



IFAS EXTENSION

THE MARKET BASKET



Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

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Welcome!

Wishing Each of You a Joyous Holiday and a Happy New Year! Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas and New Year's: For most people, just the thought of these celebrated holidays spent with family and friends can add inches to the waist. But the American Dietetic Association (ADA) says "Celebrate!" Any foods even traditional holiday treats can fit into a healthful eating plan. The key is moderation and balance. Starting in January I will only be doing this Newsletter Quarterly. Please call me if you have any suggestions or topics you would like to see featured in future Newsletters. Also in this issue we will have ideas for Budget Friendly Gift Ideas. Enjoy! See you Next Year!

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Stretching Your Food Dollar Tips:

20. The less tender cuts of beef such as round, chuck, and shoulder are less expensive, but are as nutritious as the more tender cuts. Cook them right braise or stew - and they are just as delicious.

21. When buying eggs, compare the cost of medium and large. If the price of large eggs is more than 7 cents above the medium, medium size are the best buy.

22. Make your own "master" mix for biscuits, muffins, and quick breads from "scratch" at home. I can give you a recipe for making your own "master mix."

23. You know what would go great with those chips you just picked out? Some dip or salsa would be great. And gee, look it's sitting right next to the chips. How handy!

It sounds totally illogical, but this is just what you have to do to avoid paying impulse buy prices for these items. You see, the grocery stores realize this just isn't the shopping order that most people follow. They know that by placing these items together (as you would expect them to be), they can sell you smaller packages of dip and salsa at a higher price, without you even realizing it. Shady? Yes, but it's also reality.

Inside this issue:

Stretching Your Food Dollar Tips pg. 1

Fitting Holiday Treats into a Healthy Eating Plan pg. 2

Budget Friendly Gift Ideas pg. 3

Recipes pg. 4



Plan for those Holiday Meals



Gathering round the table for a special meal with family and friends can be a source of joy and feed both body and soul. Cooking late into the night before your meal, however, can greatly diminish the pleasures of the table. Cooking too far ahead can decrease the quality and safety of your food. The following tips will give you some ideas on planning ahead on preparing the Big Meal. Assemble a Vegetable Casserole a day in advance, refrigerate and then bake the day of the dinner. Plan 15 to 20 minutes additional heating time for the refrigerated cold casserole. Heat until it's hot and steamy throughout. Cut washed fruits and vegetables within a day of your meal for salads and relish trays. (NOTE: Wash fruits and vegetables under cool running tap water.) Store all CUT fruits and vegetables covered, such as in storage containers or one-time use plastic bags in the refrigerator. Store fresh-cut produce above raw meat, poultry and fish and below cooked items. Avoid leaving cut and/or peeled fruit and vegetables at room temperature for more than two hours. This includes the TOTAL of preparation time and serving time.

Pumpkin pie is especially popular around the holidays. A pumpkin pie is a form of custard and must be kept in the refrigerator at 40 degrees F or cooler. Foods which contain eggs, milk, and a high moisture content must be kept refrigerated, as bacteria love to grow in these foods. Avoid letting a pumpkin pie set at room temperature for more than TWO hours. That means it shouldn't sit out more than TWO hours total including after its baked and while waiting to be served. NOTE: Some commercial pumpkin pies that are purchased at room temperature may later need to be refrigerated. Check the label on commercially baked pies for storage requirements. Don't buy pies stored at room temperature if label directions are unclear or missing. If you'd like to get a head start on preparing your pumpkin pie, it's easiest and safest to freeze just your shaped and unbaked pie crust in a freezer- or oven-safe pie pan. Or, purchase an unbaked frozen pie crust already in a pie pan. Then, add the pumpkin filling, mixed according to directions, to the frozen crust just before baking. It takes just a few minutes to mix together.

Remember the basic food safety rules: Keep hot foods hot, and cold foods cold. Don't let any cooked food, meat or poultry remain in the danger zone — between 40 °F and 140 °F — for more than 2 hours. If you have hot foods in the oven, you may be able to hold them safely until your guests arrive. Put a meat thermometer in the thickest part of your roast or poultry, or center of your casserole. Adjust the oven temperature so that the food stays at an internal temperature of 140 °F or above. To prevent dryness, cover the dishes or wrap with aluminum foil. If you have prepared a turkey and you have determined it is safely done several hours before serving time, remove the turkey from the oven and allow it to stand for 20 minutes. If the turkey is stuffed, remove the stuffing, place it in a shallow container, cover and refrigerate. Remove the legs, thighs, and wings. Carve the breast meat, and legs and thighs, if desired. If you want to serve the meat cold, arrange the sliced turkey on platters or shallow containers. For carved turkey meat to be reheated, place the slices in shallow oven-safe baking dishes or pans. Cover and refrigerate the meat. If you will be making gravy, pour off the drippings and refrigerate them. The gravy can be made at your leisure.

About thirty minutes before serving turkey to be heated, sprinkle with a little broth. Cover with foil and heat in a 325 °F oven. The stuffing can be heated alongside the turkey.

Budget Friendly Gift Ideas



Scale down the shopping list but do make a list and stick to it. Identify a limit on the amount to be spent for each person for whom you are shopping. Don't go shopping when you are tired, hungry or depressed. Try thrift stores, discount stores and consignment stores. Consider giving gifts of essential items and storage items that every household uses. Buy gift certificates - they can help you spend the exact amount budgeted. Make a donation, equal to the money you allotted for a gift to a charity in the name of a loved one who "has everything". Look for containers and baskets for gift giving by recycling or purchasing at thrift stores.

Purchase like new or new toys at thrift stores or garage sales. Make a cookbook including all your favorite recipes. Print recipes on cardstock, and place in an inexpensive photo album with plastic sleeves. For someone far away, copy funny jokes you have seen in magazines that made you laugh and you wished you could share with them and make a "Family Joke Book" for the one you love. Try shopping in the early morning or evenings any-time stores are not as busy. Shop early in the month and consider shopping from a catalog.

A gift card to Blockbuster or your local video store. Pair the passes with some microwave popcorn or candy. The entire family will appreciate the idea of a movie night together. A book of passes to the movie theater. How about throwing in a homemade coupon good for a night of babysitting so Mom and Dad can enjoy a show without the kids one night? Board games make great gifts for families. Choose a few to cater to different family member's ability level. Don't forget classic card games like Uno and Old Maid. A gift certificate to a nice, family friendly restaurant. Mom and Dad will appreciate the opportunity to get out of cooking for an evening and doing dishes.

Gourmet coffees with a personal coffee cup, A pound of pistachios, Child's artwork, framed, Journal with special inscription inside, Teacup with box of herbal tea, Deck of cards and book of card game rules, Homemade cocoa mix in a pretty jar, Collage of special photos, Gel pens and pretty stationary, Bottle of sparkling cider, Home baked bread, include recipe.

Disposable camera or rolls of film, Basket filled with deli cheese and fruit, Craft supplies
Holiday serving bowl or platter, Pretty basket filled with special jams or mustards, Decorative napkins and napkin rings, Fancy chocolate bars tied with a ribbon, Gardening gloves with a plant or flower seeds, Photo album, hand decorated is even better, Makeup tote, Prepaid photo developing envelopes, Homemade cookie mix with instructions for baking, Variety of bread mixes, Special coffee cup filled with candy, Fancy magazines tied together with a pretty ribbon, Gourmet popcorn and flavored oil, Locally made barbeque or steak sauce with basting brush, Pancake or waffle mix and a bottle of real maple syrup
Movie theater gift certificates

Board games, Jar of sourwood or pure honey with biscuit mix, Note cards and book of stamps, Picture frames, buy them on sale, Specialty cookbook, Pretty glass jar filled with candy, Collectible sports cards, Muffin mixes with muffin pan, Books, there are still a few for under \$10, Set of dish towels and dish cloths, Nail polish kit, Pretty night shirt, Basket filled with kitchen gadgets, Video rental gift certificates, Pepper mill and fresh peppercorns,

Handwritten copies of your favorite recipes, For the pets, gourmet dog biscuits or cat treats, Baking pans and supplies, Prepaid long distance phone cards, Small clock or radio, Pretty box for keepsakes, Colorful Post-It notepads, Address book, Christmas ornaments, Puzzles, Blank video or cassette tapes, Sewing supplies, Flashlight with batteries.

Favorite quote embroidered on a nice handkerchief, Makeup brush set, Expensive socks, still under \$10, Special soaps and bath puff, don't forget my absolute favorite ... Home-baked cookies!



Christmas Recipes and Mixes:



Mocha Coffee
Creamer

1/2 cup sugar
1 cup nonfat dry milk
2 tablespoons cocoa



Cornflake Wreath Cookies Recipe:

1/2 C. butter
3 C. miniature marshmallows
1/2 t. almond extract
1/2 t. vanilla extract
1 t. green food color
4 C. corn flakes
red hot candies



Melt butter, add marshmallows, stirring until all marshmallows are melted. Add extracts and food coloring; stir until it is a uniform green color. When mixture is smooth, add corn flakes;

Pumpkin Fudge:



3 cups Sugar , 3/4 cups butter or margarine, 1 (5 1/3 oz.) can (2/3 cup) evaporated milk, 1/2 cup solid pack pumpkin, 1 tsp pumpkin pie spice, 1 (12 oz.) pkg. butterscotch morsels, 1 (7 oz.) jar marshmallow crème, 1 cup chopped toasted almonds or pecans, 1 tsp vanilla extract, In heavy saucepan, combine sugar, butter, milk, pumpkin and spice Bring to a boil, stirring constantly until mixture reaches 234 degrees (about 10 minutes). Remove from heat, stir in butterscotch morsels. Add marshmallow cream, nuts and vanilla. Mix until well blended.

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Christmas Tree Brownies::

1 bag M&M'S? Brand Chocolate Mini Baking Bits, plus more for decorating

1 box your favorite brownie mix

1 baking sheet lined with foil and greased (11 x 17 x 1-inch)

Prepare 1 box of brownie mix according to the package directions, but use the baking sheet instead of a 13 x 9-inch pan. Mix 1 cup of M&M'S? Brand Chocolate Mini Baking Bits into the batter. Spread brownie batter evenly to edges of baking sheet. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes. Cool completely. Use a cookie cutter to cut out tree shapes; reserve extra brownie bits for snacking or crumbling over ice cream. Frost with prepared instant vanilla frosting, tinted green with a few drops of food coloring. Decorate with M&M'S? Brand Semi-Sweet or Milk Chocolate Mini Baking Bits. Store covered. Makes 15 3-inch bars.

Christmas Party Sandwiches:

whole wheat bread
peanut butter and jelly
gingerbread men cookie cutters



Using cookie cutters, cut slices of bread into gingerbread men shapes- (or make angels, or stars and bells.) Fill the sandwiches with peanut butter and jelly, or with your favorite sandwich fillings.

Hot Cider

2 quarts apple cider
1 teaspoon cloves
3 inch cinnamon stick
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 lemon, sliced



Put all of the ingredients in a pan. Cover and boil for 10 minutes. Strain. Serve hot.

