

FACES NEWSLETTER

Family and Consumer Science



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Saving your Summer Harvest

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In my humble opinion there is nothing quite as satisfying as eating an ear of sweet corn that I planted, tended, picked, shucked, silked and cooked myself. I feel pretty much the same about everything I grow. I enjoy every step in the process of growing and cooking food from my own little home garden. So what do I do in the middle of winter, when my little raised beds sit fallow? Simple, I enjoy the fruits of my summer labor by opening a jar or baggie of home preserved goodness. Yes, folks I am talking about home canned and home frozen product. If you grow a garden you probably know that even a small backyard or patio plot has the potential to yield great quantities of produce if conditions are favorable. So instead of bombarding your friends and neighbors with your abundant zucchini and cukes, why not save some of it for yourself and your family?

Canning and freezing are the two most popular methods of preserving food at home, although a fair number of people dry or dehydrate food at home too. Fermentation is also gaining a lot of popularity due to numerous studies that cite a variety of health benefits connected to consuming fermented products. All of these methods focus on preventing spoilage caused by microorganisms and chemical changes caused by enzymes. Canning involves putting food into jars or cans and heating the product to a temperature that kills microorganisms and inactivated enzymes. The heating and later cooling of the jar or can forms a vacuum seal, which prevents contamination within the jar.

Freezing reduces the temperature of food so that microorganisms cannot grow and enzyme activity is slowed. Drying removes most of the moisture from foods. Doing so stops microorganism growth and slows enzyme activity. Controlled fermentation processes encourage the growth of good bacteria, which starves, or fights off, the bad microbes that cause spoilage. Depending on what is fermented, or the manner of fermentation, foods can remain consumable for years. The fermentation process can be stopped by other means of preserving, such as, canning (heating), drying, or freezing.

The method you choose to preserve your product depends on several things. Most importantly, ask yourself whether safe guidelines and methods are available for the particular food you have. Next, do you have or can you obtain the proper instructions and equipment to properly preserve the item? Luckily, there are tons of resources available to help you answer those questions. The NC Cooperative Extension is a great place to start. We are available to answer your questions, provide information and advice on proper preservation, and give you hands on practice.

If you would like to learn more consider attending Onslow County Cooperative Extension's five part Home Food Preservation Series beginning May 28th. Each class will focus on a different method of preserving food at home. The first session on May 28th from 6pm until 9pm covers Fermented Products. Session Two, on June 4th covers Water Bath Canning, including fruit, jams, jellies and pickles. Session Three is all about Pressure Canning and will include vegetables, meats and other low acid products. Session Four covers Dehydrating. In this class participants will learn about drying foods as well as making jerkies and fruit leathers. Session Five will be an in-depth coverage of proper freezing techniques required to insure quality and safety when freezing food at home. The cost for each class is \$10. If you want to take all five classes the cost is \$45. Space is limited to 12 participants per class and you must pre-register and pay by May 15th. Call 910-455-5873 or email robin_seitz@ncsu.edu or lisa_rayburn@ncsu.edu for information.



SPRING CLEANING?



Spring Cleaning Safety Tips

While doing their spring-cleaning, families will use a wide range of products that can cause accidental poisonings, an expert says. But taking appropriate precautions will reduce the risk of danger, said Earl Siegel, managing director of the drug and poison information center at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in Ohio.

"It is vital that people arm themselves with basic information on poison prevention in the home, such as keeping chemicals out of the reach of children and carefully reading the labels and dosages on all products," he said in a hospital news release.

Tips for preventing poisonings during spring-cleaning are offered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Keep cleaning products in their original bottles or containers. Don't store them in cups, bottles or jars. Never sniff containers to determine what's inside.

Keep cleaning products locked up and out of sight and reach of children.

Read the label before you use a cleaning product. And never mix products together; doing so could create a dangerous gas.

Open windows and turn on fans when using cleaners or other chemicals.

Also, wear protective clothing -- long sleeves, long pants, socks, shoes and gloves -- if you're spraying pesticides or other chemicals. Stay away from newly sprayed areas for at least an hour, or until the spray has dried.

If you clean out your medicine cabinet, keep all medicines out of the sight and reach of children while you're working.

If a poisoning occurs, call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 immediately.

Source: HealthDay News



E-Cigarettes: Separating Fact from Fiction

What is an e-cigarette?

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) describes an e-cigarette as a battery-operated device that turns nicotine, flavorings and other chemicals into a vapor that can be inhaled. The ones that contain nicotine offer varying concentrations of nicotine. Most are designed to look like a tobacco cigarette, but some look like everyday objects, such as pens or USB drives, according to the FDA.

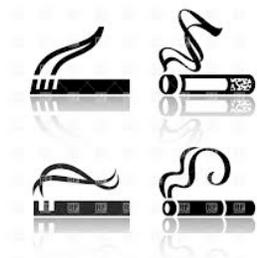
How does an e-cigarette work?

"Nicotine or flavorings are dissolved into propylene glycol usually, though it's hard to know for sure because they're not regulated," explained smoking cessation expert Dr. Gordon Strauss, psychiatrist and founder of QuitGroups. "Then, when heated, you can inhale the vapor." The process of using an e-cigarette is called "vaping" rather than smoking, according to Hilary Tindle, an assistant professor of medicine and director of the tobacco treatment service at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. She said that people who use electronic cigarettes are called "vapers" rather than smokers.

Although many e-cigarettes are designed to look like regular cigarettes, both Tindle and Strauss said they don't exactly replicate the smoking experience, particularly when it comes to the nicotine delivery. Most of the nicotine in e-cigarettes gets into the bloodstream through the soft tissue of your cheeks (buccal mucosa) instead of through your lungs, like it does with a tobacco cigarette. "Nicotine from a regular cigarette gets to the brain much quicker, which may make them more addictive and satisfying," Strauss said.

Where can e-cigarettes be used?

"People want to use e-cigarettes anywhere they can't smoke," Strauss said. "I sat next to someone on a plane who was using an e-cigarette. He was using it to get nicotine during the flight." But he noted that just where it's OK to use an e-cigarette -- indoors, for instance? -- remains unclear, although many cities including New York, Chicago and Los Angeles have instated "vaping" bans that do not allow vaping where smoking is not allowed.



Can an e-cigarette help people quit smoking? That, too, seems to be an unanswered question. Tindle said, "it's too early to tell definitively that e-cigarettes can help people quit."

A study published in *The Lancet* in September was the first moderately sized, randomized and controlled trial of the use of e-cigarettes to quit smoking, she said. It compared nicotine-containing e-cigarettes to nicotine patches and to e-cigarettes that simply contained flavorings. The researchers found essentially no differences in the quit rates for the products after six months of use.

"E-cigarettes didn't do worse than the patch, and there were no differences in the adverse events," she said. "I would be happy if it turned out to be a safe and effective alternative for quitting, but we need a few more large trials for safety and efficacy." Strauss noted that "although we can't say with certainty that e-cigarettes are an effective way to quit, people are using them" for that purpose.

"Some people have told me that e-cigarettes are like a godsend," he said. Former smoker Elizabeth Phillips would agree. She's been smoke-free since July 2012 with the help of e-cigarettes, which she used for about eight months after giving up tobacco cigarettes. "E-cigarettes allowed me to gradually quit smoking without completely

removing myself from the physical actions and social experience associated with smoking," Phillips said. "I consider my e-cigarette experience as a baby step that changed my life."

Are e-cigarettes approved or regulated by the government?

E-cigarettes are not currently regulated in a specific way by the FDA. The agency would like to change this, however, and last April filed a request for the authority to regulate e-cigarettes as a tobacco product.

The attorneys general of 40 states agree that electronic cigarettes should be regulated and sent a letter to the FDA in September requesting oversight of the products. They contend that e-cigarettes are being marketed to children; some brands have fruit and candy flavors or are advertising with cartoon characters. And, they note that the health effects of e-cigarettes have not been well studied, especially in children.

Are e-cigarettes dangerous?

"It's not the nicotine in cigarettes that kills you, and the nicotine in e-cigarettes probably won't really hurt you either, but again, it hasn't been studied," Strauss said. "Is smoking something out of a metal and plastic container safer than a

cigarette? Cigarettes are already so bad for you it's hard to imagine anything worse. But, it's a risk/benefit analysis. For a parent trying to quit, we know that secondhand smoke is a huge risk to kids, so if an electronic cigarette keeps you from smoking, maybe you'd be helping kids with asthma or saving babies." But on the flip side, he said, in former smokers, using an e-cigarette could trigger the urge to smoke again.

The other big concern is children using e-cigarettes. "More and more middle and high school kids are using e-cigarettes," Tindle said. "Some are smoking conventional cigarettes, too. The latest data from the CDC found the rate of teens reporting ever having used an e-cigarette doubled in just a year. We could be creating new nicotine addicts. We don't know what the addictive properties of e-cigarettes are," she added. "It's shocking that they've been allowed to sell to minors," Tindle said.

Source: HealthDay News

What Do Your Credit Cards Really Cost? **By Rosemary Carlson**

How many credit cards do you have in your wallet? What are they costing you? The average American has five or six. That



includes bankcards such as Visa or MasterCard, department store cards, gasoline cards and general-purpose cards such as American Express. If each credit card has a \$2,000 line of credit, that means we have \$10,000 to \$12,000 in credit available to us, on average. Consumer debt in the U.S. is at an all-time high. Household spending is rising faster than household income. That means people are borrowing more and more money to finance their spending habits, a lot of it by using credit cards. Unfortunately, we have grown accustomed to whipping out that piece of plastic for any little purchase we want to make without much thought to the consequences. Good money managers try to use credit cards just to pay for emergencies, such as a big auto repair bill, or large expenses for which they do not have enough savings. But if we have maxed out our credit card limits by making lots of little, non-essential purchases, we may not have the credit capacity to take care of those emergencies or big-but-necessary expenses. On top of that, many of us have two other credit card problems. First, we have only

enough disposable income to make the minimum payments. Or we think that's all we really need to pay. Second, credit card interest rates do not necessarily change much when market interest rates change. Many cards maintain interest rates of 19 percent to 23 percent, sometimes higher if you have had late payments or over-limit fees. How much is all this credit costing you? For the sake of simplicity, let's look at just one card. Let's say you have a balance of \$3,000 on one of your bank credit cards and the interest rate is 19 percent. Let's also say that you must make a minimum payment of 2.5 percent of the balance every month – that starts at \$75 per month. Of course, the minimum payment will drop every month as you pay down your debt, as long as you never make another charge on that debt. However, consider what happens if you pay only the minimum month by month as it goes down from \$75 to \$69 in 10 months, to \$62 in 20 months, and so on. If you make only that minimum payment month after month, it will take you a shocking 283 months to pay off that one debt – more than 23 years – and you will have paid \$4,729.44 in interest. And that's for just one card with a \$3,000 balance! Multiply that by four or five more credit cards, and most of us would have a credit problem. Instead,

let's say that, after reading this column, you decide you can set aside \$100 every month to pay off that \$3,000 debt. In this case, you will have your credit card paid off in 42 months and the interest expense to you will be reduced to \$1,101.73. You would shave more than 20 years off your debt repayment and more than \$3,600 in interest expense. Take a look at your credit card balances, interest rates and minimum payments. Pick one, preferably the one with the highest interest rate, and start paying off that debt with as much as you can reasonably afford per month. Then, move on to the next one. In the meantime, try to use your credit cards only for necessities and emergencies. You will pat yourself on the back someday for your good money management.





4-H Summer Avenues of Interest - 2014

The 4-H motto is: “to make the best better,” so make the best better by enrolling now to learn something new and meet new people. The 4-H office - along with those giving leadership to the activities - hope you have an enjoyable summer and invite youth age 9 – 18 to take advantage of some of the opportunities offered in the Avenues of Interest Summer Program. Classes offered will be First Aid/CPR and Babysitting. Also offered will be five weeks of camp opportunities (varying ages) and additional outdoor activities.

We invite you to join us for an exciting summer!!! Any youth in Onslow County may enroll in one or more workshops, you do not have to be the 4-H'er to register, just come by the 4-H office at 4024 Richlands Hwy, Jacksonville, NC. Check our website (<http://onslow.ces.ncsu.edu>) to see what classes we offer and if they are full, or call us at (910) 455-5873. All programs have a registration fee, which must be paid when you register.

Registration will not be held at the workshop or activity. Be sure to ask about our summer camp weeks for children age 8-12!

All monies collected are used for supplies and or instructor fees. Again, do not miss out on an exciting summer of 4-H activities.



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