

The Extension Cord



Health and Human Sciences

November & December 2022

Hello,

The last two months of 2022 are here, can you believe it? In the coming weeks, places of work will be completing end of year protocols, we will all be gearing up for another holiday season, and plans for the next year will begin.

In this newsletter you will find helpful tips when using your slow cooker, upcoming programs, and details about the 9th allergen addition to the United States' most common list.

Check out the program dates and plan to spend your lunch hour with me on December 14th to make and take a relaxing bath salt combination that can help you unwind during this busy season. We will talk about herbs, drying herbs, and the benefits of "doing it yourself". Whatever you create is yours to take home and enjoy!

One of my favorite herbs and scents is lavender. Most lavender is used for scenting potpourri and sachet mixtures. It also can be used in a culinary fashion in beverages as well as for pork, fish and chicken dishes. Caution is advised though to use it sparingly as a little goes a long way. Fun Fact- The flavor of herbs comes from oils in the cell walls of plants.

-Jessica Riffle

Upcoming Public HHS Programming

Date	When	Where	What
Nov. 4	12:00 pm	Fulton County Public Library	Importance of Sleep- Adults
Nov. 16	11:00 am	Kewanna Public Library	Safe Sleep Practices- Infants & beyond
Dec. 14	12:00 pm	Fulton County Public Library	DIY Herbal Bath Products- Make and Take
Dec. 21	11:00 am	Kewanna Public Library	Spice Up Your Life- Make and Take

Safe Sleep Practices

Safe Sleeping Practices for Infants addresses changes that have come about over the years. Sleep baby on their back or front? What about side sleeping? Pacifier use, or no? No blankets?!?! How will I keep baby warm? Questions make sense, as there have been many changes to recommendations of how to sleep infants safely to reduce the risk of SIDS.

This session for grandparents or other family caregivers will discuss what SIDS is, strategies to sleep infants safely (reducing the risk of SIDS), and why those strategies are important. Note: This session does not count as the required safe sleep training for child care providers.

Mastering the Slow Cooker

With all the new small kitchen appliances, the slow cooker has remained a true staple in many home kitchens. The attraction of the slow cooker is the “set it and forget it” mentality. Occasionally this hands-off approach can still result in underdone vegetables and overdone meat.

Layering within the slow cooker does make a difference in the success of a dish. The heating elements are on the bottom and sides of a slow-cooker so tougher vegetables should be placed on the bottom and up the sides. **Tougher vegetables** include potatoes, turnips, parsnips, carrots, beets, and winter squash.

The next layer can include **not-so-tough vegetables** such as celery, fennel, green beans, and bell peppers.

Any **meat and/or poultry** should be placed above hearty vegetable to prevent overcooking. This also allows the meat juices drip down and flavor the entire pot. Defrost meat or poultry in the refrigerator and cut into smaller pieces before putting in the slow cooker for more even cooking.

The **quick-cooking, more delicate, vegetables** and canned beans need to be placed on top to preserve texture and individual flavors. Delicate vegetables include zucchini, spinach, cauliflower, broccoli, and peas.

Last but not least, do not forget to **incorporate liquid** into the mix. The liquid like water, broth, or juice is used to prevent food from sticking.

Sautee fresh garlic, onion, or ground meat first **before** adding them to the slow cooker. This allows the extra fat from ground beef to be removed and the powerful flavors of garlic and onion to be more available.

Hearty herbs like rosemary and thyme also make great toppers to food in the slow cooker.

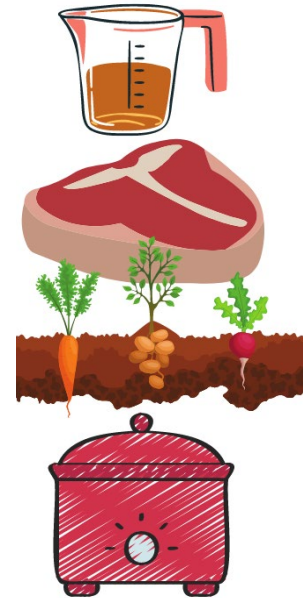
If you prefer the flavor of more **delicate herbs** like parsley, cilantro, and basil, wait until the dish is about to be served.

Soups, stews, chili and casseroles made with ground meat are usually fine to cook on high. Dishes that include poultry tend to become dry if cooked on high.

The moist heat of the slow cooker creates a good environment to cook **dry beans**. Soak dry beans overnight, drain, pour into the crockpot and cover with 2 inches of water, add your favorite spices, and the result will be textured beans much like those that are canned.

Dry spices like oregano, cumin, or black pepper flavor beans well and can withstand long cooking times of a slow cooker.

As tempting as it may be, **don't peek!** Lifting the lid even once can delay food's doneness by 20-30 minutes. Peeking early on in the cooking process can also increase the risk of keeping food in the temperature danger zone, where bacteria can grow rapidly.



Slow Cooker Chili

Ingredients: 1 lb. ground turkey or beef 2 Tbsp. oil 1 bell pepper, seeded and diced 2 tsp. minced garlic 1 medium onion, diced 1 cup celery, diced 2 (15.5 oz.) cans of beans (kidney, pinto, black, or red) 2 (15.5 oz.) can of diced tomatoes 2 Tbsp. chili powder 1-2 Tbsp. honey	Directions: 1. Brown ground meat in a skillet until cooked through. Put in slow cooker. 2. Add oil, bell pepper, garlic, onion, and celery to slow cooker. 3. Add beans and tomatoes to slow cooker and stir. 4. Add chili powder and honey to slow cooker. 5. Turn to high for 15 minutes, then cook on low for 6-10 hours. 6. Serve warm with whole grain crackers or bread!
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Try This! Additional Items for a Variety of Flavors in Chili

Note: tips are for Chili cooked on Stovetop

- To add heat – use hot sauce, pickled jalapenos or cayenne pepper.
- To make the meat savory – add Worcestershire sauce.
- Semi-sweet chocolate will add a faint hint of sweet and bitter. Plus, it has a richer taste.
- Lime Juice and vinegar will add a tanginess.
- Sugar, whether it be white, brown or a substitute, will add a sweetness.

Another tip – if your chili is too thin, try simmering with the lid off or add more beans, which adds starch to help thicken the soup.

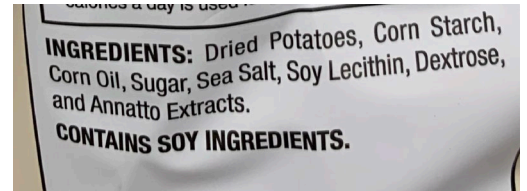
It's official, the 9th major allergen is Sesame.

The Food Allergy Safety, Treatment, Education and Research Act (FASTER) was signed into law in April that names sesame as the ninth major food allergen in the United States. The law requires explicit listing of the ingredient on most packaged foods sold in the U.S., regardless of whether they are made in the country. This new labeling requirement will be enforced starting January 1, 2023.



Previously eight major allergens were recognized and required similar disclosures on food labels. Milk, wheat, soybean, eggs, fish, shellfish, peanuts, and tree nuts were believed to be the culprit behind 90% of the food allergies in the United States.

Food labels are required to list the common or usual name of the food allergen in a **“Contains” statement** near the ingredient list.



Sesame may be listed within the ingredients in multiple forms, making it difficult for consumers to know what they are eating. Benne, gingelly, gomasio, halvah, sesame flour, sesame oil, sesame paste, sesame salt, sesame seed, sesamol, sesamum indicum, sesemolina, tahini, sim, and til are all sesame ingredients. Sesame could also be present in foods as ‘natural flavor’ or ‘spices’. These name disguises make the universal identification important for the safety of children and adults.

It’s estimated that more than 1.5 million children and adults may have a sesame allergy. The likelihood of this population having an additional food allergy is about 75%. Sesame’s growing popularity and the increased interest in global flavors is one of the possible contributions to this increasing allergen rate in the United States. Reactions can be mild or severe. Mild reactions usually present as hives but reactions can also be as severe as anaphylaxis or multiple organ system issues.

If you suspect a sesame, or any other food, allergy, visit your physician and seek a medical diagnosis. Allergies and intolerances that are self-diagnosed can lead to unnecessary diet restrictions and negatively influence nutritional status. And remember, label changes do not go into effect until January 1, 2023. Keep reading the ingredient lists on food labels until then!

Staying Scam Safe this Holiday Season

- 1.) **Spot imposters.** Scammers often pretend to be someone you trust, like a government official, a family member, a charity, or a company you do business with. Don’t send money or give out personal information in response to an unexpected request – whether it comes as a text, a phone call or an email.
- 2.) **Do online searches.** Type a company or product name into your favorite search engine with words like “review”, “complaint”, or “scam”.
- 3.) **Don’t believe your caller ID.** Technology makes it easy for scammers to fake caller ID information, so the name and number you see aren’t always real.
- 4.) **Don’t pay upfront for a promise.** Someone might ask you to pay in advance for things like debt relief, credit and loan offers, mortgage assistance, or a job. They might even say you’ve won a prize, but first you have to pay taxes or fees. If you do, they will probably take the money and disappear. Learn where to get real help with these issues at consumer.ftc.gov.
- 5.) **Don’t pay with gift cards.** Companies do not accept payment in giftcards.
- 6.) **Hang up on robocalls.** If you answer the phone and hear a recorded sales pitch, hang up and report it to the FTC.
- 7.) **Be skeptical about free trial offers.** Some companies use free trials to sign you up for products and bill you every month until you cancel. Before you agree to a free trial, research the company and read the cancellation policy. And always review your monthly statements for charges you don’t recognize.

