

unaware of how much they spend Either way, there is room to save, said Mary Meck Higgins,

Cost-saving ideas

Kansas State University associate professor in human nutrition, who suggested three cost-cutting ideas to eat well for less. To begin, Higgins, a K-State

Research and Extension nutrition specialist and a registered dietitian, recommended keeping receipts for grocery purchases and restaurant meals for one month to assess actual food costs.

She also recommended carrying a notepad or card in a purse or wallet to jot down the cost of foods purchased from occasional sources. A vending machine at work, coffee shop and event concession stand are examples.

Spending as little as \$5 a week on such purchases can add up to more than \$250 a year, she said.

According to Higgins, people often are surprised to learn how much they are spending.

Making a decision to spend less on food can yield a savings and lead to better health, more time with family and friends, and pleasurable meals, she said.

Her first suggestion is to eat more meals at home, because "eating at home is typically less expensive than eating out, where others are paid to prepare your

Higgins reported that eating at home will save time as well as

Doing so also can be healthier, said Higgins, who noted that restaurant meals can be higher in calories, saturated fat, and sodium that can contribute to heart disease, stroke, diabetes, some cancers, osteoarthritis and other

At home, she said "you'll know what you are eating, how food has been prepared, and be more able to measure portions that will contribute to health."

To begin the transition, she sug-

ferring the expense to an entertainment, rather than food, budget.

Higgins suggested brushing up on cooking skills with family and friends, and noted: "A simple meal can be satisfying and take less time (to prepare) than it takes to drive to a restaurant."

### **Simplify Meal Planning**

If not in the habit of cooking, focus on gradual change and skill-building recipes, said Higgins, who manages the challenges in planning, timing and cooking healthy meals to please an active

In the process, she's fine-tuned her shopping skills, and shared time- and money-saving ideas:

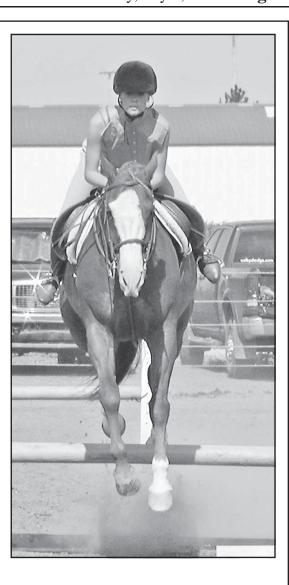
- Plan weekly or monthly menus, and rotate them.
- Plan snacks (not necessarily pre-packaged snack foods) to pro-
- vide energy between meals. Plan to cook when time is available; double or triple a recipe to wrap and freeze for future meals when less time is available.
- · Cook once, and eat two or three times with what Higgins likes to call "planned overs." For example: Choose a beef pot roast on Sunday that also will provide enough cooked beef to freeze for a hearty vegetable soup or stew later, and use what is left for quick barbecued beef sandwiches for a meal after a busy work day.

Roasting a whole chicken or turkey can be a favorite with families, yet also provide for subsequent meals that might include chicken salad, a hot turkey sandwich, or chicken or turkey casse-

or less between work and a scheduled family activity? Take advantage of leftovers, "planned overs," or choose a meal of cold sandwiches or an easy "breakfast". menu, such as a glass of low-fat milk with scrambled eggs, carrot sticks, whole grain toast and fruit



Michael Maurath, of the Golden Prairie Extension District, led his horse around the small arena on the Thomas County Fairgrounds (below) during the 4-H horse show Saturday. Another rider, Kortney Bredemeier (right), went over a jump. Thomas County Extension Agent Diann Gerstner described the 33 young riders who registered as "a very good turnout."



## Starbucks required to post calorie count of drinks

By Candice Choi

AP Food Industry Writer

NEW YORK (AP) – Starbucks has a new way to wake up its customers: showing the calories in its drinks.

The Seattle-based coffee chain says it has started posting calorie counts on menu boards nationwide, ahead of a federal regulation • Tight on time, with an hour that would require it to do so.

> Calorie counts on menus are already required in some parts of the country, including New York City.

But starting June 25, Starbucks Corp. says customers at its more than 10,000 U.S. locations will be able to see that there are 300 calories in a small caramel Frappuccino and 230 calories in a small Iced Caffe Mocha.

Pastry cases will also show cal- customers choices, such as adding plans to post calorie information orie information, in case customers want to save some calories and ing 2 percent milk the standard for McDonald's USA at the time said opt for a Morning Bun (350 calories) instead of a blueberry scone (460 calories).

The move by Starbucks comes as the Food and Drug Administration irons out the details of a regulation that would require companies with more than 20 locations to post calorie information on their menus. Other chains including McDonald's Corp. have also moved ahead with posting the information, saying they're providing it to be more transparent rather than because they're being forced

In its announcement, Starbucks highlighted the various steps it counts affect what people choose has taken over the years to give to order. But in announcing its

sugar-free syrup in 1997 and makcore beverages in North America in 2007. The company notes that it al-

ready provides nutrition informa-

tion on its website, through its

iPhone app and with printed brochures in cafes. It also says there are numerous ways people can reduce the calories in their drinks, such as by asking for non-fat milk, sugar-free syrup or no whipped A representative for the com- next year.

pany did not know what percentage of customers ask to have their drinks customized. It's not clear how posted calorie

ready put calorie information on their menus, a "large majority" are waiting for the FDA to issue its final guidelines, according to Sue Hensley, a spokeswoman for the

National Restaurant Association.

nationwide last year, the head of

that providing the information

doesn't really change the compa-

While a few national chains al-

ny's overall menu mix.

The group expects the regulation to take effect by sometime



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