

SUMMERTIME FOOD SAFETY

As we wind down summer, our attention normally falls on cookouts, picnics, barbecues and outdoor gatherings. As we think about eating and cooking outdoors our attention on food safety is important too. Follow these simple guidelines for transporting your food and preparing your food.

- Keep cold food cold. Always place food in an ice chest with plenty of ice packs or ice. You want cold food kept under 40°F to prevent spoilage and bacterial growth.
- Get a separate cooler for drinks so the constant in and out doesn't affect the temperatures of your food.
- Try to keep raw meat, poultry and seafood wrapped securely and separate from prepared or cooked foods.
- Clean produce before packing in a cooler.
- When grilling meats make sure you have separate dishes for cooked meats and uncooked foods so cross contamination does not occur.
- Always cook foods thoroughly and use a food thermometer to check if it's done.
- Keep hot foods above 140°F or hot so bacterial growth does not occur.
- If you used a marinade for your meats; do not reuse it. It should be discarded as soon as the meat hits the grill.
- Make sure foods do not sit out for longer than two hours or one hour if the temperature outdoors is over 90°F.
- Make sure to wash hands often; as hand washing is the single best defense against food safety.

"Is it *done* yet?"

You can't tell by *looking*. Use a **food thermometer** to be sure.

USDA Recommended Safe Minimum Internal Temperatures



Beef, Pork, Veal, Lamb
Steaks, Roasts & Chops
145 °F with a 3-minute rest time



Fish
145 °F



Beef, Pork, Veal, Lamb
Ground
160 °F



Egg Dishes
160 °F



Turkey, Chicken & Duck
Whole, Pieces & Ground
165 °F

www.IsItDoneYet.gov

USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline: 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854)



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JULY IS NATIONAL BERRIES MONTH

Berries are plentiful in the summer but more so in July than any other month. Everything from blueberries to raspberries are plentiful this time of year. Berries are loaded with vitamins and minerals and are low in calories making them very nutritious.

Berries can be found fresh, frozen, canned or dried and are very versatile. They can be used in salads, smoothies, atop your cereal in the morning or even as a snack.

When buying berries avoid buying bruised or oozing berries. Look for firm, plump, full colored berries. When home cover and refrigerate. Do not wash berries until right before eating them.

SEPTEMBER IS RICE MONTH

Here in Louisiana we celebrate the bounty of rice being one of our important Louisiana agricultural commodities during September. Though you shouldn't eat rice just in September but all year long.

Rice is an excellent source of complex carbohydrates, protein, vitamins and minerals. Rice is non-allergenic, gluten-free, easily digested, cholesterol and sodium free. One-half cup of cooked white rice has 103 calories, while one-half cup of cooked brown rice has 108 calories. Brown rice is a little higher in calories because it contains more of the bran layer and fiber.

Rice has many varieties and can be prepared many different ways. When storing enriched white rice, keep it in a tightly covered container in the pantry. Brown rice contains natural oils in the bran layer, but will only stay fresh in the pantry for six months. Refrigerate or freeze for longer shelf life.

To retain maximum nutrients, do not rinse your rice before or after cooking. Rice can be cooked on the stove, in the oven or in a rice cooker.

There are many different varieties of rice and it's up to your taste preference on which type you use. Long grain rice kernels are slender and when cooked are separate, light and fluffy. Long grain rice is good for entrees, rice bowls, pilafs, stuffings, rice salads, jambalaya and more. Long grain rice comes in brown, white, parboiled, jasmine, basmati and aromatic red. Medium grain rice the kernels are moist and tender, with a tendency to cling. Medium grain rice is good for sushi, rice bowls, risotto, paella, rice puddings and desserts. It comes in brown and white, Arborio and black japonica. Short grain rice kernels are plump and almost round in shape. After cooking the grains are soft and clingy. Short grain rice is good for sushi, paella, Asian rice dishes, rice puddings and desserts.

Eat rice as much as you can, not only in the month of September.

BREAKFAST...MAKE IT A PRIORITY!

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day for many reasons. More and more studies show that children who eat breakfast have less behavior problems, perform better in school and those children meet daily nutrient requirements. Not only do children need breakfast, adults do too because we have gone several hours without food, so our bodies need energy to start the day. Also, eating breakfast helps with proper weight management.

Breakfast should provide one-fourth of the daily recommended intake of calories, vitamins and minerals. Parents should try to incorporate three of the five food groups according to My Plate as a part of breakfast. The My Plate food groups are: grains, vegetables, fruits, protein and dairy. Always try to be sure grains and protein make up breakfast; that way children and adults will be held up until lunch time.

Breakfast does not necessarily have to be breakfast foods, it can be leftovers from the night before or peanut butter and jelly sandwich. The following are some ideas you can serve for breakfast to your kids so they can start their day off on the right foot.

- cereal and low-fat milk
- toast, English muffin or bagel with cream cheese or peanut butter
- fruit smoothie
- egg and toast
- breakfast burrito with eggs, cheese, vegetables
- fruit or cereal bars with yogurt
- waffles

HOW TO DECREASE A HUNDRED CALORIES IN THE DIET

Now that fall is upon us, many people take advantage of the cooler temperatures to become more active and start watching their waistlines. One pound equals 3,500 calories; so if each week you consume 3,500 calories extra that's when weight gain can occur. Maintaining a healthy weight is a matter of balance: calories in = calories out.

But the good news is that you can decrease your calorie intake by 100 calories to help prevent extra weight and become overall healthier. Some ways to decrease 100 calories in the diet:

- Use mustard or low-fat mayonnaise instead of regular mayonnaise
- Instead of cookies or chips snack on fruit.
- Drink water instead of soda.
- Instead of upsizing your meals order just the small size.
- Use water-packed tuna instead of in oil.
- If you must indulge in a candy bar; eat a snack size one instead of a full size.
- It's okay to leave 3-5 bites of food on your plate.
- Omit cheese on your sandwich or burger.
- Instead of French fries order a side salad.
- Switch to low-fat salad dressing instead of regular.
- Switch to non-fat or 1% milk.
- Get in the habit of skimming the fat off soups, stews, sauces, gravies and gumbos.
- Look at the serving size on bottled drinks, there are two or more servings in some.
- Share dessert with a friend.
- Enjoy fruit packed in water or 100% juice instead of heavy syrup.

Following these tips can help you decrease 100 calories in your diet and lead you to lead an overall healthier life.

LOUISIANA BLUEBERRIES

Blueberries are nature's source of antioxidants that can help prevent diseases. Blueberries are a good source of fiber and vitamin C. One-half cup of blueberries have only 42 calories.

In Louisiana the rabbiteye blueberry is the most dominant variety grown and are available from early May to July. You will find blueberries from other parts of the country in the supermarket July-August.

Store your blueberries covered in your vegetable keeper of your refrigerator. Normally they will last between 3-5 days in the fridge. Before eating them wash under cool running water.

Blueberries can be frozen. Freeze them without washing. Remove stems and package tightly in freezer bags or containers leaving ½ inch headspace. Seal airtight and freeze. Remove from freezer when ready, rinse in cold water and use immediately.

Blueberries are versatile, they can be added to cereals, salads, muffins, pancakes, on top of cheesecakes or waffles, cobblers or made into jam or jelly.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

- August 24—10:00 a.m.—Rouse's Cooking Demonstration on Healthy Desserts and Snacks. Rouse's Supermarket, 2900 E. Milton Ave, Youngsville, LA 70592

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:

Holiday Foods, Sweet Potatoes, Fall/Winter Physical Activity, Diabetes Information and Much More!!!

Kindest Regards,

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