

Living Well

Summer Issue

Dear Extension Family,

The most enjoyable time of the year for me is the summer month's here in Florida. While the days are beautiful and the nights are breathtaking we must always keep in mind that these fun filled summer days can be harmful if not prepared. Remember to stay hydrated while out enjoying these beautiful days and don't forget the sunscreen!

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Does your refrigerator need a makeover? In the Heart Healthy section find out how you can do just that. In the Home and Energy section I will also discuss ways to make sure your family is prepared for Natural Hazards such as inclement weather. Feel free to indulge in the recipe of the month as well. I hope that you find this newsletter as enjoyable to read as I have enjoyed providing this information. Have a safe fun and relaxing summer! Feel free to contact me at anytime if you have any questions or comments.

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Special points of interest:

- * Simple tips to makeover your fridge with healthy choices.
- * Summer Grilling Safety
- * Refreshing Summer Recipe



Refrigerator Makeover

When you open the door of your refrigerator what do you see? Is it over stuffed? Is there currently a science experiment taking place in the back of it? Sometimes we don't give the refrigerator the attention it deserves. When it comes to eating right the refrigerator is the mission control to our bodies. We place the desired food in it to feed our families and fuel our bodies.

Are you concerned about ways to feed your family better options? Try these quick tips to make over your refrigerator and include foods that are quick healthy options.

- ⇒ Low-fat cheese is a great option for a simple snack, making an omelet or a quesadilla. Low-fat cheese reduces saturated fat.
- ⇒
- ⇒ Fruits and vegetables, precut, fresh, canned or frozen are convenient for quick snacks, smoothies or an after dinner dessert. Incorporate green, red, yellow and orange vegetables into your diet. Pair vegetables with your favorite dips or hummus.
- ⇒ Drinking water instead of sugary drinks is a healthy choice and beneficial in hydrating our bodies in the hot summer months.
- ⇒ Nuts and seeds are a delicious snack choice and last longer in the fridge.
- ⇒ Eggs are a quick and convenient snack . Add to salads, serve deviled or boiled.
- ⇒ Greek yogurt can be filling and can be topped with fruit, cereal or nuts for an energizing breakfast . Add chocolate chips and cinnamon for a healthy dessert.
- ⇒ Hummus can be paired with almost anything. Spread onto a sandwich or wrap. Use as a dip with your favorite vegetables.
- ⇒ Fresh salsa with tomatoes, jalapenos, cilantro and onions is a fun way to incorporate veggies into your diet. Pair with a small serving of whole grain tortilla chips or serve with grilled chicken or fish to spice up dinner.

Remember to always use the Nutrition Facts Label to choose beverages and foods. The label contains information about total sugars, fats and calories. Reading the label can help you make better choices.

*For your safety always maintain a temperature of 40 degrees or below to keep your food safe.

Home and Energy

Protecting Your Family During Natural Disasters

Your home is your castle. It keeps your family and possessions safe from the elements. Your home is also one of your major investments. Natural hazards such as tornadoes, hurricanes, tropical storms, high winds and even floods can threaten your most important investment. Some common myths as to why families don't prepare include:

- ⇒ Surviving a previous storm
- ⇒ Assuming it won't be that bad
- ⇒ It can't happen to you
- ⇒ The government will come to the rescue
- ⇒ You don't live near the coast, so you are safe

The truth of the matter is that we cannot assume anything about how a storm will be. Surviving a previous storm just means you were lucky. Hurricane Katrina is a grave reminder as to how unpredictable weather can be, so let's take steps now to prepare for what could be.

Steps you can do to prepare include:

- ⇒ Gather all emergency supplies. Most of these items are already in your home. Keep emergency supplies stocked. Make or purchase a first aid kit.
- ⇒ Create an evacuation plan for natural events such as hurricanes, tornadoes, floods and wildfires. Exercise the plan by performing drills. Become aware of the state evacuation plan on safe driving routes.
- ⇒ Know your property and take appropriate action.
- ⇒ Strengthen your home. Consider many options to protect windows, garage and doors.
- ⇒ Don't gamble with your home stay covered with insurance.

If you have concerns about whether you are natural hazard prepared pick up a free Natural Hazard handbook at the Extension Office for the latest information on how to prepare.



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Summer Grilling and Food Safety 101

Summer grilling season is in full affect. This is one of my favorite times of the year because I enjoy cooking outside. When preparing your favorite summer dishes keep in mind these steps to insure your food is safe for the family to enjoy.

- ⇒ When purchasing meats, seafood and poultry make sure the package is sealed completely and stays cool until you get home and refrigerate immediately.
- ⇒ Separate raw and ready to eat foods in the shopping cart. Have the cashier wrap and bag separately.
- ⇒ Refrigerate or freeze meats as soon as possible. If refrigerated make sure the temperature is set to 40 degrees or below. This preserves freshness and prevents bacteria from growing.
- ⇒ Meat and poultry should be cooked to a safe temperature to destroy harmful bacteria that may be present. Color of meat and poultry is not a good indicator of safety. Use a food thermometer to make sure meats have reached a safe minimum internal temperature.
- ⇒ Keep Hot Food Hot! After cooking meat and poultry on the grill, keep it hot until served — at 140 °F or warmer. Keep cooked meats hot by setting them to the side of the grill rack, not directly over the coals where they could overcook.
- ⇒ Refrigerate any leftovers promptly in shallow containers. Discard any food left out more than 2 hours (1 hour if temperatures are above 90 °F)

Culinary Corner

Grilled Pesto Chicken

Ingredients

½ cup fresh basil leaves,
chopped
1 clove garlic
1/4 cup grated Parmesan
cheese
kosher salt and fresh pepper to
taste
1 ½ tbsp olive oil
1 lb skinless chicken breast,
cut into 1-inch cubes
12 cherry tomatoes
8 skewers

Directions

In a food processor pulse basil, garlic, parmesan cheese, salt and pepper until smooth. Slowly add the olive oil while pulsing. Combine the raw chicken with pesto and marinate a few hours in a bowl. Soak wooden skewers in water at least 30 minutes. Beginning and ending with chicken, thread chicken and tomatoes onto 4 pairs of parallel skewers to make 4 kebabs total. Cook on grill or pan until chicken is cooked through, about 2 to 3 minutes. Serve with salad or favorite veggies.
