

IT'S CRAWFISH TIME!

Crawfish is considered a delicacy in other parts of the world but in Louisiana it's as common as beef or chicken. Crawfish are an excellent source of protein and low in calories, fat and saturated fat. Louisiana produces over 100-120 million pounds of crawfish in either ponds or the Atchafalaya Basin.

Crawfish is harvested between December to June; but March-May are the peak times where quality is best and the price is lowest.

You can buy crawfish in the following forms: live, cooked, peeled and in specialty products. Crawfish fat does become rancid within 2-6 months when frozen so if you have it frozen it doesn't stay long. Normally 6-7 pounds of live will provide one pound of tail meat. If purchasing live crawfish plan on 3-4 pounds of live per person or one pound tail meat fresh or frozen feeds three people.

You can store fresh, peeled, tail meat in the refrigerator at 40°F or below and use within 1-2 days or freeze within that time. Crawfish tail meat can be frozen up to 9 months and crawfish dishes like etouffee can be frozen for a few months. This spring enjoy Louisiana crawfish and put some in your freezer.



FUN EXERCISE IDEAS FOR KIDS

Summer is around the corner and it's a time to remember that exercise is important. Exercise is an important part of being a healthy lifestyle. Here are some fun exercise ideas for kids.

- Community centers or recreation based facilities may offer workshop, events, etc. that youth can do.
- Try new activities that you may enjoy. Sports like yoga or kick boxing are non traditional exercises but can be fun.
- Take advantage of seasonal opportunities like kite flying in the spring; gardening in both spring and summer; swimming, rollerblading and bike riding are also great spring/summer activities.

Just remember, no matter how you do it; get up and get your kids up and moving!!

A CLOSE LOOK AT KIDS DRINKS

As childhood obesity rates continue to climb, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention remind individuals that sugar sweetened beverages in children's and adult's diet can contribute to empty and extra calories in their diets.

The following list shows just how some popular kids drinks stack up nutrition wise:

- Hi-C → A fun little portable way to get all the Vitamin C your child needs in one day, but read the nutrition facts label a little closer. Hi-C only contains 10% fruit juice and one 8 ounce box contains 100 calories and 6.5 teaspoons of sugar.
- Hawaiian Punch → Seen at kids' birthday parties and school functions as a top beverage choice. Of course it only contains 5% juice and in an 8 ounce serving it has 120 calories and approximately 7 teaspoons of sugar. Also, parents whose kids may have food allergies or ADD or ADHD may be advised it contains food dyes such as "Red No. 40" so they may want to be conscious of this.
- Sunny Delight → most parents mistake this for orange juice; again another drink that contains only about 5-10% juice, but does have a good source of Vitamin C. An 8 ounce serving contains about 7½ teaspoons of sugar and 130 calories.
- Capri-Sun → What's more fun than juice packed in a pouch that virtually portable? Capri-Sun of all the drinks marketed to kids, does now offer some healthier alternatives. There is a 25% less sugar version, a flavored water version and a 100% juice version. Kudos to them for being a little more in tune with good nutrition. An original Capri-Sun pouch has 100 calories and about 6 teaspoons of sugar. Maybe opt for the healthier choices offered by Capri Sun.
- Coca-Cola → Just to put in perspective, a 12 ounce can of coke has 140 calories and a little over 9 teaspoons of sugar.

Here are some healthier alternatives to quench your thirst:

- Water—it's recommended adults get 6-8 glasses of water daily and kids get 4-6 glasses of water daily too. Water is calorie, sugar and fat-free so it doesn't add extra calories to the diet.
- Opt for 100% juice—like apple, orange or grape juice. You will get more essential vitamins and minerals from 100% juice.
- Limit your juice portions to 1 cup a day. Portion sizes are important. For kids 4-8 ounces per day is plenty and 8 ounces for adults is enough. If you are really concerned you can always dilute them with water.
- Make sure kids get 2-3 cups of low-fat or fat-free milk each day. Milk is rich in nutrients, Vitamin D and potassium. If your kids don't like milk, try flavored milk. Any kind of milk is better than no milk and the nutrients found in milk are essential for healthy growth and development.

MAY IS NATIONAL HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE EDUCATION MONTH

High blood pressure also known as Hypertension affects over 68 million people. Hypertension can be prevented for those that don't have it and if you have it, it can be controlled. High blood pressure is serious because it can lead to stroke and heart attack which are the two leading causes of death in the U.S.

High blood pressure is often referred to as the silent killer, because you may not have any signs or symptoms. That's why it's important to check your blood pressure often and if it's elevated take steps to lower it through diet, exercise and lifestyle. One way to lower is to reduce sodium in the diet.

Eating too much sodium in the diet can elevate blood pressure and increase the risk for heart disease. Most people eat over the recommended amounts for sodium every day. We only need 2,400 mg of sodium per day and should watch closely our intake of both salt and sodium. Sodium levels are highest in processed foods, pre-packaged and restaurant foods. A small percentage of sodium in our diets comes from us adding salt to foods we eat from the table. There are some steps you can take to reduce the sodium in your diet.

1. Consume or eat more fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products without added salt.
2. Consider buying canned goods with either no added salt or reduced sodium versions of your favorite products.
3. Read and compare the nutrition facts label, especially the sodium content for foods.
4. Cook from scratch more; because you can control what goes in your recipes.
5. Instead of salt to season foods, use other spices or herbs.
6. Do not add salt to rice or pasta when cooking it.
7. If you are dining out, ask for low sodium options or no salt to be added to your food.
8. Make sure to check and monitor your blood pressure often.
9. Maintain a healthy weight and get regular exercise most days of the week.
10. Limit or watch your alcohol intake (one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men).

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Smart Choices Curriculum



JUNE IS BEEF MONTH!

In Louisiana in June we celebrate beef all month long. Beef cattle contributes over \$448 million to our states economy so that gives us even more reasons to celebrate Beef Month! Many people shy away from beef because they don't think that beef is healthy, but it's not true.

Research is indicating that lean beef, trimmed of visible fat can be part of a heart healthy diet. A study called the "BOLD Diet" showed that lean red meat can be part of a cholesterol lowering diet. Beef is an excellent source of protein. An average 3 ounce serving of beef has only 153 calories but 10 essential nutrients like protein, iron, zinc and B vitamins that are needed for a healthy lifestyle.

There are 29 lean cuts of beef that meet the USDA's recommendation for Americans to choose lean sources of protein. These 29 cuts have less than 10 grams of total fat, less than 4.5 grams of saturated fat and less than 95 milligrams of cholesterol per serving. The 29 cuts are: eye round roast and steak; sirloin tip side steak, top round roast and steak; bottom round roast and steak; top sirloin steak; brisket, flat half; 95% lean ground beef; round tip roast and steak; round steak; shank cross cut; chuck shoulder pot roast; sirloin tip center roast and steak; chuck shoulder steak; bottom round steak; top loin strip steak; shoulder petite tender and medallions; flank steak; shoulder center steak; tri-tip roast and steak; tenderloin roast and steak; T-bone steak.

Try the following beef recipe and eat more beef not only in June but all year long.

Beef and Vegetable Skillet

- 1 1/4 pounds boneless beef top sirloin steak, cut 3/4 inch thick
- 2 teaspoons dark sesame oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 medium red bell pepper, sliced
- 3 tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce, divided
- 2 tablespoons water
- 3 cups coarsely chopped fresh spinach
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions
- 3 tablespoons ketchup
- 2 cups hot cooked rice, prepared without butter or salt

Cut beef steak lengthwise in half and then crosswise into 1/4 inch strips. Toss with sesame oil and garlic. Heat large non-stick skillet over medium-high heat until hot. Add beef (1/2 at a time) and stir-fry 1-2 minutes or until outside surface is no longer pink. Remove from skillet. In the same skillet, add bell pepper, 2 tablespoons soy sauce and water, cook 2-3 minutes or until pepper is crisp-tender. Add spinach and green onions; cook until spinach is just wilted. Stir in ketchup, remaining 1 tablespoon soy sauce and beef; heat through. Serve over rice.

Serves 4. One serving provides: 334 calories; 9 g fat; 3 g saturated fat; 62 mg cholesterol; 668 mg sodium; 25 g carbohydrates; 2.1 g fiber; 36 mg protein.



SENSIBLE FOOD BUYS

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|---------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Beets | Broccoli | Chicken | Milk and Milk Products |
| Cabbage | Cucumbers | Pork Meat | Collard and Mustard Greens |
| Summer Squash | Melons | Snap Beans | Strawberries |
| Tomatoes | Peaches | Bell Peppers | Eggplant |
| Green Beans | Irish Potatoes | Turnips | Dewberries |
| Blueberries | Blackberries | Chicken Leg Quarters | |

STRAWBERRY FACTS

Strawberries, especially Louisiana ones, are a nutritious and delicious snack or addition to meals. Strawberries are available year round, but Louisiana ones are around for about six months (November-May). Strawberries are naturally high in fiber, Vitamin C, folate, potassium, antioxidants, low in calories and fat-free and sodium free. One cup of strawberries provides 46 calories, 85 mg of Vitamin C and 2.9 grams of fiber. Strawberries are ripened fully when picked, so when purchasing them look for bright red berries free of mold or decayed spots.

When buying strawberries, a one quart basket equals 1 1/3 pounds of berries. One pound of berries yields 2 2/3 cups whole, stemmed berries or 2-2 1/3 cups sliced berries, or 1 1/3 cups crushed berries. One pound fruit will make 3-4 half pint jars of preserves and 2 pounds will make 6-8 half pint jars.

When storing fresh berries do not wash them before putting in the refrigerator. Wash berries under cold water in a colander before using them. Let the berries air dry and then use in your recipes. Berries can be frozen with sugar or without. If you will freeze berries but use them later for preserves or jam make sure to freeze them without sugar. For more information contact our office for the "It's Strawberry Time" publication.



For more information on any topic in this newsletter or any other topic please contact our office at :

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Next Issue Features:

Back to School Nutrition, Summer Food Safety, Rice Month, Blueberries and Much More!!!

Kindest Regards,

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