/07 to help us count for supper

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Money Matters: Protect Your Money During An Emergency

During emergency situations such as hurricane damage most people strive to be helpful to others. Unfortunately, individuals do exist who will take advantage of the situation and use it to victimize others for their own personal gain.

When an emergency situation arises it leaves many people feeling confused, insecure and vulnerable. These kind of feelings make a person more susceptible to deception and fraud. Con artists use any type of emergency, from hurricanes to floods to terror, to play on our fears and emotions to get us to buy overpriced, worthless, or unneeded goods and services. They use pressure sales tactics and insist on your immediate action.

When there are periods of high concerns scams appear. Con artists use fear and most scams will relate to protection from injury or survival. If property damage has occurred the scams will target concerns relating to cleanup and rebuilding. Fraud will include shoddy, overpriced cleanup work, unqualified builders, unethical lenders, overpriced credit, etc.

Victims must be cautious about employing strangers to remove trees and do repair work. Every agreement and credit contract should be read carefully and evaluated before it is signed. Shoddy workmanship and price gouging are common in crises. Beware of door-to-door salesmen. Sometimes un-

dependable workers enter a damaged area, make cheap repairs, and leave before the residents discover that the repairs are inadequate. If your local contractor cannot do the work, ask them to recommend someone.

Defend Yourself



Your best defense against getting ripped off is a healthy skepticism. Remain calm so you are able to make rational decisions:

Get information from unbiased, reliable sources.

Do not let anyone pressure you into making instant decisions.

Be very skeptical of any claims that promise unrealistic results. Keep in mind that if the promise sounds too good to be true, chances are it is.

You are your own best protection. Although there are laws that provide many protections, con artists usually take advantage of you and then disappear before you have time to realize what just happened. Report any illegal action to authorities. However, you are much better off avoiding being victimized.

Sources: Fegan and Olexa, University of Florida
Harrison and Turner, University of Florida