



Improving Family,
Resources & Health

CLOSE TO HOME

by Judy Harris

USU Extension Agent in Utah County

Temperature Rules!

How do you know when your hamburger is cooked? Because it is brown inside? Think about this—1 out of every 4 hamburgers turns brown in the middle *before* it has reached a safe internal temperature of 160°F.!

Premature browning is related to pigment in the raw meat. *“It’s safe to bite when the **temperature’s** right!”*

Students Need Money Skills

Parents of high school students who will soon be starting college or other training may want to take time now to prepare them with crucial financial skills.

Hopefully parents have been teaching their kids about money management for years. Ideally teens will leave home with valuable experiences of tracking expenses, creating a spending plan (budget), setting aside money for an upcoming expense, and an understanding of the costs and uses of credit. But if that is not the case, a crash course is better than no training at all.

Many students are ready for the academic challenges of college but not the tight budgeting usually required. A typical college budget is tighter than the student is familiar with from living at home. And worrying about money can lead to additional stress.

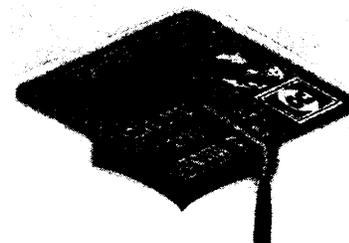
Having and knowing how to use a checking account may help. Parents should help students set up an account before college and work with them to balance and maintain it. If the student’s checking account will not be opened until the move to campus, let him or her practice now by writing some family checks and balancing the account.

A student should know how to write and endorse checks, keep a checkbook ledger, and reconcile the ledger with the account statement.

Once students turn 18 they can be inundated with credit card offers. Before that happens, teach your teens how to compare offers, read the disclosure box for potential fees, etc. Perhaps collect some of the offers mailed to you and use them as teaching tools. Use these examples to show how often the big print giveth but the fine print taketh away.

Some parents provide students with a prepaid, reloadable teen payment card. Two examples are VISA Buxx and the iGEN MasterCard. Possible advantages might be having credit available for emergencies and the fact that the teen cannot charge more than the limit on the card. Possible downside could be teens who use credit instead of carefully managing their cash or who learn to rely on Mom and Dad to bail them out. (Source: Barbara Rowe, USU Family Resource Mgt. Specialist)

If the teens are still in high school and the school offers an Adult Roles class, check if a substantial section is on money management and credit control. If so, encourage the teen to sign up! Of course, parents would be wise to support teen’s work on assignments and supplement experiences at school with lessons at home.



Recall of Swings on Backyard Gym Sets

In cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Hedstrom(r) Corporation is recalling to repair about 190,000 Star Cruiser(r) and Rocket Rider(r) swings on backyard gym sets. Screws that hold the swing together can fall out, causing the seat to fall to the ground, *posing an injury risk to children.*

Hedstrom has received 291 reports of seats separating.

Department, toy, discount, lumber, and hardware stores nationwide, including Toys "R" Us, Wal-Mart and Kmart, sold the gyms from September 2000 through April 2001 for \$150 to \$400.

The recalled swings, which come with separate pieces for the seat and handle bars/leg rest, were sold with Hedstrom metal and wood gym sets, wood kits, and as accessories. The Star Cruiser has a one-piece seat, with a white plastic circle and the words, "Star Cruiser" and "Hedstrom" on the front of the handle bars/leg rest. A mesh backing, called a Safe-T™ Backrest, can be connected to back of the seat. The Rocket Rider is a 'see-saw' swing, with a white seat on which two children can sit back-to-back. The words, "Rocket Rider" are printed on the front of each of the two handle bars/leg rests.

Consumers should stop using the swings immediately and detach them from the gym set. Consumers should call Hedstrom toll-free at (800) 642-9193 anytime to order a free repair kit. Consumers also can log on to the company's website at www.hedstrom.com or write to the company at Hedstrom Corp., Free Repair Kit, P.O. Box 432, Bedford, PA 15522.

To see a picture of the recalled product on CPSC's web site, link to the following address:
<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml01/01165.html>
 (Source: CPSC, 5 June 2001, Release # 01-165)

Fireworks Safety

Improper use of fireworks or use of illegal fireworks can result in deaths, blindings, amputations and severe burns

Fireworks can add fun and excitement to a holiday celebration, but they can also turn a backyard celebration into a rush to the emergency room. In 1999, hospital emergency rooms treated about 8,500 people for fireworks-related injuries. About 45 percent of the victims were children under age 15.

Even fireworks that seem innocent can cause serious injury. For example, sparklers, that are often used by young children, burn at temperatures of 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission advises consumers to leave fireworks to the professionals. But if you decide to set them off on your own, be sure to follow these important safety tips:

- * Never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- * Read and follow all warnings and instructions.
- * Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- * Only light fireworks on a smooth, flat surface away from the house, dry leaves, and flammable materials.
- * Never try to relight fireworks that have not fully functioned.
- * Keep a bucket of water or a hose handy in case of a malfunction or fire.

(Source: CPSC, June 28, 2000, release #00-130)



Summer Cooking in a Low Wattage Slow Cooker

Consider using your slow cooker this summer to help keep your home cool. With a little planning and morning preparation the slow cooker will also free your busy evening hours.

The slow cooker is especially helpful in cooking less tender cuts of meat, and cooks often wish to adapt favorite recipes for use in it. *Instruction manuals may offer suggestions about techniques for using specific cookers.* If not, the following steps will serve as a guide.

Adapting the Recipe

When adapting a recipe, first look for steps that may be omitted. For example, vegetables are not sauteed, meats are usually not browned (see exception top of next column), and the product is not brought to a boil first. However, frozen vegetables and seafoods, especially those added near the end of cooking, may need to be partially or completely thawed before they are put in the cooker.

Cooks also seem to feel they can just “throw it all in the pot at once” but may be less than pleased with the over-cooked pasta and rice that results from this.

Food Placement

Placement of foods in the cooker may determine the success or failure of any dish. Vegetables such as potatoes, carrots, and onions cook very slowly and should be kept small to medium in size and placed in the bottom of the pot. This also allows the meat juices to drip over the vegetables, enhancing their flavor. Unless the meat is very fatty, a rack usually is not necessary. If a sauce is used over meat or vegetables, it should be poured evenly over the food so that all parts are exposed for even cooking. Most breads and cakes need a rack to prevent burning on the bottom while the top is not yet cooked. If a rack is not available, a ring or crumpled foil may serve the purpose.

Timing Factors

Proper timing for foods in the slow cooker is affected by many things, yet is crucial for best results. The temperature of the food when placed in the cooker will affect cooking time. Frozen foods take longer than refrigerated foods, which take longer than food at room temperature. Fats on foods tend to increase the cooking temperature

and make the foods cook faster. However, if there is much fat present, the meat should be trimmed or browned or broiled to eliminate as much fat as possible. Fat occasionally causes an off-flavor to develop.

Liquids speed heat transfer in the slow cooker, but the amounts needed are much less than for standard cooking. There is almost always more liquid after cooking than before because the cooker lets little escape. For most recipes one cup may be sufficient, but a general rule of thumb is to use only one-half as much as in standard cooking. Additional amounts may be needed if cooking a pasta or rice product, which absorbs much liquid.

Minerals, acids, and sugars also *increase* the cooking time in dried bean products and may affect other foods in hard-water areas. Sugars and acids such as tomatoes also affect dried beans and should be added only after the beans have softened.

Some foods should be last additions to the slow cooker. These include seafood and frozen vegetables as well as fresh mushrooms, which need one hour or less of cooking. *Crushed or ground seasonings should be added near the end of cooking* because they become diluted during the long cooking, while whole seasonings may withstand the long cooking and should be used in very small amounts (about one-half as much as usual). Rice and pasta may become gummy with long cooking and should be added only during the last hour unless directions specify earlier. Since sour cream and milk may curdle during long cooking, they need only a very short time; but condensed soups are satisfactory during the long cooking. When adapting a recipe, this chart may provide guidelines:

TIME GUIDE (assumes HIGH 300 W & LOW 190 W)

<i>If conventional recipe says:</i>	<i>Cook in slow cooker:</i>
15 to 30 minutes	1½-2½ hrs. on HIGH or 4-8 hours on LOW
30 to 45 minutes	3 to 4 hours on HIGH or 6 to 10 hours on LOW
50 minutes - 3 hours	4 to 6 hours on HIGH or 8 to 18 hours on LOW

Most uncooked meat and vegetable combinations will require at least 8 hours on low. (Source: *The Handbook of Food Preparation* published by the American Home Economics Association)

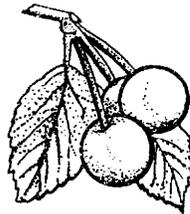
Here are some tasty ways to enjoy cherries

Choose Cherries

Cherries are great in fruit salads. One colorful combination is cantaloupe, sweet cherries, and green grapes.

Dried cherries give breakfast oatmeal a lively flavor that both kids and adults enjoy.

Chopped tart or sweet cherries add a rosy hue and great flavor to applesauce.



Power Bars

A great pick-me-up any time of day

- ¾ cup light margarine
- 2 cups firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups old-fashioned or quick-cooking oats, uncooked
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 can (21 ounces) regular or lite cherry filling & topping
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon cornstarch
- ½ teaspoon almond extract

With an electric mixer beat margarine and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Combine flour, oats, and baking soda. Add flour mixture to sugar mixture; mix on low speed until crumbly.

Spread two-thirds of the oat mixture into the bottom of a 13x9x2-inch baking pan. Press down to make a firm layer.

In an electric blender or food processor, purée cherry filling until smooth. Pour puréed cherry filling into a medium saucepan. Combine granulated sugar and cornstarch; stir into cherry filling. Cook, stirring constantly, over low heat until mixture is thick and bubbly. Stir in almond extract.

Pour cherry mixture evenly over oat layer. Sprinkle remaining oat mixture evenly over cherry mixture.

Bake in a preheated 350°F. oven for 30 to 35 minutes, or until golden brown. Allow to cool before cutting into bars. Makes 32 bars.

Cleaning Tip

Use a small *foam* paintbrush to clean tight spaces between cabinets or under appliances.

Sunscreen and Stains

It is good when you and any children use sunscreen every time you are outside. But the stains on clothing from the sunscreen products can be very bad indeed. Here are some suggestions.

Sunscreens and suntan lotions contain oils to make them moisture resistant. If they get onto clothing, the oil can be difficult to remove. *Even stains that are not immediately apparent can become more visible as they age.*

Follow any directions provided by the lotion manufacturer. Let the product dry before you put on your clothes, and wash your hands thoroughly after you have applied the lotion and before you put on your clothes, and wash your hands thoroughly after you have applied the lotion and before you touch any garments. If you do get lotion on a garment, pretreat the stain as quickly as possible and launder the garment. Careful handling can help prevent staining. However, it's important to know that some residue can still transfer to clothing through perspiration. (Source: *Cleanliness Fact* by Soap and Detergent Association, July/August 2000)

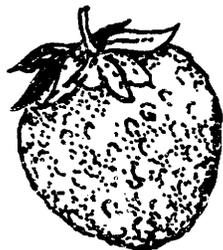
Blanching Vegetables before Freezing

If you are freezing vegetables that you want to be high quality several months in the future, blanching is an important step. Blanching brightens the color, helps retain vitamins, and reduces the action of the enzymes that would otherwise destroy fresh flavor, even after freezing. There is another practical reason for blanching: it shrinks the product, making it easier to pack.

Vegetables that are frozen without blanching are safe to eat, but will lose quality more quickly. They should be used within two months.

Blanching is immersing the veggies for a few minutes in boiling water. The time depends on the size and density of the vegetable. The recommended USDA blanching times are available from our office.

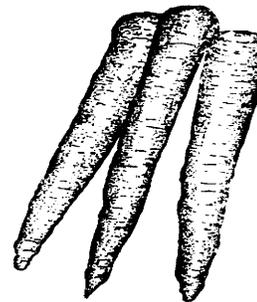
Veggies that do *not* need blanching are those used exclusively for flavor, such as green onions, peppers, herbs.



Welcome to summer along the Wasatch Front in Utah.

It's been a while since we've had a cold snap in June that brought frost and snow to the Utah County area. It was sad to see the sweet corn, tomatoes, squash and some ornamentals with their leaves turning brown from the cold. Then came the BIG wind that blew over and broke branches on many of our trees, even some big ones that had been around over 50+ years.

GREETINGS FROM THE COUNTY AGENT



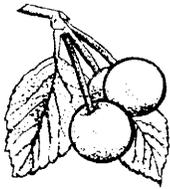
The two species that took the wind the hardest were the ornamental (red) plum and the larger (40-80 feet) blue spruces. Mother Nature will always present challenges to keep us on our toes.

I hope you all have a great harvest. Many of our garden plants are producing and tasting great already.

Adrian C. Hinton

TIMELY TIPS FOR JULY/AUGUST

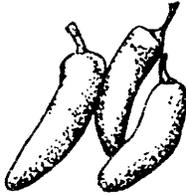
1. Plant beets and turnips for fall harvest before August 1.
2. Around July 4th fertilize your lawn.
3. In early July: Control peach borer on all stone pit fruit.
4. In early July: Divide and replant Iris.
5. In mid-July: Do last pinch for fall mums.
6. Fertilize potatoes with nitrogen around July 15th.
7. Watch for large insects to arrive (grasshoppers, Mormon crickets, etc.). Use hopper baits.
8. Water wisely. Overwatering kills more lawns and plants than underwatering.
9. Host a neighborhood barbeque and enjoy the fresh corn, tomatoes, and other garden produce.
10. August 1st: Plant the last of your fall garden vegetables.
11. Enjoy city celebrations, county and state fairs. We will have an Extension Summer Showcase August 8-11 at the Historic Courthouse.



THE REWARDS OF YOUR LABORS -

The Beginning of the Harvest

by Paul A. Wilkey, Master Gardener/Horticulture Assistant
USU Extension - Utah County Office



All of the hard work of preparing the soil and planting our gardens is now paying off. The beauty of the spring and early summer flowers are always a joy, but the real treat is the burst of flowers that come from the fruits and vegetables. Thus far many of us have had the pleasure of asparagus, radishes, early spinach and peas along with many other salad greens. The lucky ones have enjoyed the tart blast of a rhubarb/strawberry pie. Now we are anxiously awaiting the best of the best - the tomatoes and fresh corn.

When you begin your harvest don't forget your neighbors and the local food coalition, and of course, begin your freezing and canning for future use. Come by our office and review the many new booklets on preserving your harvest. We have many new titles ranging from asparagus to zucchini and everything in between.

Here's a tip to help you in the future. Our office receives many calls asking if it's too late to plant this, that or the other.

Now is the time to make notes for your 2002 garden. Make a good list of what you want to grow. Research best varieties and planting times for each of them. Plan how much you expect to use fresh and how much you expect to use for sharing or canning. This helps you utilize your space better and avoids any waste of product, also insuring a proper harvest date.

Some other things to do this month would be ordering your fall bulbs. Order your next season's catalogs and most important, start preparing unused garden space for planting new seeds for your cold season vegetables. The 24th of July is an ideal time to plant so you can enjoy the crops in your fall harvest.

If you have any gardening tips you would like to share send them to our office, Attn: Master

Gardeners Desk. We may print them in future newsletters.

Remember - SHARE THE HARVEST!

DID YOU KNOW?

**..WHICH FRUITS ARE
IN JUICY FRUIT
GUM?**

Even though the William Wrigley Jr. Company is not releasing the secret formula, we know the predominant flavors are orange, lemon, pineapple and banana.

The bananas probably account for the gum's extreme richness.

PESTICIDE PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

Howard M. Deer, Extension Pesticide Specialist

Skin absorption is the primary route of exposure for most pesticide applicators. Proper clothing will help protect you when filling the sprayer or granular applicator and when applying pesticides.

Clothing should be absorbent to keep pesticide drift or liquid from reaching your skin. Clothing with a high cotton content is not only absorbent but is also cooler during warm weather. Layering clothing is also an effective means of protection. Underwear, including an undershirt or T-shirt of high cotton content, helps provide this layering effect under shirts and trousers. Wearing a coverall on top of these provides another layer of protection. Starching the clothes provides additional protection from pesticides. The starch actually absorbs the pesticide, keeping it from the skin. When the clothing is washed, the pesticide-containing starch washes away, reducing the amount of pesticide that stays in the clothing. Spun-bonded polyester fabrics such as Tyvek and Kleengard are also protective and have the advantage of being disposable.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

WATER WISE VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

Dan Drost, USU Extension Vegetable Specialist

BY NOW, MANY OF YOU HAVE HEARD AND READ THAT WATER AVAILABILITY MAY BE AN ISSUE THIS SUMMER.

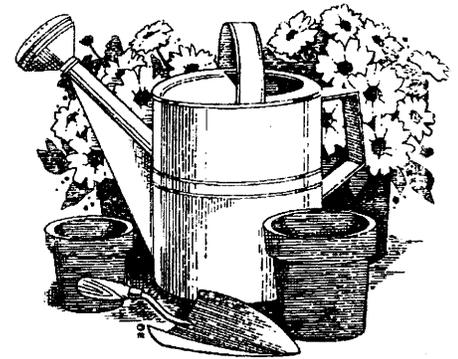
While rationing is being discussed as a possibility in many municipal communities, availability for agriculture is equally uncertain. Water shortages at critical times in the development of growing vegetables can seriously impact productivity and quality. What are some of the things you can do to ensure that the crop you already planted can deal with the possibility of a period of water shortage during the summer?

Critical periods of high water demand vary with different crops. Water requirements and amounts depend on soil characteristics, stage of development, plant growth habit, and prevailing weather conditions. Generally, vegetables require a constant and abundant supply of water throughout the season for optimal productivity. This is because many vegetables contain 80 to 9% water. Soil types vary greatly in their water holding capacity and their ability to store and supply water to the growing plant for extended periods of time. Sandy soils have low water holding capacity (3/4 inch per foot of soil) while heavier clay soils may hold three times that amount. The amount of water available and the amount that the plant can easily extract are not the same. In general, only about 50% of the water in soils is usable by the plant. Therefore, sandy soils require more frequent irrigations of smaller amounts applied at each irrigation than heavier soils.

The stage of development, method of establishment, and type of vegetable grown will also influence how much water is needed. Plant age can affect water use. Young plants have only a few leaves and therefore their rate of water use is low. As a plant matures, leaf area increases and daily water use increases. Since rooting depth is related to plant age, frequent small irrigations may be needed early in the plant's life cycle with larger, less frequent applications of water applied as the plant gets larger and the roots grow deeper in the soil. Different methods of establishment will influence

a plant's water use. Direct seeded crops generally root deeper and have more extensive root systems than transplanted crops. Irrigations may also be delayed on direct seeded crops to encourage the plant roots to root more deeply. Delaying irrigation may not be an option with transplants since the soil around the root ball needs to stay moist to ensure the roots and plants get established.

Vegetable type also affects water use. Water needs and soil availability varies with rooting depth. Shallow rooted vegetables



(cabbage, onion, lettuce, potato) will need more frequent water applications than deep rooted crops (asparagus, pumpkin, tomato, watermelon). Critical water periods vary for different vegetables. Leafy vegetables (lettuce, cabbage, celery, onion) need constant supplies throughout development. Fruiting crops (melons, tomato) require sufficient moisture levels during flowering and fruit enlargement. Crops grown for their fresh or dry seeds (sweet corn, beans, peas) need adequate moisture during flowering, fruit set and fruit development. Root and tuber crops (carrot, potato, radish) are most sensitive to water stress when the harvest part is enlarging. Bad timing and too little or too much water will then have a significant effect on yield and quality.

SORRY -

**We cannot accept samples
for the plant and insect
diagnostic lab on Fridays.**

The samples deteriorate too much to work with by Monday (when we have a diagnostician available).

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Mention or display of a trademark, proprietary product, or firm in text or figures does not constitute an endorsement and does not imply approval to the exclusion of other suitable products or firms.

PESTICIDE PROTECTIVE CLOTHING (Continued)

Many companies provide employees clothes in these fabrics to protect them, to provide a uniform look and to avoid laundering tasks and equipment. Research has shown that washing spun-bonded polyester fabrics greatly reduces the protection that these fabrics provide. They are inexpensive enough to throw away once they become contaminated.

While it is important to protect most of your skin surface when applying pesticides by wearing a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, hat, shoes, and socks, remember to clean these articles of clothing soon after use. Cloth hats and hatbands can retain pesticides. When contaminated hat is worn, pesticides come in contact with the forehead and top of the head, which absorb pesticides faster than many other body areas. Be sure to launder the hats along with your other pesticide-contaminated clothing.

Line-drying the laundered clothes removes additional pesticide residues that may still be in the clothes. Fresh air circulating through the clothes removes residues, as does the ultraviolet light present in sunlight. However, if line-drying is not practical, using a clothes dryer is an acceptable alternative. Laundering removes the bulk of the pesticide residues so what is removed by drying is small. Realize that laundering pesticide-contaminated clothing does not eliminate all the pesticide residues in the clothing, but laundering does reduce the residues enough to make the clothing safe to wear.

Utah Pesticide and Toxic News
Utah State University Extension

(ME, 3/01)

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It's time to renew if your
expiration date is 6/2001



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The phone number for USU Extension is 370-8460. If you do not have a touch tone phone, stay on the line and the receptionist will help you. With a touch tone phone, at the greeting press the number of the desired subject area:

- 5) garden, yard, trees, insects
- 2) food, finances, clothing, housing
- 3) pastures, field crops, dairies
- 4) 4-H and youth

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