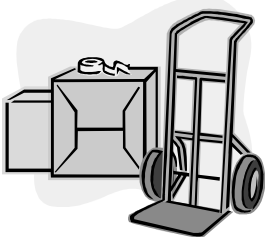


## Healthy, Happy Families

Texas Cooperative Extension—Rockwall County

Family & Consumer Sciences Newsletter — Fall, 2006

### Your County Extension Office is Moving!



The Soroptimist House at 1350 East Washington Street will soon be the new location for the Rockwall County Extension Office! If you are not familiar with this building, we will be located just east of Harry Myers Park and before you get to the Tuttle Athletic Complex. (This was the site of the County Juvenile Services Center.)

We are excited about all the possibilities for more programs and class series because our work space has now more than tripled! The new office will have a demonstration kitchen with a meeting room, much more storage for resources and curriculum, and many other features which will enhance our educational outreach.

But, we are not there yet! The staff at the Rockwall County Extension Office is busy cleaning out files, shelves and closets—packing boxes—updating our new office with carpet, appliances, paint, and furniture—moving all our “stuff” — setting up our new space—PLUS continuing with the usual fall Extension programs, classes, 4-H club work, contests and events.

Once we have settled into our new facility and are ready for new and better outreach, an Open House will be held and you will receive an invitation in the mail. We are aiming for a this special event to be held during the holidays.

A special thank you to the local Soroptimist Club members for approving the move of the county Extension office and for their support of Texas Cooperative Extension and our mission to provide quality, relevant educational programs to the families in Rockwall County.

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### Food for Thought

- Moderation. Small helpings. Sample a little bit of everything. These are the secrets of happiness and good health. — *Julia Child*
- You can say this for ready-mixes — the next generation isn't going to have any trouble making pies exactly like mother used to make.— *Earl Wilson*
- The secret to staying young is to live honestly, eat slowly, and lie about your age. — *Lucille Ball*
- Your stomach shouldn't be a waist basket. — *Author Unknown*
- Vegetables are a must on a diet. I suggest carrot cake, zucchini bread and pumpkin pie. — *Garfield / Jim Davis*
- Everything you see I owe to spaghetti. — *Sophia Loren*
- I come from a family where gravy is considered a beverage. — *Erma Bombeck*
- Put eat chocolate at the top of your list of things to do today. That way, at least you will get one thing done. — *Author unknown*
- Food for thought is no substitute for the real thing. — *Walt Kelly*

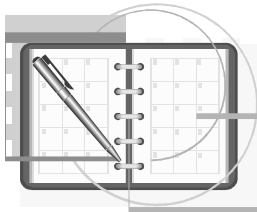
- Choose more fruits and vegetables.
- Choose to be together.
- Choose to move.
- Choose face time, play time, and family time.
- Choose to “right size” your servings.
- Choose to be sweet without sugar.
- Choose to be involved.

*Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.*

The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating

# The Holidays Are Coming!

We are all enjoying the cooler weather and the holidays are right around the corner. Are you ready? Or have you even started to think about them?



For many of us, holidays bring a sense of warmth and family — and stress.

Start getting ready now by preparing to handle the increase in your stress level. One way is to increase your physical activity. During the holidays, you will probably need more exercise because you know you may be eating more.

For some of us, many holiday foods are “comfort” foods. We prepare these favorite dishes only during the holidays.

But whether or not these foods can really boost your mood — and even relieve your psychological stress — will probably depend on following an exercise and nutrition routine more than anything else.

A recent study showed people who exercised more frequently (one to four times a week) were less stressed than those who didn’t exercise at all. Exercise alone, regardless of one’s body size, is really important in terms of handling stress. There truly is a physiological response in our body to emotional stress, but there is not necessarily a food or a

vitamin that will stop it. Nutrition plays a part in helping people cope with stress. Foods high in carbohydrates tend to help people relax, perhaps even sleep better. Foods high in protein generally help people stay alert.

Recognize that stress exists. Get a good night’s sleep. Keep a normal eating schedule. Plan for more activity in your day.

Avoid holiday binge eating, but if it does happen, don’t beat up on yourself. Don’t feel guilty or binge eat more or even go on a diet the next day. Just go about your normal routine. Happy Holidays!

## Sometimes You Feel Like a Nut



A serving size of nuts is one ounce —about a handful. Since the nutrient density of nuts is so high, this small amount is enough to provide you with a substantial amount of many vitamins and minerals.

It’s important to stop after one handful. A second helping will simply contribute more calories than most of us need.

Add a few nuts to your favorite foods for a nutritional boost and a delicious twist. Mix chopped walnuts or pecans into breads, muffins and pies; or sprinkle

chopped, unsalted peanuts over frozen yogurt. Substitute nuts for some of the croutons in salads. In the morning, add a few almonds or cashews to your bowl of cereal. Choosing unsalted nuts will help you avoid added sodium and enjoy the nut’s natural flavor. Also, nuts will stay fresh longer if refrigerated or frozen.

Texas pecans are available to order now at the Rockwall County Extension Office. There are many choices available to you—from 3 and 5 pound bags of shelled pecans—to delicious chocolate covered pecans with all kinds

***Here is your chance to get fresh picked pecans through the annual fundraising project of the Rockwall County Master Gardeners.***

of mixed nuts in between.

Stock up in time for the holidays and support the Rockwall County Master Gardeners Association!

The last day to order is **October 23rd**.

Delivery date is set for the week before Thanksgiving.

Call for a selection list and price sheet. You will need to prepay

with the orders placed at the office. Our phone number is 972-882-0375. Since we are in the process of moving, call first to know which office to come to so that you can place your order.

## Holiday Stains on Fabrics

Here are tips for removing some common stains that appear during the holiday:

**Beverages (coffee, tea, soft drinks, wine, alcoholic beverages):** Sponge or soak stain in cool water. Pretreat with a prewash stain remover, liquid laundry detergent and water. Then launder with bleach that is safe for the fabric.

**Candle wax:** Scrape off the surface with a dull knife. Place the stain between clean paper towels and press with a warm iron. Replace the paper towels frequently to absorb more wax and to avoid transferring the stain. Place stain face down on clean paper towels. Sponge the remaining stain with a pre-wash stain remover or cleaning fluid; blot

with paper towels. Let dry; then launder. If any color remains, rewash using a bleach that is safe for the fabric.

**Chocolate:** Pretreat with a prewash stain remover or liquid laundry detergent. Then launder. If stain remains, rewash using a bleach that is safe for the fabric.

# Turkey Basics for a Safe Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is the time for giving thanks and feasting on turkey with family and friends. Turkey needs to be handled with food safety precautions in mind.

A primary rule of food safety is to keep everything clean. Always wash hands, sink, and food preparation surfaces such as counters and utensils before, during and after preparation.

After purchasing your turkey, take it home and store it in the freezer or refrigerator. Never store turkey on the back porch, on the counter top or any place else where the temperature can reach above 40 degrees.

As soon as the turkey starts to thaw, bacteria can begin to multiply to levels

that can make people sick. Thawing turkey in the refrigerator is the safest method. It takes about 24 hours to thaw every 5 pounds of turkey in the refrigerator. Place the thawing turkey on the bottom shelf to prevent turkey juices from dripping on other foods.



To safely cook the thawed turkey, tuck the wing tips under the shoulders of the turkey and place in a roasting pan with ½ cup of water. For safety, the stuffing should be cooked separate from the turkey. A tent of foil can be loosely laid over the turkey for the first 1 to 1½ hours

and removed for browning. Place the turkey in an oven set no lower than 325°F.

## Cooking times:

8 to 12 pounds	2¾ to 3 hours
12 to 14 pounds	3 to 3¾ hours
14 to 18 pounds	3¾ to 4¼ hours
18 to 20 pounds	4¼ to 4½ hours
20 to 24 pounds	4½ to 5 hours

The turkey should reach 180°F in the inner most part of the thigh. For quality, let the turkey stand for 20 minutes before carving.

After your holiday meal, refrigerate leftovers immediately. Carve the meat from the bone and store in shallow storage containers, covered, in the refrigerator.

## Views on Aging

Do you realize that the only time in our lives when we like to get old is when we are kids? If you are less than 10 years old, you are so excited about aging that you think in fractions. “How old are you?” “I’m four and a half!” You’re never thirty-six and a half. You’re four and a half, going on five. That’s the key.

You get into your teens, now they can’t hold you back. You jump to the next number, or even a few ahead. “How old are you?” “I’m gonna be sixteen!” You could be 13, but hey, you’re gonna be 16! And then the greatest day of your life .... You become 21. Even the words sound

like a ceremony. You become 21. Yes! But then you turn 30. What happened there? Makes you sound like bad milk. He turned; we had to throw him out. There’s no fun now, you’re just a sour dumpling. What’s wrong? What changed?

You become 21, you turn 30, then you’re pushing 40. Whoa! Put on the brakes, it’s all slipping away. Before you know it, you reach 50 and your dreams are gone.

But wait! You make it to 60. You didn’t think you would.

So you become 21, turn 30, push 40,

reach 50, and make it to 60. You’ve built up so much speed that you hit 70! After that, it’s a day by day thing; you hit Wednesday.

You get into your 80s and every day is a complete cycle; you hit lunch; you turn 4:30; you reach bedtime. And it doesn’t end there. Into the 90s you start backwards; “I was just 92!”

Then a strange thing happens. If you make it over 100, you become a little kid again. “I’m 100 and a half!”

May you all make it to a healthy 100 and a half!

— George Carlin

## Pointers for Happy Children in Safety Seats

- ♥ **Start early** — Bring your baby home from the hospital in a child safety seat and never put your baby in a vehicle without one.
- ♥ **Be consistent** — there are no excuses, always buckle your child into a safety seat.
- ♥ **Use words** — as your infant becomes a toddler and starts to talk, explain in simple words your family rule that everyone buckles up.

- ♥ **Model good behavior** — children copy parents all the time. When you buckle up every time you get in the car, you set the example you want them to follow.
- ♥ **Be firm** — nearly every child will try at some point to get out of the safety seat. Don’t panic! Stop the car at a safe location. Talk to your child in a firm, serious voice and then re-buckle the child into the safety seat.

- ♥ **Clue in grand-parents** — safety seat products have changed, laws have changed, and knowledge has changed. Grandparents need to know the importance of using safety seats and have rules for children in their vehicles.



## Animal Cleanup Doesn't Have to be a Pet Peeve

Whether the weather forces you to house your pets indoors, or because your pet is in the house 24/7, eventually Maggie or Peanut makes some kind of mess.

**Avoiding a Cat-Astrophe** Keep the following cleaning products on hand for fast and convenient use: spray stain removers for upholstery, carpet and clothing; polish and electrostatic dust cloths; a broom or dry mop; fabric freshener and household cleaners; vacuum and carpet spray; paper towels; and, disposable disinfectant wipes. When using cleaning products, be sure to



properly store them, keeping them out of the reach of children and your pet's paws, claws and jaws.

**Ferretting Out Odors** Trouble spots include where pets sit, sleep, eat and play. The recommendation is to thoroughly clean these spots at least twice a week. Use a carpet and room deodorizer; many are formulated to eliminate deep-down pet odors. On hard to wash fabrics and upholstery, a fabric refresher is good for neutralizing odors.

**Getting Out of the Dog House** When accidents occur, it's important to clean the mess up as quickly and thoroughly as possible. Blot the area with a spray stain

remover, following the directions on the package. Also, use a disinfectant spray to remove any remaining germs.

**Disappearing Dust Bunnies** Animal dander, fur and feathers can dirty your house, as well as trigger allergy and asthma attacks. To minimize symptoms, launder bed linens frequently. Vacuum and dust the rooms pets hang out in, a couple of times a week. Electrostatic dust mitts and sheets are very handy when it comes to dusting. Also, wash pet bedding at least once a week.

— Source: [www.cleaning101.com](http://www.cleaning101.com)

## Fall Decorating Tips



Golden leaves flutter down from the trees and dance across the street in the wind. A chill in the air suddenly invites us to light fires in the fireplace, bring out our warm sweaters, and cozy up for autumn. Whenever the fall mood strikes you, there are some very easy and quick ways to decorate. Simple touches of warm fall colors are all that's needed.

Put together a box of tools to pull out when decorating for the seasons. Include: a tape measure, pencil, craft wire, pipe cleaners, raffia, nails, cup hooks, tape, wax pellets, felt circles, scissors, clippers, pliers, a hot glue gun, and a hammer.

Use these natural items to decorate your home: wheat, nuts, pinecones, twigs, cattails, branches, pumpkins, dried corn or anything else that appeals to you.

Pumpkins and other fresh produce often becomes soft over time. Always use a plate, platter, foil, or plastic to protect your wood and furniture surfaces from destructive moisture.

Store your fall garlands and permanent decorations in a large covered plastic bin labeled "FALL". If you've cut garlands to fit specific locations, attach a card with a twist tie, noting this information. Obviously, candy, fresh produce and pumpkins should be used and thrown away after the holiday. However, dried corn, preserved leaves, wheat stalks and dried berries will generally last several years if stored properly.

## How to Talk to Your Kid About School

Have you ever thought you'd pull your hair out if you heard your children answer "nothing" or "fine" to one more of your efforts to get them to talk about school? It may not be that they don't want to talk; it may just be the way you are asking. To get more bang for your buck in school-related conversations with your child, try the following:

- Let your child have a moment or two to wind down after school. Most everyone needs some downtime after a long day's work.
- Ask specific questions. Try to limit questions that can be answered with one word such as, "Was gym class fun?" Try these instead: "What was your favorite part of today?" "What did you make in art class?" The more specific the question, the more information you'll receive in the answer.
- Get down on your child's level, physically and emotionally. Make eye contact (bend down if you have to) and empathize if they've had a particularly trying day.
- Really listen! The better you are at actively listening (nodding your head, making eye contact, and giving non-verbal and verbal feedback that shows you are paying attention), the more likely your child is to want to talk.
- Know your child. Some children do not like to talk as much as others. Some kids like to be the initiator and will talk to you about school when they are ready.



## Using and Storing Cranberries

Cranberries are a tart-tasting fruit packed with fiber, vitamin C, and beneficial phytochemicals. Recent studies have linked cranberry consumption with a lower incidence of urinary-tract infections. Other possible health benefits of these seasonal berries include a reduced risk of cancer and heart disease.

Fresh cranberries are available from September to December. The season peaks in November.

Cranberry juice and dried sweetened cranberries have the same health benefits as fresh cranberries.

In fact, cranberry juice cocktail is the most common method of cranberry consumption.

Consuming 1 to 2 ounces of dried sweetened berries or 8 ounces of cranberry juice cocktail daily may help prevent urinary tract infections. Check with your doctor if you are concerned.

For best quality, store fresh cranberries in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. They will keep for up to 4 weeks.

The easiest way to freeze cranberries is by freezing them on a tray and then

packing them into rigid containers or flexible freezer bags that are moisture and vapor resistant.



Be sure to remove the stems and wash the berries before freezing. For best quality, use frozen cranberries within 9 months.

Use fresh or dried cranberries in nut breads, muffins, or fruit salads. Add dried, sweetened cranberries to bran cereal for extra flavor and fiber.

## Winter Spruce Ups

When cold weather clothes come out of summer hibernation, it's likely that a little tender loving care will bring them back to life. Here are some suggestions to get your winter gear out of storage and into the wardrobe.

**Wash and Repair** Check your winter clothes for stains or damage after they are unpacked. Some trims and closures can cause stains during storage. Follow garment care labels for proper cleaning. Check garments for small holes—signs that moths, beetles or other insects could have enjoyed a summer snack at your wardrobe's expense. Hanging the clothes outside to air in the shade may be needed to remove odors from being stored in mothballs or crystals.

**Winter Coat Care** The way coats are treated *before and after* they are unpacked will contribute to their long and healthy life. Wearing a neck scarf will protect the collar area of the coat from perspiration, body oils and hair tonics. Hang coats on padded hangers to avoid distortion of the neckline and damage to fabrics that hooks or coat racks can cause. Store leather garments in a cool, well-ventilated area. This keeps the leather from drying out or attracting mildew. Avoid storing coats or clothes in plastic bags, as they promote mildew and damage.



## Teens and Money



Parents and teens can work together to set up a budget plan—this is really helpful if the teen has started a new job and has regular income. Teens can keep track of everything they spend for one week ... or one month ... and then compare that amount to what they earned for the same time frame. This information will help them determine where they can cut expenses or increase savings.

New paychecks can be an excellent incentive to open a new checking or savings account. These accounts can introduce teens to such necessary adult skills as check writing, check book balancing, bill paying and money managing.

Effective money managing includes comparison shopping. Whether in stores, at garage sales, or over the Internet, comparison shopping is the key to saving dollars. Finding out what items cost, how much, and where to purchase them is a valuable consumer tool for making informed decisions, no matter what the item.

Teen wage earners **might** benefit from a credit card. Establishing good personal credit is a financial necessity and is invaluable when it comes time to purchase a house or a car or any other big-ticket item. Parents can help their teens establish good credit by supervising the teen's account to make sure he or she doesn't get into financial trouble.

## Texas Cooperative Extension— Rockwall County

Janie E. Squier  
County Extension Agent -  
Family & Consumer Sciences  
Courthouse Annex  
101 South Fannin  
Rockwall, Texas 75087

Phone: 972-882-0375  
FAX: 972-882-0374  
Email: j-squier@tamu.edu



## Fun in the Kitchen with Kids

Who are the “new cooks” of the future? Why, kids of course! Children are naturals when it comes to learning new skills, and what better time to teach them than when they show interest in your kitchen activities.

Since kids are present in the kitchen from the time you put them in their high-chairs, they know from a very early age that great tasting foods are usually the result of “playing around” in the kitchen. So chances are good that most children are eager to help Mom and Dad, and can easily perform the simplest culinary tasks from age three on.

Cooking is a lifelong accomplishment that should be part of everyone’s range of skills. With today’s busy lifestyles, it’s a real plus if everyone in the family can pitch in to keep things running smoothly – certainly a bonus for two-career households.

Aside from the usefulness of learning about cooking techniques at a young age, there’s another important advantage to introducing your child to cooking: Children will be much more apt to sample unfamiliar foods they have helped to prepare. Putting a plate of asparagus or sweet potatoes in front of a child who has never seen or tasted them before will often provoke a look of disgust, and not much else. However, if the same child learns to snap off the asparagus stalks and put them in the steamer basket before you cook them, or gets to help with peeling and mashing the sweet potatoes, he or she will certainly be more enthusiastic about sampling the results!

Want to learn more? You need to check out the County Extension Office’s Web site located at

<http://rockwall-co.tamu.edu/>

Nine “Click and Learn” courses are now available online for you to learn more about:

- Cooking with Kids
- Culinary Herbs
- Fit It In
- The Skinny on Fad Diets
- Berry Bonanza
- Family Meals in Minutes
- Living Heart Healthy
- Cooking for 1 or 2
- Cold Weather Cooking with your Slow Cooker

To download a “Click and Learn” Course, click on the **Publications** link at the top of the site’s home page. Next, click on “Click and Learn Courses” and make your selection by clicking on the topic.