

# EFNEP Notes

Jefferson County  
April - June, 2008

Dear Homemakers,

## Contents



Healthy Eating

Functional Foods

Avocados

Veggies: Sneak 'em Tricks

Recipe

Dates to Remember

This is the time of year to plant your spring gardens. Some of you may have already started. Those of you who haven't a clue, can contact your Jefferson County Extension Service and they will assist you with what, how much and when to plant your garden. Your EFNEP program assistant can help with information on small backyard gardens.

Maybe you've tried to grow a garden before but were not successful. There could have been several things wrong. The first thing to consider is the soil. Take a soil sample from the area you are thinking about planting a garden. There is a correct procedure to do this, as follows:

- Collect soil from 10 to 12 areas in a zig-zag pattern or different areas of garden plot.
- It is recommended 6 to 8 inches in depth from the area to be sampled.
- Mix soil together and put in one pint zip-lock bag or in a one pint jar.
- Bring it to your county Extension office at 500 Idaho

There, they will take your soil and the necessary information and send it to the lab for analysis. In about 10 to 14 days your soil test results will be mailed to you. If you have any questions regarding your soil test report, please contact your county Extension agent at (870) 534-1033.



Vanessa Woods Evans  
County Extension Agent  
Family & Consumer Sciences

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## Healthy Eating

Starting early with healthy eating habits is a way to prevent developing the chronic diseases such as cancer and diabetes. By adding a variety of fruits and vegetables into your diet along with physical activity can prevent obesity in children. We as parents have a responsibility to provide a nourishing environment for our children. One way of doing that is by making sure they get enough physical activity, eat healthy snacks instead of cookies, chips, and sugar-filled drinks, watch the serving size we give them and make sure they get well balanced meals. Your Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) program assistant can give you information on increasing your physical activity, healthy snack recipes, reading food labels and portion sizes and how to plan a menu.

## **Functional Foods**

What are functional foods?

Functional foods are foods that provide health benefits beyond basic nutrition when consumed as part of a varied diet and on a regular basis. The phytochemicals (plant chemicals) in these foods fight against diseases such as:

- Cancer
- Heart disease
- Cataracts
- Strokes



### **List of functional foods and their functions:**

**Whole grains**—reduce risk of cardiovascular disease and cancer.

**Blackberries**—reduce risk of certain forms of cancer and decrease cholesterol levels.

**Blueberries**—may protect against the effects of aging.

**Red grapes**—reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer, blood clots and stroke; reduce the inflammation associated with allergies; inhibit the growth of head and neck cancer and protect the lungs from harmful effects of pollutants and cigarette smoke.

**Strawberries**—reduce certain forms of cancer and decrease cholesterol levels.

**Sweet potatoes**—may help slow the aging process, reduce the risk of certain types of cancer, improve lung function and reduce complications associated with diabetes

**Tomatoes**—may decrease the risk for prostate cancer and heart disease; contains lycopene—good sources of lycopene are ketchup tomato juice and spaghetti sauce.

**Spinach**—may help slow aging process, reduce risk of certain cancers, improve lung functions and reduce complications and prevent blindness.

**Southern greens**—may reduce the risk of cataracts and macular degeneration and may help reduce the risk of certain types of cancer.

**Red peppers**—reduce risk of prostate cancer and heart disease

**Carrots**—may help slow the aging process, reduce the risk of certain types of cancer, improve lung function and reduce complications associated with diabetes.

**Ask your EFNEP Program Assistant about recipes and food demonstrations using these functional foods.**

## **Veggies: Sneak ‘em Tricks**

### **Spaghetti sauce:**

Add one to two cups mixed frozen vegetables to one 26-ounce jar of pasta sauce; puree in blender. May puree peas, corn, greens, beans, bell peppers, mushrooms or any leftover vegetable and add to a jar of prepared spaghetti sauce.

### **Mashed potatoes:**

Puree white beans or cooked cauliflower in skim milk before adding to potatoes or add pureed butternut squash with mashed potatoes.

### **Salsa:**

Add pureed spinach or green beans. Chop soft-boiled broccoli stems and mix into chunky salsa.

### **Omelets:**

Slip cooked, pureed sweet potatoes, squash or carrots into omelet while preparing.

### **Ketchup:**

Blend just about any strained veggie with ketchup; ketchup masks the smell and taste well.

### **Tacos and Burritos:**

Add finely grated carrots to filling.

### **Pizza and Pasta Sauce:**

Add pureed beets or carrots to filling.

### **Sauces:**

Use vegetable juice or broth in sauces in place of water as an ingredient.

### **Hamburgers:**

Mix pureed broccoli or peas into ground beef before making patties. If the mixture is too soft, add dried breadcrumbs.

### **Dip or Sandwich Spread:**

Instead of using mayonnaise, spread mashed avocado with a touch of lemon juice. Roast a bunch of your favorite veggies and puree them in a food processor with cream cheese or yogurt. Serve with crackers or use as a sandwich spread or dip.

### **Red Applesauce:**

Puree canned beets; add sweet potatoes or butternut squash to applesauce. Blend well.



## **Avocado**

Is an avocado a fruit or a vegetable? It is a fruit rich in Vitamins C, E, and B6, folate, potassium and magnesium. Avocados are sodium and cholesterol-free. It has the highest fiber content of any fruit. It

has more fat than an orange, but it is monounsaturated fat, which is the good fat and may be a contributor to lower blood cholesterol.

When choosing an avocado, it should be firm but yield to light pressure. Unripe avocados are usually found in the market. Select those that are unblemished and heavy for their size. To speed the ripening process, place several avocados in a paper bag and set aside at room temperature for two to four days. Ripened avocados can be placed in the refrigerator for several days.

Avocados can be frozen for later use; they are best frozen as puree for use in salads, sandwiches and dips.

To open an avocado without losing any of its flesh, cut the avocado lengthwise around the seed.

Next, twist the halves in opposite directions to separate. Then slip a spoon between the seed and the fruit and work the seed out. To remove the skin from the fruit, slip a spoon between the skin and the fruit and scoop away the peel.

#### **Here are a few ways to use avocados:**

- Add diced avocados to scrambled eggs.
- Fold in diced avocados to an omelet.
- Grill slices of avocado on the grill brushed with lime juice.
- Add a few slices to any favorite sandwich.

## **Recipes**

### **Guacamole Dip**

#### **Ingredients**

- 2 avocados
- 1/2 lemon juiced
- 2 tablespoons chopped onion
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons olive oil



#### **DIRECTIONS**

Cut the avocados into halves. Remove the seeds, and scoop out the pulp into a small bowl. Use a fork to mash the avocado. Stir in lemon juice, onion, salt and olive oil. Cover the bowl, and refrigerate for one hour before serving.

## **Salsa**

### **Ingredients**

- 1 cup finely chopped, peeled tomato
- 1/2 cup tomato sauce
- 1/4 cup yellow or red onion
- 1/4 cup finely chopped green pepper
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 to 3 jalapeno peppers, seeded and chopped (Use caution—wear rubber gloves and do not rub your eyes when chopping peppers)
- 1/2 cup fresh cilantro, chopped (optional)

### **Directions**

1. Mix all ingredients in a glass bowl
2. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

\*Try both dips with multi-grain tortilla chips



## **Kids Corner**

### **Shake-a-Pudding**

- 2 cups fat-free or low-fat milk
- 1 sm. box instant vanilla pudding mix
- 1 cup sliced fruit (canned or fresh)

  1. Pour milk into a quart jar with a tight-fitting lid.
  2. Add the pudding mix; screw lid on jar. Shake until the mixture is smooth.
  3. Divide fruit into four paper cups, or put in a serving bowl. Pour pudding over the fruit.

Chill

Makes 4 servings.

**Try any milk flavor: cherry, choc., grape or orange.**  
**Try any fruit: apple, banana, berries, papaya, mango, kiwi, orange, melon, peach, pear or pineapple.**

## 2008 Dates to Remember:

### May 14---4-H County O-Rama

Jack Robey Jr. H. S.  
9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.  
**SE AR Health Fest**  
SEARK College  
9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

### May 31---Pleasant Grove Baptist

**Church Health Fair**  
1801 Indiana Street  
10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

### June 7---Farmer's Market Annual

**Opening**, Saracen Landing  
7:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

### 14---Jefferson Co. Recreation

**Assoc. Annual Fishing  
Derby**, Hwy. 270  
7:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

### June 25---Right Bite Diabetic

**Cooking School**  
10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

### 26---Right Bite Diabetic

**Cooking School**  
10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

### 27---Right Bite Diabetic

**Cooking School**  
10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

**All three sessions will be held  
at Jefferson Co. Extension  
Service, 500 Idaho**

**EFNEP 4-H Youth Day Camp  
To Be Announced**



**Expanded Food and  
Nutrition Education  
Program**

(EFNEP) Program Assistants:

Queen Thomason, Lynn Whitlock  
Eloise Flennaugh, Chita Collins,  
Lisa Collins and Susie Whitaker

**For more information, contact your Jefferson County  
Extension Service (870) 534-1033**

University of Arkansas, United States Department of Agriculture and County Governments Cooperating

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