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**Issue 10 ♦ Volume 5**

**RAISING KIDS, EATING RIGHT, SPENDING SMART, LIVING WELL**

*Timely Tips*



A PUBLICATION OF NORTHERN KENTUCKY FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES AGENTS

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**Living Green. . . .Plastic Bag Facts**

Some plastic bags have become an accepted part of our shopping culture, but they shouldn't be. Here are some facts you need to know about plastic bags.

1. **Plastic bags are made from non-renewable resources.** Most plastic shopping bags are made from polyethylene which is a thermoplastic made from natural gas and crude oil.
2. **Plastic bags do not biodegrade, they photodegrade.** Photodegradation is a chemical reaction between plastic and sunlight. These single use bags take up to 1,000 years to break down.
3. **Say no to plastic bags at the cash register!** Combine the number of bags we use every year in the USA and you have harmful environmental effects plus the bags add money to our grocery bills.
4. **We can make a difference!** If each person uses a cloth bag, we can each save at least six bags a week. That's 24 bags a month and 288 bags per person each year. This adds up to 22,176 bags saved per person over an average lifetime of 77 years. Think of the impact we would have over a lifetime by using cloth bags instead.
5. **Reusable bags are the solution!!** A sturdy reusable bag will last for years and only needs to be used 6 times to have a lower environmental impact. Buy or make a bag today!

Source: "Living Green. . .Plastic Bag Facts"  
University of Kentucky.

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Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a tribe, call it a family. Whatever you call it, whoever you are, you need one. — Jane Howard "Families"

# Cook's Corner



### Chicken Pasta Stew

Yield: 5 (1½-cup) servings

- 1 lb. skinless, boneless chicken, in 1-inch pieces
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- ¾ cup celery
- 7 ounces diced green chiles
- 2 tsp chopped garlic
- 2 cups chicken broth, fat removed
- 1 cup water
- 2 cups egg noodles
- 1½ cups frozen mixed peas and carrots



In a 3-quart saucepan, mix all ingredients except noodles and mixed vegetables. Simmer covered for 15 minutes. Add remaining ingredients.

Simmer uncovered, 15 minutes or until noodles are tender. *Nutritional Analysis:* 272 Calories, 32 g protein, 21 g carbohydrate, 7 grams fat, 87 mg cholesterol, 291 mg sodium.

Source: "Soup & Salad" Sandra Bastin, University of Kentucky, Oct. 1996.

## Eating Right

### Family Meals: Think 5

It seems that the busier we are the harder it is to have a family meal. According to a recent study conducted by Columbia University, some of the benefits of family meals are better school success, instilling family values and dealing with weight concerns.

The study also found that teens who had family meals more than 5 times per week were two times less likely to have smoked cigarettes and one a half times less likely to have used alcohol.

Five times a week try to make it a point to gather your family together for a meal. It could be breakfast, lunch, or dinner. Other ideas to make mealtime pleasant include eliminating distractions (such as TV, phones ringing, etc.), concentrate on each other, consider 5 fruits and vegetables daily, use smaller 7 to 8 inch plates, and promote milk as your beverage for mealtime. Not only will you be feeding bodies with nutritious meals but you'll voice concerns with laughter and talk. Enjoy your family!!

Source: Rosie Allen, Gallatin County FCS Agent, "Family Meals-think 5", 2010.

### Coupons 101: Surviving an Economic Crunch

As we adapt to a changing economic environment, families are looking for ways to reduce spending. Through meal planning and using coupons, Kentucky families can save on their monthly grocery bill. Here are some suggestions:

#### Starting to Save

**(1) Create a monthly meal plan.** Make a list of the meals you already know and make for your family; this will serve as a guide for your monthly meal plan. Fill in a blank monthly calendar with the meals you have listed. While filling out the blank calendar, keep in mind nights you plan to eat away from home, etc.

**(2) Create a master shopping list.** The next step in the planning process is to create a Master Shopping List which is a list of every ingredient & item you buy at least 3 times yearly

**(3) Create a product price book.** A price book is a tool that allows you to track prices of the most frequently purchased groceries and household items. The price book helps identify the "rock bottom" price for that specific item.

#### Using Coupons

**(1) Finding Coupons:** Sunday newspaper, weekly mailers, web sites, blinking coupon dispensers, store discounts, and coupon exchanges.

**(2) Organizing Coupons:** File coupons under clear categories. Insert into a three-ring binder with baseball card style inserts to store and view your coupon collection.

**(3) Shopping Smart with Coupons:** Prepare by looking through local sale ads and identify what you plan to buy. Using coupons with a rock bottom sale price is the golden rule of couponing. Stick to necessities if items are not on sale and you do not have a coupon.

**(4) Coupon Etiquette:** Do not copy coupons. Purchase the item for which the coupon is intended. Use one manufacturer's coupon per item. Make sure coupons have valid dates.

Source: "Coupons 101", University of Kentucky. Audrey Myers & Katie Englert, June, 2010. FRM-AP.087



What will your child or grandchild be for Halloween? A princess or a pirate? Spiderman, SpongeBob, or Dora? It doesn't matter, let them be whomever they want to be. Just remember to

make sure that nothing blocks their eyes or nose. Only wear a mask with large eye and nose holes. Face paint or hats are just as much fun to wear and much safer than masks. Have children wear colors that can be seen at night by adding reflective tape to their candy bag or costume so cars and other trick or treaters can see them. Costumes should be short enough to prevent children from tripping and falling. Well fitting shoes is a must as well.

### Here are other trick or treating tips for kids:



Always get your candy at the door. Never go inside a stranger's house.



Always look both ways when crossing the street. Never cut across a yard or use an alley for a short cut.



Always wait to eat candy at home after an adult checks it out.



Always trick-or-treat with an adult or in a group.



Always let someone know where you are going. Never sneak off to a house by yourself.



Always carry a flashlight so that you can see and people can see you.



Always call 911 for help if lost or have an emergency. Never go on a route that you are not familiar with and could easily get lost.



Always be cautious of candle flames and lit jack-o-lanterns. Make sure that costumes, masks, wigs, etc. are flame resistant

Source: "Take Tricks Out of Halloween" by Ellen Brightwell, University of Kentucky, October, 2004.

### Who needs a flu vaccine?

- A) You
- B) You
- C) You
- D) All of the above



Even healthy people can get the flu, and it can be serious. Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine. **This means you!**

CDC says "Take 3 Actions" to fight the flu: **1) Take time to get a flu vaccine.** While there are many different flu viruses, the flu vaccine protects against the three viruses that research suggests will be most common. CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses. **(2) Take everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs.** Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way. Try to avoid close contact with sick people. If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care. While sick, limit contact with others. **(3) Take flu antiviral drugs if your doctor prescribes them.** If you get the flu, antiviral drugs can treat your illness. Antiviral drugs are different from antibiotics. They are prescription medicines and are not available over the counter. Antiviral drugs can make illness milder and shorten the time you are sick. It's very important that antiviral drugs be used early to treat people who are very sick. Flu-like symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. **This season, protect yourself — and those around you — by getting a flu vaccine! See your doctor if you have additional questions.**

Source: "Take 3" Actions to Fight Flu. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention Online Info Source. September, 2010.