



Family and Consumer Sciences Newsline

You just can't have a day without agriculture!

It's 7:00 a.m. and you are up and out of bed. Did you know that most likely the sheets you were sleeping on were an agricultural product? Cotton is a major Oklahoma agricultural product. Many of the items we use every day from the clothing we wear to the money in our pocket are made with cotton. Americans purchase 600 million pair of blue jeans made from cotton each year!

Now it's time for breakfast. The cereal, muffin, or toast you are eating is made with a grain. Perhaps even wheat, another Oklahoma ag product. Wheat has been a staple to the Oklahoma economy throughout our 100 year history. It takes 9 seconds to harvest enough wheat to make 70 loaves of bread.

You better hurry, you have a doctor's appointment to go to. We use products everyday from plant and animal by-products produced by America's farmers and ranchers. In the health care industry, pharmaceuticals, surgical sutures, ointments, latex gloves, x-ray film, gelatin for capsules and even heart valves are made from agricultural products.

You wouldn't have a place to live without agriculture. Almost a third of the world's total land area is covered by forests. Some tissue-making machines can produce as many as 6,000 feet of toilet tissue every minute out of trees. Every year in the United States each person uses the equivalent of one tree, 100 feet tall and 16 inches in diameter to fulfill their wood and paper needs. Some farmers grow trees on a woodlot. Each time a tree is harvested, the farmer replants and grows trees using sustainable agricultural practices.

Not only does March celebrate Agriculture, but it is National Peanut Month. There are 340 million M & M's produced each day. Peanuts are not actually nuts, but like soybeans, they are legumes and are another Oklahoma grown product.

March also is a celebration of Nutrition. We have all heard of "5-a-day" as it relates to the fruits and vegetables we consume. You probably have even heard of the "old wives tales" about the medicinal power of onions, but did you know that onions really do contain antibiotics that fight infections, soothe burns, tame bee stings and relieve the itch in athlete's foot!

And finally, March celebrates the shamrock with St. Patrick's day. Shamrock is the English form of the Irish word *seamrog* which, literally translated, means "little clover". Clover is one of the major crops grown in Oklahoma as hay. It is extremely delicious and fattening to cattle. This fact is where we get the idiomatic phrase "in clover," meaning a carefree life of ease, comfort, or prosperity. Clover also grows, often unwanted, in most lawns in Oklahoma. Clover is a legume, which means it is good for the soil. Legumes capture nitrogen. Clover is one of the first plants to start greening up in the spring.

**You just can't have a day without agriculture!
National Ag Day, March 20**

Source: Oklahoma Department of Agriculture



Food, Nutrition, Health **2**

- Nutrition, just the facts
- Cracking up!

Family Economics **3**

- Does this sound familiar
- How to get a tax rebate

Family Relationships **4**

- Poison Control Week
- Which milk is best for growing bones?

Home and Community Education News **5**

- Notes from Elizabeth
- Reminders
- Casa La Mia OHCE Featured

Leadership Development **6**

- Kids & Kows & More Event Help Needed
- NE District OHCE Meeting information and updates

OSU Extension—Tulsa County
4116 East 15th St. ♦ Tulsa, OK 74112
918-746-3703(O) ♦ 918-746-3726 (Fax)
Charlotte L. Richert,
Extension Educator
Family and Consumer Sciences
www.oces.tulsacounty.org

Nutrition, just the Facts

- Don't eat after 8 p.m.
- Avoid carbohydrates.
- A piece of cake on your birthday will ruin your diet. Right?

Not exactly. **"There are no bad foods, no good or bad times to eat and no magic bullets for maintaining a healthy weight,"** says registered dietitian and American Dietetic Association spokesperson Ruth Frechman. "The fact is, it's the total diet approach that matters in living a healthful lifestyle."

March is National Nutrition Month®, the perfect time to take a fresh look at the big picture. "No single food or meal makes or breaks a healthful diet," Frechman says. "Your overall pattern of eating is the most important focus. A wide variety of foods can fit within this pattern, if consumed in moderation, in appropriate portions and combined with regular physical activity."

The theme for National Nutrition Month 2008 is *Nutrition: It's a Matter of Fact*. The American Dietetic Association reminds consumers to focus on the total balance of foods you consume, rather than any one food or meal.

"No one food or type of food guarantees good health, just as no single food or type of food is necessarily detrimental to health," Frechman says.

"It doesn't matter if you eat after 8 p.m.

What's more important is how many calories you ate the entire day, not when you ate them," Frechman says. "Splurging on cake and ice cream during a party isn't going to ruin a healthful eating plan. Pay attention to the portion of your treat and enjoy it in moderation, exercise a little longer the next day or plan ahead to save calories, like skipping your morning latte."

National Nutrition Month was created in 1973. The American Dietetic Association promotes healthful eating by providing practical nutrition guidance and focusing attention on making informed food choices and developing sound physical activity habits.

Cracking Up!

- In the U.S. hens produced 6,657,000,000 dozen eggs! That's 6,657 billion dozen. After these eggs were laid, about 2/3 were sold in the shell and 1/3 of them were broken, not by accident, but on purpose. After eggs are broken out of their shells, they can be made into liquid, frozen, dried, and specialty egg products.
- Eggs age more in one day at room temperature than in one week in the refrigerator. To keep eggs fresh, keep them refrigerated.
- It takes 24–26 hours for a hen to produce an egg; there is 30 minutes between each egg-producing cycle.
- Egg yolks are one of the few foods that naturally contain Vitamin D.

Source: agday.org/education/fun_facts.php

Oven-baked Egg Omelet (Perfect for Sunday Morning Brunch)

12 eggs

3/4 cups skim or low-fat milk

1/2 cup chopped bell pepper; 1 medium chopped onion, deli-ham cut into small pieces

1/2 cup low-fat cheddar cheese

1 t salt (optional) 1/4 t pepper (optional)

In large bowl, beat together eggs and milk, stir in peppers, onion, and ham. Season with salt and pepper. Pour egg mixture into lightly greased 13x9x2 inch baking pan. Place in pre-heated 350 degree oven. As mixture begins to set, sprinkle with low-fat cheddar cheese. Continue baking until lightly browned, about 25 minutes.

Does this sound familiar?

Do you find yourself in a yearly cycle?

- A. using your tax refund each spring to get caught up
- B. then gradually getting more and more behind throughout the year, (and more and more stressed out), until....
- C. you can once again use your tax refund to get caught up?

You can prevent this common cycle [by putting more money in your regular paycheck](#), instead of getting such a large tax refund.

A large tax refund seems like a great idea, but that isn't always true. Why?

- Perhaps you could be investing the money and earning interest throughout the year. You give up that interest income when you let the IRS keep your money for several months. Overpaying on taxes is simply an interest free loan to the government.
- Perhaps you would save money on late fees or finance charges if you had the money in your paycheck throughout the year. If you paid a \$5 late fee on your utility bill six different times throughout the year, then that's \$30 you could have saved by getting your tax refund in your paycheck rather than waiting till the end of the year.

What can I do to get my refund money throughout the year instead of waiting?

1. Change your Withholding Instructions on Form W-4. If you receive a large refund, it may be because you claim too few exemptions.
2. Talk with your payroll office about this.

If you qualify for the [Earned Income Credit](#) you can request to receive part of it throughout the year.

How? Ask your payroll office for Form W-5 - Earned Income Credit Advance Payment Certificate.

How Much? Using IRS guidelines which estimate what your Earned Income Credit amount for the year might be, your payroll office distributes about half of that amount in your paychecks throughout the year.

For more information on managing your money and taxes, talk with a tax professional or visit http://www.extension.iastate.edu/finances/personal/money/tax_refund_large.htm.

To Get a 2008 Tax Rebate, You Must File a Tax Return

You could receive a \$300 or more tax rebate even if you are not required to file a return, as a part of the U.S. 2008 economic stimulus package.

Who is eligible?

- To qualify, an individual, couple or family needs to have received as little as \$3,000 or more income in all of 2007 from wages or pensions. Social Security payments alone can qualify you, as can railroad retirement or veteran benefits.

What if I receive SSI

- SSI benefits do not count toward the \$3,000, but if you receive enough other income too, having some SSI is OK.
- If you do receive SSI or any other needs-based benefits like TANF or food stamps, receiving the check will not affect them.

How much will I get?

- Single taxpayers who qualify will receive \$300, couples \$600. If you have dependent children, you can receive more. People with very high incomes will receive less, or none.

How can I be getting a "rebate" if I pay no taxes?

- The payment is not truly a "rebate"—because you can receive it even if you owe no income tax. It is actually a "refundable" credit to be figured with your 2008 taxes. Either year, it will not affect what you owe, and it will come in addition to any refund you may be due from tax withheld.

What do I need to do?

- Many low-income people who get Social Security don't normally need to file a tax return. But this year, it's worth it. You need to use form 1040 or 1040A. You can pick one up at a post office. You may also be able to file electronically. Go to www.irs.gov for information.

When do I need to file?

- It's best to file by April 15, but extensions are possible. Checks will be sent through 2008.

What if I need help filing my taxes?

- Free help with tax returns is available from VITA program. Call 1 (800) 906-9887. You may also check with AARP at 1 (888) 227-7669.

Poison Prevention Week is March 18-24

Source: Debbie Richardson, OSU Extension parenting specialist

While accidental poisoning is the second-leading cause of home injury death, many parents and caregivers are overlooking simple steps that can help keep family members safe.

More than 2 million poisonings are reported to Poison Control Centers across the country each year.

In observance of National Poison Prevention Week, slated March 18-24, the Environmental Protection Agency is reminding families how to take precautions and properly use and store dangerous household chemicals to avoid accidental poisonings.

Debbie Richardson, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service parenting assistant specialist, said accidental poisonings are an all-too-often occurrence.

“Every 13 seconds a poison control center receives a call about an unintentional poisoning,” Richardson said. “Of the estimated 2 million poisonings per year, more than half of them involve children under the age of six. In addition, 70,000 of the calls concerned the potential exposure to common household pesticides.”

Parents and other caregivers must understand the danger household cleaners, chemicals and cosmetics may present to young children. Any label containing the words “caution,” “warning” or “danger” should be locked away and stored out of children’s reach.

Without proper safety measures in place, a child’s natural curiosity, coupled with their inability to read or understand product labels, can result in a tragic accident.

“Hand-to-mouth behavior and imitation are normal for children. Anything within their reach will most likely end up in their mouths,” she said. “Common household items, from

medications and cleaners to automotive fluids and pesticides, present serious risks to everyone, especially children.”

Children are not the only people who are at a greater risk for a poisoning exposure in the home. Older adults also are at risk.

Richardson said older adults, especially those who are taking multiple medications, face an increased risk for accidental poisoning.

“A recent survey conducted by the Home Safety Council shows that nearly 1 in 10 caregivers of an older adult age 50 or older recently reported that their loved one had experienced a poisoning incident at home, more frequently from taking the wrong medications,” she said.

Some tips to help protect your family from accidental poisoning include knowing what

things in and around your home could poison you; put child safety locks on cabinets to safely store cleaners, medications, cosmetics, chemicals and other poisons; keep all of these products in their original packaging with the labels on them; do not mix household products together because their contents could react with dangerous results; have a service person check heaters, stoves and fireplaces every year to ensure they are working properly; and install a carbon monoxide detector near the bedrooms and furnace to warn you of high levels of CO, a deadly gas you cannot see or smell. “Be sure to post the Poison Control Hotline number by every telephone in the house. The number is 1-800-222-1222. Be sure to post other emergency numbers as well.” Richardson said. “This number will connect you to emergency help in your area. Use this number immediately in the event of a possible poisoning. You also can call the hotline if you have a question about poisons.”

Poison Control Hotline
1-800-222-1222

Which milk is best for growing bones?

Everyone knows that milk is an important part of a growing child’s diet. There are several types of milk available at the grocery store, so which one is the best? Check the Nutrition Facts label to learn about the benefits of milk. Milk isn’t just for growing bones. Everyone in the family should be drinking milk. Calcium and vitamin D are important for your child’s growing bones and teeth. In addition, these same nutrients help a grown-up’s bones stay healthy.

Protein is another nutrient found in milk. Protein, a must for building a growing body, keeps a body in good repair. Vitamin A helps keep eyes and skin as healthy as possible. All types of milk contain the same nutrients that are needed in a healthy diet.

Infants up to 1 year old should drink breast milk or infant formula. From 1 to 2 years of age, toddlers should drink whole milk. Toddlers need the fat from whole milk to grow properly. After 2 years of age children can begin drinking low-fat milk. This is a good habit for the entire family to get into. Drinking low-fat milk cuts down on the consumption of saturated fat.

For some families, the transition from whole milk to low-fat milk may be easier by incorporating 2 percent milk into the diet for a while. Switch from whole to 2 percent. When everyone adjusts to the flavor, try low-fat milk. Chocolate low-fat milk has about the same flavor as higher fat chocolate milk. This added flavor can help with the adjustment.

Try putting low-fat milk on cereal and smoothies. Your child probably won’t notice the difference. It’s also important for parents to drink milk to protect their bones, too. Children are more likely to drink milk if their parents are drinking it.

Source: Janice Herrmann, Phd. Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service, nutrition specialist



*Elizabeth's
Notes*

We're in the short rows now for District Meeting!!!! Please see page 6 for information on door prizes, pictures, volunteers, etc. for District Meeting final details.

Coe Ann Patton will attend the Leader Training session for "Clutters Last Stand" at District Meeting and will get the Tulsa County Packet. She will give the Leader Training for it to Tulsa County at the Extension Office on April 22 at 10:00 am. The June and July training will be in Owasso at 10:00 am.

We're going to have a GREAT DISTRICT MEETING!!!!

BLUE STAR MOTHERS

Bring travel size items for our service men and women to be distributed through Blue Star Mothers. Our goal is to collect 1,000 items at the conference. That's about 50 items per county!

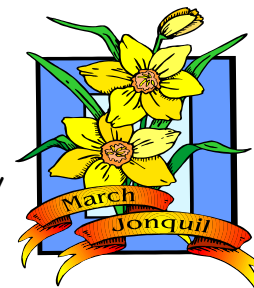
MARCH

- 10 District Meeting Committee at Extension Office, 10:00 am
- 20 Eastside deadline for "This is What We Do" article, due at Extension office
- 21 Extension Office closed for Easter
- 24 Setup at 1:00 pm at Green Country Events Center for District Meeting
- 25 NE DISTRICT MEETING
- 26 *Put our feet up day !!*

APRIL

- 22 Leader Training at Owasso 10:00 am
June and July lessons.
Leader Training, Tulsa County ONLY, for May
- 1 lesson at Extension office 10:00 am

**CASA LA MIA
OHCE
FEATURE**



Casa La Mia (which roughly translates to My House or My Home) is a grand old club. We have members with longevity from forty-three years to three years.

We meet the second Wednesday of each month in various members' homes for a business meeting, a lesson, snacks and a door prize. We exchange good information such as household tips, and funny stories.

On the third Wednesday we meet at one of our members' home for community activities. We make tray favors for a local nursing home, these are delivered to the 48 residents who are very appreciative and are really a delightful bunch of ladies; we also make neck coolers for the participants of the Multiple Sclerosis walk. When times permits, we write a life story and read it to the club.

We do a lot of community activities as a group and as individuals. We have members who: Visit the nursing home to read, call bingo, or just lend a friendly ear, deliver Meals on Wheels, make premie dresses, work in their churches office, check on the elderly, knit and quilt.

We enjoy each other and feel that each life has been enriched through our association with HCE.

Peggie Fleener

Kids & Kows & More, Help Needed

If you grew up on a farm, it may seem strange that children today don't know where their food comes from or that cotton is a plant that Blue Jeans are made with. Agriculture literacy is needed as our society gets further removed from agriculture's roots.

On March 13 and 14 we are expecting 1800 3rd and 4th grade children for the third annual Kids & Kows & More event! This is an ag-literacy project being done by the Tulsa County OSU Extension Service (4-H, FCS, Ag, and Horticulture), Texas A & M Extension, Southwest Dairy Association, and Expo Square.

Students participate in educational programs including Beef, Swine, Sheep, Wheat, Cotton, and Dairy, and General Agriculture. Following the event, the 3rd and 4th grade students may write an essay about what they learned about agriculture. The Kiwanis of East Tulsa and Broken Arrow sponsor the essay contest while Farm Credit of Eastern Oklahoma and the Tulsa County Farm Bureau provide resources for the event.

Many Oklahoma Agriculture Commodity groups are available for teaching students about their products while others provide take-home information to the teachers and students. The Oklahoma Agriculture Ag-in-the-Classroom coordinators help bring agriculture to life for these young people.

We need Home and Community Education members to help serve refreshments for this event. To help, please call Charlotte or Pamela at 746-3703. The times needed are Thursday and Friday, March 13 and 14, from 8:30 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.

Sincerely,



Charlotte L. Richert
Family and Consumer Sciences
 OSU Extension Educator-Tulsa County

This newsletter is published by OSU Extension Service/Tulsa County Family and Consumer Sciences Department. Information about Oklahoma Home and Community Education (OHCE) groups may be obtained by contacting Tulsa County Extension, 4116 East 15th St., Tulsa, OK 74112-6198 918-746-3703 or log onto: www.oces.tulsacounty.org

DISTRICT MEETING DETAILS

DOOR PRIZES - Fasten contents list to your baskets. Each group is to bring two 8" clay pots to be used to hold tickets for your baskets. (If you put your group name on the bottom of the pots, you will get them back.) Bring your baskets and pots to the Green Country Events Center on March 24th for setup at 1:00 pm.

PICTURES - There will be an area set aside for groups to take group pictures, so bring your cameras.

DRESS - Wear dark skirt or pants and pastel tee or blouse.

VOLUNTEERS - Group Presidents, you are receiving a Volunteer Signup sheet that has been coordinated with Wagoner County. Please follow instructions as we need this done before the March 10th meeting.

There will be a room for Volunteers so we can leave our coats, purses, goody bags (with our names on), receive instruction packets, name tags, etc. We need to keep a program with us at all times so we can give information as needed. Volunteer Orientation is at the Event Center on Monday, March 24 at 1:00 p.m.

All who can, need to be at the March 10 meeting at the Extension office at 10:00 am. Bring a sack lunch and we will fill goody bags in the afternoon. Thanks to many of you. We have great stuff for the bags!

March 25, the day of District Meeting, all volunteers need to be at the Green Country Events Center at 8:00 am.

The Business Meeting starts at 9:00 am.

Don't forget about travel items for Blue Star Mothers!

Elizabeth Bartlett