The year 1914 was an important year for agriculture in the United States. That year, the Smith-Lever Act went into effect, creating an educational force that would change agriculture forever. The Cooperative Extension Service as we know it was born. In 1914, Extension agents promoted the mechanization of farms, introduced pest control and fertilization techniques and encouraged crop diversification and farm cooperatives. In the decades following, home demonstration agents taught techniques for mattress-making, clothing construction and safe food preservation and led efforts for childhood immunizations. Today, Extension agents and faculty promote resource conservation, cutting-edge production and development of phone- and tablet-based tools for farming. Family and Consumer Sciences faculty teach techniques for money management, health and nutrition, successful aging and family relationship skills. Here are some interesting dates related to EHC:

- 1912 the Extension Homemakers Council is established out of home demonstration work, and agents are hired to teach girls in canning clubs.
- 1927, Extension and EHC help Arkansans recover from the Great Flood of 1927.
- 1970s, Arkansas first lady, Betty Bumpers, teams with Extension Homemakers Council to promote childhood immunizations in Arkansas.

Help us celebrate this centennial year of Extension by telling your friends, neighbors, and family about the free, research based resources we can provide that can help any of life’s challenges.

**Holiday Party Rescheduled**

The holiday party that is usually around Christmas time is rescheduled for **Friday, March 7th, 2014 at 10am**. Please bring a covered dish.

- New Hope and Kristen will decorate
- PV will do registration and devotional
- Vesta will bring paper goods

Club presidents have the recipe booklets to give to club members from the cancelled Christmas party.
Heart to Heart

February is not just about giving that special someone a sweet treat. It is also American Heart Month. The American Heart Association has declared February 7th National Wear Red Day. This is to raise awareness of heart disease, the number one killer of women in the United States. There are three health-related factors that contribute to heart disease.

1. **Tobacco use.** Smokers have twice the risk for heart attack of nonsmokers. Nearly one-fifth of all deaths from cardiovascular disease, or about 190,000 deaths a year, are smoking-related. Every day, more than 3,000 young people become daily smokers.

2. **Lack of Physical Activity.** People who are not physically active have twice the risk for heart disease of those who are active. If you're inactive, doing anything is better than nothing! Studies show that people who have a low fitness level are much more likely to die early than people who have achieved even a moderate level of fitness. If you want to exceed a moderate level of fitness, you need to exercise three or four times a week for 30 to 60 minutes at 50-80 percent of your maximum capacity. Some of the benefits of exercise are:

   - Reduces the risk of heart disease by improving blood circulation throughout the body
   - Keeps weight under control
   - Improves blood cholesterol levels
   - Prevents and manages high blood pressure
   - Prevents bone loss
   - Boosts energy level
   - Helps manage stress
   - Releases tension
   - Improves the ability to fall asleep quickly and sleep well
   - Improves self-image
   - Counters anxiety and depression and increases enthusiasm and optimism
   - Increases muscle strength, increasing the ability to do other physical activities
   - Provides a way to share an activity with family and friends
   - Establishes good heart-healthy habits in children and counters the conditions (obesity, high blood pressure, poor cholesterol levels, poor lifestyle habits, etc.) that lead to heart attack and stroke later in life
   - In older people, helps delay or prevent chronic illnesses and diseases associated with aging and maintains quality of life and independence longer
3. **Poor nutrition.** People who are overweight have a higher risk for cardiovascular disease.

Healthy food habits can help you reduce three of the major risk factors for heart attack -- high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure and excess body weight. They'll also help reduce your risk of stroke, because heart disease and high blood pressure are major risk factors for stroke. The American Heart Association Eating Plan for Healthy Americans is based on these new dietary guidelines, released in October 2000:

- Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables. Choose 5 or more servings per day.
- Eat a variety of grain products, including whole grains. Choose 6 or more servings per day.
- Include fat-free and low-fat milk products, fish, legumes (beans), skinless poultry and lean meats.
- Choose fats and oils with 2 grams or less saturated fat per tablespoon, such as liquid and tub margarines, canola oil and olive oil.
- Balance the number of calories you eat with the number you use each day. (To find that number, multiply the number of pounds you weigh now by 15 calories. This represents the average number of calories used in one day if you're moderately active. If you get very little exercise, multiply your weight by 13 instead of 15. Less-active people burn fewer calories.)
- Maintain a level of physical activity that keeps you fit and matches the number of calories you eat. Walk or do other activities for at least 30 minutes on most days. To lose weight, do enough activity to use up more calories than you eat every day.
- Limit your intake of foods high in calories or low in nutrition, including foods like soft drinks and candy that have a lot of sugars.
- Limit foods high in saturated fat, trans fat and/or cholesterol, such as full-fat milk products, fatty meats, tropical oils, partially hydrogenated vegetable oils and egg yolks. Instead choose foods low in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol from the first four points above.
- Eat less than 6 grams of salt (sodium chloride) per day (2,400 milligrams of sodium).
- Have no more than one alcoholic drink per day if you're a woman and no more than two if you're a man. "One drink" means it has no more than 1/2 ounce of pure alcohol. Examples of one drink are 12 oz. of beer, 4 oz. of wine, 1-1/2 oz. of 80-proof spirits or 1 oz. of 100-proof spirits.

Following this eating plan will help you achieve and maintain a healthy eating pattern. The benefits of that include a healthy body weight, a desirable blood cholesterol level and a normal blood pressure. Every meal doesn't have to meet all the guidelines. It's important to apply the guidelines to your overall eating pattern over at least several days. These guidelines may do more than improve your heart health. They may reduce your risk for other chronic health problems, including type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis (bone loss) and some forms of cancer.

Remember, **Wear Red Day is February 7th**!
Long-Range Calendar of Events

February 14th - Happy Valentine’s Day
March 7th - EHC Spring Council Meeting 10am
April 15th - Registration due for State EHC Meeting
June 3rd-5th - AEHC State Meeting @ Hot Springs
July 4th - Extension Office Closed for Independence Day
September 4th-6th - South Franklin County Fair
September 8th-13th - North Franklin County Fair

Characteristics of Quality Chocolate

February is the time of year for stocking up on your favorite chocolate candies so in honor of Valentine’s Day here is some tips for picking out the best chocolate. Determining whether chocolate is of high quality involves all the senses.

- **Glossy shine** indicates that it has been properly stored, around 65 degrees F. When chocolate melts and re-solidifies, the cocoa butter rises to the top, causing "bloom." It may look off, but changes the taste and texture only slightly.

- **Snap**

- **Aroma**

- **Texture:** When talking about food in your mouth, texture is referred to as "mouth feel." The mouth feel of good chocolate should be smooth, not grainy, not waxy. It should melt in your mouth, literally. Cocoa butter has a melting point lower than 98.6 degrees F, body temperature. Chocolate with vegetable fat will hold its shape in your mouth longer. Solid shortening has a melting temperature that is above body temperature and has a waxy mouth feel.

- **Taste:** In the end, this is what will determine for you which chocolate is right. Every manufacturer’s chocolate is different based on a combination of many factors including where the cacao beans come from, how they are roasted, and the balance of cocoa butter, sugar, and pure chocolate.
Storage of Chocolate

Chocolate
- Store in a tightly covered container or sealed plastic bag. Chocolate's porous nature allows it to pick up flavor from other items.
- Temperature should be around 65 degrees F.
- Humidity should be no more than 50 percent.
- Stored as stated above, it will keep one year.

White Chocolate
- Store in the refrigerator or freezer.

Cocoa Powder
- Keep in tightly covered container.
- Keep in a cool place.
- Keep in a dry area.
- Stored in conditions stated above, it will keep almost indefinitely. High temperature and high humidity tend to cause cocoa powder to lump and lose its rich color.

Chocolate Passion Bowl

What You Need
- 1 pkg. (18.3 to 19.5 oz.) brownie mix (family size)
- 2 pkg. (3.9 oz. each) JELL-O Chocolate Instant Pudding
- 3 cups cold milk
- 1 tub (8 oz.) COOL WHIP Whipped Topping, thawed, divided
- 2 cups fresh raspberries

Make It
- PREPARE brownie batter and bake in 9-inch square pan as directed on package; cool completely.
- MEANWHILE, beat pudding mixes and milk in medium bowl with whisk 2 min. Stir in 1 cup COOL WHIP. Refrigerate until ready to use.
- CUT brownies into 1-inch cubes. Layer half each of the brownie cubes, pudding, berries and remaining COOL WHIP in 2-qt. bowl. Repeat layers.
- REFRIGERATE 1 hour.

16 servings, 2/3 cup each