

Research food preservation for health and safety before canning

Tis the season for fresh fruits and vegetables, whether it's from your garden or local market. So now is the time to preserve some of those great fruits and vegetables.

I don't have room in this column to tell you even a fraction of what you need to know about food preservation so I am just going to hit a few highlights and invite you to stop by the Extension office and pick up some of our publications or go to www.ksre.ksu.edu/bookstore and type in the search box what you want information on. I found that using the words "preserving" or "freezing" searches better than "canning." For example, "preserving vegetables" or "freezing peaches" worked best.

If you really want to get into preserving I recommend the Ball Blue Book Guide to Preserving. Let me know if you would be interested in attending a food preservation class. If there is enough interest, I would be glad to hold one.

Freezing foods is probably the easiest and fastest form of food preservation, but there is more to it than just washing the produce off and sticking it in a zip-closing bag. Some foods have to be blanched - dipped in boiling water for a certain amount of time to kill enzymes and bacteria that could break down the food's quality. In most cases with freezing, the food will still be safe to eat without blanching, but the quality may be greatly diminished.

The biggest problem with freezing is having the freezer space. If you don't have freezer space, you will need to consider canning.

Canning is fairly easy, but there are specific rules that must be followed to ensure safe food. I don't want to scare anyone away, but want you to have a healthy respect for the possibility of food-borne illness that could be life threatening if directions are not followed.



Diann Gerstner

• Knowledge for Life

recommendations, as some are not recommended for home canning. The weight of a canner can crack the glass cook top.

It's important for both new and more experienced home food preservationists to choose tested recipes and follow the ingredient amounts and directions exactly. Salsa creation is the greatest offender, where I hear of people not keeping the ingredient amounts the same or even adding extra ingredients. If they are not canning the product, that is no problem. But if they are canning the salsa, they need to remember that food is a science and every recipe for canning or baking is a chemical formula.

With canning, the acidity of the product is important. Onions, peppers, cilantro, garlic, cucumber and most other vegetables you might decide to throw in the salsa are all low acid and may bring the acid level of your salsa down to an unsafe level for water-bath processing or cause a need for longer processing. How much longer? Only a science lab can truly determine that.

Low-acid foods such as meats and vegetables require pressure canning to achieve a safe temperature of 240 degrees F to reduce risks of botulism that can grow in improperly canned low-acid foods.

All canners need to be checked annually to assure that the gasket is clean and pliable, seal edges are smooth and vent holes are clear. A dial gauge should be checked for accuracy

If you have a smooth-top cooking surface be sure to follow manufacturer's

annually because a variance of one pound in pressure can increase the risk of food-borne illness. A weighted gauge does not have to be checked.

I have the equipment to check a dial gage and am glad to check the rest of your canner also. This is a free service so after the fair, bring your canner in.

Something to be aware of when canning here in Northwest Kansas is our altitude. We are at 3,153 feet. Canning recipes require processing time or pressure adjustments for each thousand feet over 1,000. As the altitude goes up, the boiling point goes down. That means that foods processed in a pressure canner need to be processed at a higher pressure and boiling water bath needs increased time.

When learning from or sharing recipes with family and friends in eastern Kansas, be aware they are only around 1,000 feet so they don't have to make the adjustments.

High acid foods, such as fruits, fruit products, jams, jellies, pickles and tomatoes should be processed in a boiling water bath (212 degrees F), which requires a large kettle equipped with a rack to hold the jars off the bottom of the pan. If jars are in direct contact with the bottom of a kettle during the canning process, they may crack and then will have to be thrown away - a waste of food and your time. Another important factor with boiling water bath is that there should be at least one full inch of boiling water covering the tops of the jars.

Don't fall for faddish canning methods that you may see on the Internet. It is not safe to can in the oven, microwave, dishwasher, setting in the sun or to skip processing, you must either boiling water bath or pressure.

Diann Gerstner is the family and consumer sciences agent for the Thomas County Extension office.

Smithsonian museum seeks stories from elders about how farming has evolved

No one knows how much agriculture has evolved and transformed over time better than America's farmers. That's why the Smithsonian National Museum of American History is seeking farmers' help in telling stories of the innovation and experiences of farming and ranching across the United States.

Farmers are invited to share their personal stories about the ways innovation and technology have helped to continually improve the industry at www.americanhistory.si.edu. The museum is seeking stories, photographs and other memorabilia to feature in its upcoming "American Enter-

prise" exhibition, which will paint the picture of American business through agriculture, consumer finance, information technology/communication, manufacturing and retail/service.

"Agriculture continually evolves and has become extremely efficient and sustainable with the help of new technologies," says Sharon Covert, a farmer-leader on the United Soybean Board, which recently committed a \$1 million investment in support of the exhibition. "Sharing your stories and artifacts of agriculture's transformations will allow the public to see incredible strides the industry has made in order to provide food,

feed, fuel and fiber for the rest of the world."

Submitted stories could be included in the exhibition or featured on the museum's blog and social media sites. A few suggested themes include personal experiences, the effects of technology, or the roles of finance, competition, safety, animals, water or labor.

Scheduled to open in May 2015, this multimedia "American Enterprise" will capture the nation's history of business spanning the mid-1700s to the present, highlighting agriculture and its many contributions to our economy.

"Growing up in the 1950s, I

remember 'walking the beans' to remove weeds from the fields with a long-handled hoe," says Covert in her story submission. "Now, we can spray that same field to remove the weeds and our soybeans are strong and vigorous."

The development of American agriculture will be demonstrated through objects such as road signs related to no-till production and organic farming, a 1920s Fordson tractor and a computer cow tag and reader unit to show the change in dairy farming from an intensive hand-labor process to a modern computer-run operation.

Corrections

The Colby Free Press wants to maintain an accurate record of our town. Please report any error or lack of clarity in a news story to us at 462-3963.

Markets

Quotes as of close of previous business day
Hi-Plains Co-op

Wheat (bushel)	\$6.89
Corn (bushel)	\$6.93
Milo (hundredweight)	\$11.07
Soybeans (bushel)	\$13.30

City to celebrate pig's return

GARDEN CITY, Mich. (AP) - A Detroit suburb is getting ready to go hog wild to celebrate the return of a prominent, plump pig sculpture to its downtown.

The Garden City, Mich. Downtown Development Authority says a Friday celebration will mark the return of "Willy the Pig." A community art fundraiser will feature pork sliders and a pig-calling contest. A showing of the talking-pig movie "Babe" is on the agenda.

The centerpiece of activities is to be a 7 p.m. unveiling of the newly casted sculpture.

A shiny, red sculpture titled "Cochon Rouge" by artist Sophie Marie was stolen last year from Garden City. Also known as "Willy," it was found missing three hooves and a snout along a bike trail in Livingston County's Green Oak Township, about 35 miles northwest of Detroit.

Deaths

Emma L. Sattler

Emma L. Sattler, 78, Atwood, sister of Madonna Anderson of Gem, died Sunday, July 21, 2013, at the Atwood Good Samaritan Center.

She was born Dec. 31, 1934, on a farm west of Herndon, the daughter of John and Emma (Keplinger) Huss. She grew up on the farmstead five miles from Herndon. After a year of country school, she attended St. Mary's Grade School and Herndon High School.

On Nov. 16, 1957, she married Kenneth Sattler in St. Mary's Catholic Church of Herndon. They lived on a farm six miles northwest of Herndon, where she was a homemaker and farm wife.

Preceding her in death were her parents; her husband; three brothers, Larry Huss, Donald Huss and John Huss; and an infant sister, Marian Huss.

Survivors include two sons, John Sattler, Wichita, and Troy

(LeeAnn) Sattler, Herndon; a daughter, Terri (Donnie) Dechant, LaSalle, Colo.; two additional sisters, Celene Dunker, Ludell, and Joanne Malone, Russell; eight grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Services will be at 10 a.m. Saturday, July 27, 2013, at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Herndon, with the Rev. Nick Parker and Deacon Mark Vrbas officiating and burial in the church's cemetery.

Visitation will be from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday at Pauls Funeral Home in Oberlin, with a vigil service at 7 p.m. at the funeral home. Saturday visitation will be from 8 a.m. to service time at the church in Herndon.

The family suggests memorials to the nursing home, to the Catholic churches of Rawlins County or to Hospice Services, in care of the funeral home, 121 N. Penn, Oberlin Kan., 67749.

Colby Comets 4-H Club

The Colby Comets 4-H Club met July 15 at the Thomas County 4-H Building. There were 27 members present.

President Madison Zimmerman called the regular monthly meeting to order and led the club in the Pledge of Allegiance. Members answered roll call with their favorite carnival ride or game.

Secretary Olivia Wetter read the June minutes, which were approved. Treasurer Samantha Lindberg gave the treasurer's report. Reporter Abigail Wetter said she had an article published in the paper.

Council representative Karissa Singer reported there would be no reserve champion this year, and for grand champion there would be a blanket, green with white letters.

Angela Zimmerman, club leader, gave the dates for fair setup and

cleanup and encouraged members to help. She also requested families to sign up for putt-putt golf or security watch.

Following up from last month, the club decided to have a potluck and water games for the August meeting at Fike Park.

Song leaders Cassandra and Melissa Zimmerman and Mallory Jackson led the club in the song "You Are My Sunshine."

During the club tour, members shared what they were taking to the fair.

Recreation leaders Miah Jackson and Jenna Reinert led the club in a game of telephone.

Vice President Hayden Reinert announced the date of the next meeting.

Members recited the 4-H pledge and the meeting adjourned.

Abigail Wetter

Birthday party set

Viola Lindeman of Oakley will turn 90 on July 30, 2013, and will celebrate with a public reception from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday at the Oakley Country Club. Cards may be sent to 615 Price Ave., Oakley, Kan., 67748.

American Legion Post 363



Steak Feed

Saturday, July 27
6 - 8 p.m. • \$15 per person
Serving Grilled Rib Eyes, Baked Potatoes, Vegetable, Roll & Dessert
(To go boxes available)

Thomas County 4-H/FFA Livestock Judging Contest Friday, August 2nd

Thomas County Fairgrounds • Livestock Arena • Colby, KS
Registration 12:30 - 12:55 p.m. • Instructions begin 12:55 p.m.
Contest Starts at 1:00 p.m.

Questions Contact:



Tom Rundel
Colby FFA Advisor
785-899-4203
Chelsie Calliham
Colby FFA Member
785-443-1166



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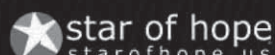
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Come enjoy the concerts!

Kit Carson County Fairgrounds, Burlington, CO

Friday, July 26, 6 p.m.:
Kahuna Beach Party

This wildly popular group will bring back the sounds of the Beach Boys. Check out their website at:

www.reverbnation.com/kahunabeachparty

PRCA Rodeo to follow this concert!

Sunday, July 28, 7 p.m.:
HOTEL CALIFORNIA

"A Salute to the Eagles"

The band will perform an evening of Eagles music. Enjoy their sound at: www.hotelcal.com

Tickets are \$13 presale available at Zimbelman's Jewelry in Burlington, or \$15 day of the show.

