

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES NEWSLETTER



Ashe County Center

Summer 2015

Inside This Issue

Are You Throwing Away Money And Time?

Berry Purple Smoothie Recipe

Remember To Keep Reusable Shopping Bags Safe

Did You Know?

Cold-Water Laundry Is Better For Clothes, Environment

Where's Your Cell Phone While You Sleep?

Does The Smell Of A Cleaning Product Affect Your Purchase?

Water Conservation

Is It Time To Clean Your Dryer Vent?

Canning Corner—Remember...

Keeping Mildew From Growing In Your Home

Squash Croquettes Recipe

Baked "Fried Squash" Recipe

Contact Us

North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Ashe County Center
134 Government Circle, Suite 202
Jefferson, NC 28640

Phone: (336) 846-5850

Fax: (336) 846-5882

<http://ashe.ces.ncsu.edu/>

Distributed in furtherance of the acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

Are You Throwing Away Money And Time?

Did you know that families throw away 15% of all food they buy? We also throw away 10% of the beverages we buy. If a family spends \$100.00 each week on groceries, \$25.00 of food purchased would be thrown away which would be \$100.00 of food wasted each month! No one is deliberately buying food to throw away and many people are not aware of the total expense of wasted food.

Here are a few tips to reduce food waste at home:

- **Organize Before You Shop**—Check food supplies you already have and make plans to use the oldest foods first.
- **Plan For Using Perishable Foods**—Buy what you can use within a few days. Buying more than you can use within a short period of time can be wasteful as food will spoil. Many fresh foods can be frozen, but you have to remember to freeze them before they spoil.
- **Plan For Leftovers**—Refrigerate leftovers and plan to use them within a few days. You may also freeze many foods for later use as freezing stops time which can make food unsafe to eat.
- **Look In Your Refrigerator**—Each day look for foods that need to be eaten soon—remember to look in the drawers of the refrigerator—often out of sight is out of mind!

Berry Purple Smoothie Recipe

For hot summer days, this cool Berry Purple Smoothie is easy to make, refreshing and good for us! This recipe is from the Virginia Family Nutrition Program Eat Smart Move More.

Ingredients:

20 ounces pineapple chunks in juice, un-drained

2 cups blueberries, frozen

1 1/2 cups ice cubes

6 ounces yogurt with fruit, nonfat, or lemon flavored



Instructions:

In blender container, combine all ingredients; process until smooth. Serve immediately or cover & refrigerate until ready to serve. Best served when first made.

Nutrition Facts: Serving Size: 3/4 cups; Servings: 4; Calories 163 (Calories from Fat 9); Total Fat 1g—6%; Saturated Fat 0g—0%; Cholesterol 1 mg—0%; Sodium 34mg—1%; Total Carbohydrate 39g—13%; Dietary Fiber 3g—12%; Protein 3g—6%; Vitamin A 2%; Vitamin C 26%; Iron 3%; Calcium 10%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet

NC State University
A&T State University
**COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**

Empowering People • Providing Solutions

Remember To Keep Reusable Shopping Bags Safe

Reusable shopping bags are promoted as one way to reduce the need for plastic bags, and one way to be more environmentally friendly. Used over and over, reusable shopping bags need to be cleaned often. To prevent cross-contamination from one product to another, clean the bags after use. The greatest potential danger is from meat, fish, or poultry juices contaminating the bag or other foods with bacteria or viruses that can cause illness. Packages of raw foods can have bacteria even on the outside. To prevent cross-contamination, put packages of meat, fish, or poultry in a disposable plastic bag to catch liquids that may drain from the meat package. The wrapped package of meat can then be put in the reusable bag, or designate a reusable bag as a "meat bag" and use that only for raw, potentially contaminated foods. Avoid using reusable bags for items other than food.

Wash the reusable bags in the washing machine regularly and after a spill. After washing, machine dry it or turn inside out and hang to dry. (*Drying is actually the most important step*).



Did You Know...?

- If you will be staying in a motel remember to wipe the television remote with a disinfectant wipe or tissue with hand sanitizer. The TV remote was one of the most germiest hotel room surfaces according to a microbiology study.
- Where has your pocket book been? Most have been on the floor of restaurants, restrooms and more, a good reason to keep them off our tables and countertops.
- Chores can provide exercise that can burn calories; 1/2 hour dusting burns 75 calories; painting and decorating 90 calories; vacuuming 105 calories and mowing the lawn burns 165 calories.

Cold-Water Laundry Is Better For Clothes, Environment

Seventy-five percent of greenhouse gas emissions from household laundry come from heating water, and clothes aren't noticeably cleaner for it. Using cold water can save consumers \$60 or more dollars each year while protecting clothes and making them last longer. To meet consumer demand, manufacturers have developed detergents, enzymes and surfactants that can work effectively in a wide range of cooler water temperatures. Look for brands of detergent that say they are effective in cold water.

And speaking of washing clothes, when you purchase new clothes, do you ever wash them before you wear them? Most of us don't. According to some dermatologists, new clothes should always be washed before they are worn to remove whatever has come in contact with the fabric before it was sewn and the garment itself during the time it was sewn. This practice can help prevent skin illnesses. The majority of ready to wear clothing is not sewn in the United States, often sewn in countries with standards of cleanliness much lower than in our country. Clothing travels a distance to reach us, so there are many opportunities for clothing to be exposed to many things. Washing finishes out of the clothes before wearing is also important as many people can have allergic reactions to them. So, before you put on those new threads, give them a quick wash.

Where's Your Cell Phone While You Sleep?

Our society has become so obsessed with texting and staying connected, many people are taking their cell phones to bed. Texting in bed has been compared to the new smoking in bed and should never be done for safety reasons. House fires have been linked to cell phones covered in bed. Cell phones do not have adequate ventilation, causing them to overheat.

Does The Smell Of A Cleaning Product Affect Your Purchase?

Fragrance plays an important role in every household, and companies are devoting more resources than ever to product perfumes. They want us to keep coming back to purchase products again and again.

Doing laundry is not the most enjoyable task; fragrance experts realize that when laundry products have a pleasing fragrance they can make household chores less of a chore. Fragrance often defines a product's success and can give consumers a "feeling" of clean.

Research has shown companies add fragrance to products that often connects our sense of smell to our memories. The link between the sense of smell, memory and emotion affect what consumers purchase.

Fragrance plays such a key role in what we purchase that the first thing we do (*when we see a new product on the shelf*) is smell it!



Water Conservation

If you watch the news, you know that several states are experiencing water shortages, and have imposed strict rules for water use. Drought conditions, along with population growth and increased water use, has stressed the water supply. Being aware of the water we use each day and learning ways to reduce the amount, can conserve our water supply and save money at the same time.

Here are a few tips to help save water use every day:

- ✓ When washing dishes by hand, don't let the water run while rinsing. Fill one sink with wash water and the other with rinse water. Even better, run full loads of dishes in the dishwasher which takes less water.
- ✓ Run your clothes washer and dishwasher only when they are full. You can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.
- ✓ For cold drinks keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator instead of running the tap. This way, every drop goes down you and not the drain.
- ✓ Wash your fruits and vegetables in a pan of water instead of running water from the tap.
- ✓ Use a broom instead of a hose to clean your driveway and sidewalk.
- ✓ Collect the water you use for rinsing fruits and vegetables, then reuse it to water houseplants.
- ✓ Shorten your shower by a minute or two and you'll save up to 150 gallons per month.
- ✓ Don't use running water to thaw food. Defrost food in the refrigerator for water efficiency and food safety.
- ✓ Teach your children to turn off faucets after each use.
- ✓ Use a water-efficient shower head. They're inexpensive, easy to install, and save you up to 750 gallons of water a month.
- ✓ Use a commercial car wash that recycles water.
- ✓ Turn off the water while brushing your teeth and save 25 gallons of water a month.
- ✓ Make sure there are water-saving aerators on all of your faucets.
- ✓ Insulate hot water pipes for more immediate hot water at the faucet and for energy savings.
- ✓ If your toilet was installed before 1992, reduce the amount of water used for each flush by inserting a displacement device in the tank.

Practicing daily water conservation can make a big difference in how much water we use.

Is It Time To Clean Your Dryer Vent?

If you cannot remember the last time your dryer vent was cleaned, it is probably time to clean it again. A clean open vent saves you money by decreasing time it will take to dry clothes. It reduces wear and tear on your dryer, and will help prevent fires. If your dryer is powered by gas, a clean vent will protect you from combustion gases, such as carbon monoxide.

Depending on the placement of your dryer, dryer hose and vent, and whether you can reach these you may be able to clean the vent yourself.

BEFORE YOU START: Unplug your dryer and shut off the gas if you have a gas dryer.

1. Pull your dryer away from the wall so the vent is accessible. Use a screwdriver to loosen the clamp and remove the vent from the wall.
2. Use a vacuum or your hands to remove as much lint as possible from the wall vent as well as the vent that goes from the dryer to the wall. Most lint will build up at the ends of the vent. If there is a large build up of lint in the dryer-to-wall vent it can be removed completely and either taken outside and cleaned with a dryer vent brush or replaced. A dryer vent brush shouldn't be used inside, as it will bring large amounts of dust and lint into the house. The dryer hose can also be vacuumed.
3. Reattach the dryer-to-wall vent, retighten the clamp and slide the dryer back into place.
4. Locate the outside end of your dryer vent and remove the cover by sliding it straight out. The cover may be secured with caulk or screws. If it is secured with caulk use a utility knife to cut it away.
5. Lint near the end of the vent can be removed with a vacuum or your hands. Use a dryer vent brush to remove lint located further in the vent.
6. After you have removed a majority of the lint, plug in the dryer, and turn on the gas (for gas dryers) but do not put the cover back yet.
7. Run the dryer on the air fluff setting for 10-15 minutes. This cycles air without drying and will help remove any leftover lint particles.
8. Put the outside vent cover back and reapply caulk if necessary.
9. In addition to cleaning the exhaust vent regularly, it is essential that you clean the dryer's lint screen after each use. This action helps with fire safety and efficient drying.



Canning Corner - Remember...

- To have your dial gauge canner checked for accuracy every year so that food canned in your pressure canner will be safe and tasty. You may call and schedule a time to bring your canner lid to the Extension Office to be checked and receive a new Ball Blue Book (while supplies last) - (336) 846-5850.
- *"Canning in Ashe County"* - a booklet that lists foods commonly grown in Ashe County is also available at the Extension Office. The booklet includes up to date processing times and recipes for locally grown food.
- Always use a pressure canner for low acid foods such as beans, corn, potatoes, squash and meat.
- Use only canning salt if you choose to salt your foods when canning. Table salt has additives that can discolor foods and give them an undesirable flavor.
- Store canned foods away from heat and light in a space with a year round constant temperature for best keeping quality of your canned foods. A cool dry basement is ideal.

Keeping Mildew From Growing In Your Home

It's the time of year when our homes are warm, the air is moist and still. These are the perfect conditions for mildew to grow. It can become a persistent problem and a nuisance. Mildew problems not corrected can become expensive as it can ruin home furnishings, clothing and more. Mildew is a mold. It has the ability to decompose cellulose and therefore may ruin paper and cellulosic fabrics such as cotton, linen, ramie and rayon when conditions are favorable for mildew growth. Wood, paint, glue and leather can also be damaged by mildew.

Mildewed areas of the house have an unpleasant odor; mildew can act as an allergen which can cause health problems, especially for family members with allergies and other respiratory issues..

The best growing temperature for mildew is 77° F to 86°F. It requires moisture—areas with relative humidity between 70%-93% is perfect for mildew growth. Mildew growth is slow to start and can take months or seasons to become established. Once it begins, growth is rapid. Calls to the Extension Office have shown that mildew will cover everything in a room closed off from heat and air conditioning during the winter.

Mildew on textiles such as upholstery and clothing, books and other household materials will be recognized by an unpleasant musty odor and will be discolored. The best way to control mildew growth is to eliminate the source of food, keep moisture levels low, and keep temperature too low for fast mildew growth (below 77°F).

Keep Things Clean—Mildew feeds on natural fibers used in clothing and furnishings and paper materials. However, soil on surfaces where mildew would normally not grow will support mildew growth. Organic residue of some soaps left on shower stalls and curtains provide nutrients for mildew growth, as does smoke and cooking oils that settle on walls and household furnishings. Walls, closets, basements, clothing and other textiles where mildew is likely to grow should be kept clean.

Control The Temperature In Your Living Space—Mildew thrives between 77°F and 86°F, which is common in summer months. Air conditioning can reduce the temperature, but there can still be mildew growth in closed areas of the home: cabinets, closets, behind draperies are spaces where warm air can become trapped. Control the moisture in the air of your home. Relative humidity (RH) is required for mildew growth. Moisture accumulates inside a home from normal household activities. A family of four in a home for 12 hours produces 12 pints of water as moisture by breathing. A short shower adds 1/2 pint of water to the air and any moisture left in the shower and on towels will add more. Cooking can add another 5 pints, while washing clothes and dishes add more. Reducing moisture from these sources include common sense: use lids on pots of food when cooking, take shorter baths or showers and use exhaust fans to remove moisture. Relative humidity can be checked by using a hygrometer. The ideal RH is 50%. Once humidity levels reach 65% - 70% or higher, steps need to be taken to reduce moisture levels. Open doors and windows or exhaust fans to replace moist air with dry air—if the outside air is drier than inside air.

Air conditioning on hot days will draw moisture from the air. In areas such as closets, cabinets and drawers where cooler air may not reach, leaving doors ajar will help provide ventilation and prevent mildew in these areas. Where there is no air conditioning, a dehumidifier can be used to collect moisture from the air; moisture removed is collected in a container that must be emptied or by connecting a hose to the dehumidifier that can run into a drain. Moisture absorbent chemicals can also be used to draw moisture from the air. Be sure to follow directions for use.

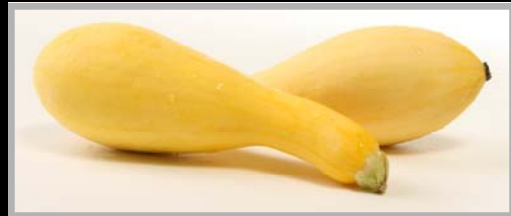
Remember the two most effective methods of preventing mildew growth are keeping things clean and dry. Once it appears, it should be removed as soon as possible.

Squash Croquettes Recipe

Looking for a simple side dish to use garden-fresh yellow squash? Try this easy, flavorful recipe.

Ingredients:

2 cups yellow squash, finely chopped (*use cloth or paper towels to squeeze out excess water*)
 1 cup onion, finely chopped
 1 egg, beaten
 1 teaspoon salt
 1 teaspoon pepper
 1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
 Vegetable oil or spray



Instructions:

In a large bowl, combine squash, onion, egg, salt and pepper. Mix well. Stir in flour. In a skillet, heat 1/2-inch oil over medium-high heat. Drop batter by tablespoonfuls into oil. Cook about 3 minutes per side or until golden brown, turning once. Drain croquettes on paper towels. *If preparing more than 1 skillet, place on baking sheet and place in 250 °F oven to keep warm while others are prepared.*

Nutrition Facts (per serving): Calories—100; Total Fat—5.5g, Proten—2.7g, Vitamin C—14%.

Note: For a healthier option these may also be baked in the oven. Preheat oven to 375 °F. Spray a baking pan with vegetable spray. Drop patties onto pan at least one inch apart. Spray tops of patties with vegetable spray and place in oven to bake until the underside of the patties are lightly browned. Flip croquettes over and spray them again with vegetable spray and bake until the other side is browned.

Baked "Fried Squash" Recipe

This recipe places squash in the oven to become crusty as if it had been fried without your having to tend to a skillet of squash, turning them over and over. There's less fat in the squash, but you won't miss it!

Cut squash lengthwise, about 1/4 inch thick
 Equal amounts of cornmeal and flour in a plastic bag
 Salt and Pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 375°F. Wash and slice squash, place in bowl and sprinkle with water, turning squash to wet them (*so the breading will stick*). You can salt them at this time or salt the cornmeal and flour. Place a few slices at a time into meal/flour mixture and shake to coat. Remove coated squash from bag and place on baking sheet (*that has been sprayed with vegetable spray*) in a single layer—do not overlap them. Spray the top of the squash lightly with vegetable oil spray. Place in middle of oven and bake until the underside of squash are lightly brown. Remove from oven, flip squash over and spray the top (*browned side*) of the squash. Return to oven and bake until underside of squash are lightly browned, about 10 minutes. Serve immediately, these taste like fried squash, but with less fat.



Sincerely,
Carolyn H. Shepherd
 Carolyn Shepherd
 Ashe County Extension Director