

NEWSLETTER

December 5. 2022

Volume 3 Issue 25

Saratoga County youth learning through 4-H

"To Make the Best Better" is the 4-H motto. 4-H inspires young people to learn and grow, and make their best efforts better through participating in educational experiences. Learning by doing is the 4-H way, whether it's community service, programs or projects-it's a hands-on experience for our youth. With that being said, our Saratoga County 4-H youth have been busy recently doing just that.

Clubs and individual members participated in the gingerbread house making. The gingerbread houses were on display at the Festival of Trees during the Saratoga Springs Victorian Street Walk. This week they will be moved to the Saratoga Springs Visitors Center and the Saratoga Springs Public Library.

The 4-H Dairy Club represented Saratoga County 4-H at the Ballston Spa Holiday Parade this past weekend, and Saratoga Sharpshooters 4-H Club found an interesting way to perfect their shooting skills. Their targets were preferred toppings for pizza at their next meeting.







Interested in enrolling your child(ren) in 4-H or volunteering yourself? It's never too late to get involved.

Contact Leland at 518-885-8995 or glb76@cornell.edu.



SARATOGA COUNTY 4-H HOLIDAY MITTEN TREE

Saratoga County 4-H is excited to announce the return of their 4-H Mitten Tree this holiday season. We will be partnering with the Saratoga Springs Public Library, and the Ballston Spa Public Library to fill our Holiday Mitten Tree. Don't let the name throw you...we are seeking donations of new socks, hats, mittens, gloves and scarves, etc., as well as lightly used coats.

Our trees will be set up at the Saratoga Springs Public Library, 49 Henry Street, Saratoga Springs, and the Ballston Spa Public Library, 21 Milton Ave, Ballston Spa. The goal of this project is to provide cold weather gear to children and families in our community who need them. As we all know, a winter in Upstate New York can be pretty brutal without the proper outerwear. We would like to just a small part to ensure that those in our community have warm clothing to get them through the harsh winter months.

Anyone who is in need of these items will be able to stop by the mentioned libraries during the holiday season to take what they need from the tree. At the end of January, any items left on the trees will be distributed to local organizations who can get them to those who need them.

Donations by be dropped off at the Cornell Cooperative Extension Office, 50 West High Street, Ballston Spa or at the participating libraries.



Questions? Contact Leland at 518-885-8995 or glb76@cornell.edu.



CAR SEAT CHECK EVENTS

Wednesday, December 14 | 4 PM—8 PM New Country Toyota of Clifton Park 202 Rt NY-146, Mechanicville

Participants are asked to bring the following, if possible:

- 1. Child(ren) for each car seat
- 2. Age, weight, and height information for each child (present or not)
- 3. Vehicle owner's manual
- 4. Car seat owner's manual

Technicians will need free and easy access to the vehicle's back seat, trunk, and front seat. Please have the vehicle clean and free of debris.

> APPOINTMENTS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED, PLEASE CALL 518-885-8995

DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP ONLINE

CCE Saratoga hosts a monthly Online Diabetes. Friday, December 9 at noon, people with diabetes, prediabetes, and their loved ones are invited to join Diane Whitten, Community Nutrition Educator, for an informal Zoom meeting. There is no fee for the support group. Topics will vary and may be based on the interest of the group.

Individuals may contact Diane Whitten at 518-885-8995 or <u>dwhitten@cornell.edu</u> to register or for any questions.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 15, 2022 at 7:00 PM | Extension Office. If interest in attending, contact Wendy at 518-885-8995 or wlm8@cornell.edu.



2023 Winter Cut Flower Webinar Series January 10—February 14, 2023

Cornell Cooperative Extension and the Regional Capital Area Agriculture Program are pleased to present the 2023 Winter Cut Flower Webinar Series, which is being offered online, via Zoom.

The series features six sessions on topics of value to cut flower growers and will be presented from January 10 to February 14, 2023.

Residents of the CAAHP service area (Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady and Washington Counties) will pay \$15/session, or \$75 for all sessions.

Residents outside the CAAHP service area will pay \$20/session, or \$100 for all sessions.

NYSDEC pesticide application credits available, Categories: 1A, 3A, 3C, 24 & 25 after select sessions are completed by the participant.

Registration/information: https://caahp.ccext.net/civicrm/event/info?reset=1&id=166

For assistance with registration, (518)765-3518/<u>cce-caahp@cornell.edu</u>.

Program questions, Jingjing Yin, (518)429-8608/jy578@cornell.edu.

Session 1: 1/10/2023

1:00 PM: Cutting Out Cut Flower Diseases (pesticide credits available)

2:00 PM: Stump the Professor (Bring All Your Bulb Questions!)

Session 2: 1/17/2023

1:00 PM: Promoting Biological Control in Cut Flower Production (pesticide credits available)

2:00 PM: What Are Biopesticides? Should I Be Use Them on My Cut Flowers? (*pesticide credits available*)

Session 3: 1/24/2023

2:00 PM: USDA-NRCS High Tunnel Initiative

2:45 PM: Choosing the Right Cut Flowers for Your Farm



Session 4: 1/31/2023

1:00 PM: Tarping and Soil Health

2:00 PM: Tunnels Low to High: Maximizing Season Extension for Cut Flowers on Limited Land

Session 5: 2/7/2023

1:00 PM: Cut Flowers: Pests Love Them Too! (pesticide credits available)

2:00 PM: New Cut Flower Varieties to Grow

Session 6: 2/14/2023

1:00 PM: Ways to Market and Diversify Your Cut Flower Operations

2:00 PM: Optimizing Irrigation Water Quality in Tunnels

Operations Managers Conference

January 31—February 1

DoubleTree by Hilton, 6301 State Route 298, East Syracuse

Join PRO-DAIRY and the Northeast Dairy Producers Association for this conference in East Syracuse. This year's conference theme and topics focus on managing for consistency while leading through change. A complete agenda with full session descriptions and speaker biographies is available here:

https://cals.cornell.edu/.../operations-managers-conference Contact Heather Darrow at hh96@cornell.edu or 607-255-4478 for more information.



How Much Hay to Feed Horse in Winter?

University of Minnesota Equine Extension Program



Question: With temperatures falling, my horses have been eating more hay. How much extra hay should I be feeding in the winter?

Response: Horses require additional dietary energy to keep warm during the winter months. Healthy, adult horses with a full winter coat have a lower critical temperature of 18°F. When environmental temperatures fall below 18°F, the horse loses more heat than it can produce. As a result, horses need additional dietary energy to maintain their body temperatures. The lower critical temperature can vary between horses. For example, young horses or horses with a thin coat may reach their lower critical temperatures sooner than 18°F.

Providing more forage is the ideal way to meet your horse's elevated energy needs during cold weather. High fiber present in forages undergoes microbial fermentation in the hind gut, which efficiently produces heat. For each degree below 18°F, horses will need an additional one percent energy in their diet.

For example, let's say we have a 1,000-pound healthy adult horse at maintenance. They need about 17 Mcal of energy daily when temperatures are at or above 18°F. If the horse's hay contains



0.93 Mcal of energy per pound, the horse needs about 18 pounds of hay to meet their energy needs.

If the temperature falls to 0°F, the horse's energy requirement increases 18% to 20 Mcal of energy. Therefore the horse would need about 3 additional pounds of hay in their diet (21 pounds total).

New York Equine Hay Survey

Attention horse owners and hay producers! The Equine Subgroup of the statewide CCE Livestock Program Work Team wants your assistance in understanding hay sales and purchases within the state for horses.

This research study, a partnership with Cornell and Penn State Equine Extension, covers the following objectives:

• Characterize hay buying & feeding practices of New York horse owners and preferences impacting these practices.

- Determine current hay prices and explore how different factors affect them
- Characterize hay producer preferences and practices regarding marketing and selling hay to horse customers
- Compare forage testing knowledge and attitudes among horse owners and hay producers
- Determine need and desire for extension hay education for horse owners and horse hay producers

The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Please give us your input as we seek to collect data on the NY Equine Hay Industry. Your anonymous responses will help us understand the needs of both horse hay buyers and producers



and develop appropriate educational products. Exclusively for New York residents, the QR Code and link for the survey may be found on our website at:

www.ccelivestock.com/species/equine

Barn Snow Removal

HEAVY SNOW LOADS

By Curt A. Gooch, Cornell University

The recent accumulation of snow in many areas throughout New York state has caused some agricultural buildings to fail. Failure can be the result of several items linked to the snow load present on the building. These items include but are not limited to:

- Improper building design
- Improper building construction
- Actual snow load exceeds design snow load
- Imbalance of snow load on roof
- Failure of one key member causing others to fail as a result of load transfer (domino effect)

Pre-engineered post frame agricultural buildings are designed to withstand a certain level of wind and snow loading and should withstand any snow loads that are below the "design value". For example, if the given snow load is 30 lbs. per square foot acting on the building and it was designed for a design load of 40 lbs. per square foot, then there should be no load carrying problems. Unfortunately, there are agricultural buildings out there that have not been designed for any particular loading at all. These buildings have a much higher probability of failing as a result of the current snow accumulations we are seeing.

So, how do we know if a building is going to fail? For a pre-engineered building, we can check the actual snow load on the building against the design snow load. If the actual load is less than the design load, then failure is eminent.. Table 1 can be used as a guide to estimate the snow load on a barn. Compare the table value against the design value to see where you stand. The table cannot be used for a non-engineered structure.

Wood structures will show stress before they fail unlike metal structures that usually will not. For a wood structure, the following audible and visual signs may be noticed prior to failure:

- Creaking or moaning in the building
- Bowing of truss bottom chords or web members
- Bowing of rafters or purlins
- Bowing of headers or columns

Table 1. Snow Load on Accumulation Depth

Snow Depth on Roof (Ft.)	" Dry Snow" (lbs./sq.ft.)	"In Between Snow" (lbs/sq. ft.)	" Wet Snow" (lbs./sq. ft.)
1	3	12	21
2	6.5	24	42
3	9.5	36	62
4	12.5	48	83
5	15.5	60	104



If these signs are present, consideration may be given to evacuating animals from the barn and it is certainly recommended to evacuate all humans from the structure.

One option commonly considered to relieve loading from the barn is to shovel the roof. Experienced individuals who are properly trained and protected should only do this. *Attempting to save a barn is not worth risking lives over*. Shoveling the roof without the proper approach may actually cause more damage than good by creating an unbalanced load on the roof.

DO AND DON'TS OF BARN SNOW REMOVAL

By Curt Gooch and Sam Steinberg, Cornell University

Removal of significant snow accumulations off of a barn roof is best performed in a systematic way to reduce the risk of injury or death to both barn occupants and those working on the roof. Removing roof snow without a proper approach may actually cause more damage than if left alone in some cases by creating an unbalanced and/or concentrated roof loads.

The recent Upstate New York lake effect snow storms have dumped feet of snow causing many barns to be in danger of failure. The forecasted rain events for the next few days, along with warming temperatures will increase the weight of the current snow on barn roofs, thus further increasing the risk of barn failure.

Before accessing a barn roof, first assess the barn's current structural situation. Wood frame structures generally will provide clues that failure is interment before they fail. For a wood structure, the some or all of the following audible and/or visual signs may be noticed prior to failure:

- Creaking or moaning in the building
- Bowing of truss bottom chords or compression web members
- Bowing of rafters or purlins
- Bowing of headers or columns

Note: For pre-engineered metal structures, the above list does not apply, as these structures will more likely fail without warning.

If any of the above items are observed, then careful assessment of the situation is needed. Consider removing cows from the barn, if possible, using cab tractors and skid loaders to provide workers some level of safety. If in doubt, do not enter the barn or go on the roof.

Farms that do decide to remove snow from barn roofs must be very aware of the dangers that are present and refrain from becoming complacent after working hours on end removing snow. For some recommendations for removing snow from barn roofs in the form of Do's and Don'ts visit <u>Snow-Removal-Dos-and-Donts.pdf (cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com)</u>

Managing Coyote Conflict

Written by Katie Carter, updated by Tamara Carawan, NC Cooperative Extension Pamlico County Center,



Owning livestock comes with many challenges, one being protecting livestock from predators. Coyotes are a common threat that livestock face. A livestock owner/producer needs to know how to handle a coyote that comes onto their property and what options are available to get rid of this potential threat.

Coyotes typically weigh 25-40 pounds and come in a wide

variation of colors. Coyotes are extremely adaptable and will call just about anywhere home, from a farmer's woods around pastures, to a highly populated neighborhood. A coyote's diet also varies depending on their habitat. A coyote that lives close to people in a neighborhood will have a diet made up of trash and possibly small animals, such as outdoor cats or rodents. A coyote that lives in a less populated rural area will have a diet consisting of small rodents, rabbits, bugs, fruit and vegetables, and occasionally livestock and chickens.

Coyotes are very territorial. There will be a mated pair for every territory. Coyotes do not hunt in packs. On summer nights where you can hear coyotes barking and yelling back and forth, it is the parents teaching their pups how to hunt. Once the pups leave to go find their own territories, it will be just the mated pair again. Pups born in the spring will leave to find their own territories in the fall. These pups can travel hundreds of miles, even crossing over state lines looking for an unoccupied territory.

Coyotes can self-regulate their population. If there is an abundance of coyotes, mated pairs of coyotes will have fewer pups per litter. These pups usually are weaker and survival rates are low. If there is a disease outbreak or something that reduces coyote populations, the mated pairs will have larger litters with higher pup survival rates.

A big concern with any wild animal is the threat of disease. Rabies is a deadly disease that is zoonotic, which means it is an infectious disease that is transmitted between species, from animal to human, or from human to animal. Although coyotes can contract rabies they are less likely to develop rabies compared to other wildlife species, such as raccoons or foxes.

If you see a coyote on your property and feel it is a threat to you or your livestock, you can go to the <u>NYS Department of Environ-</u> <u>mental Conservation webpage</u>. This webpage has information about coyotes and options for management. In New York, the coyote hunting season begins October 1 and ends on March 27. Coyotes may be taken day or night with a NY State hunting license. Bait, dogs, and electronic callers are permitted. There are no bag limits.

Trapping season for coyotes in the majority of New York is

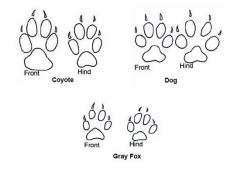
October 25 – February 15. (See page 59 of the <u>New York Hunting</u> <u>& Trapping 2022-2023 Official Guide to Laws & Regulation</u>. Trapping is only allowed during trapping season and a trapping license is required. It is important to remember that it is illegal to relocate coyotes. They have strong homing instincts and will return to the location they were removed from. Once the animal is trapped, it needs to be euthanized and disposed of, or used for its fur. All residents must have a valid trapping license in their possession except:

- Resident owners primarily engaged in farming, lessees, and members of their immediate families do not need a trapping license when trapping on farm lands they are occupying and cultivating for coyote.
- Native Americans living on a reservation do not need a trapping license while trapping on reservation lands.

Fencing is key to keeping coyotes and other predators out of your pastures or chicken runs. High fencing, about 6' tall with 12-18" under the ground, is a good start. Coyotes are great diggers, so running electric wire around the bottom of your fence is a good deterrent.

Another way to keep coyotes away from livestock and chickens is by securing them at night. This would be hard to do with a herd of cattle or large flocks of sheep, but horses and chickens can be secured in barns and coops very easily. During calving season, be sure to have a safe place for livestock to give birth. Coyotes will take advantage of a mama cow calving, not only killing the calf, but also wounding the mother while she is vulnerable. This applies to goats and sheep as well. Herd protectors, such as a donkey in a pasture with a herd of cattle or a guard dog out with a flock of sheep, are ways to prevent coyotes getting to livestock.

Not all coyotes are potential predators. If they are seen around property, but not harming livestock let them be. If you remove these coyotes, remember new coyotes can move in and may try and take advantage of livestock, if an opportunity arises.



A comparison of size and shape of footprints of the coyote, gray fox, and a large domestic dog. A gray fox footprint is similar to a small dog, but narrower. Scale is 1 inch equals 3 inches.

Credit: D.A. Wade, 1973. Control of Damage by Coyotes and some other Carnivores. Coop. Exten. Service Publ. WRP-11, CO State Univ., Fort Collins.

Preparing an Emergency Food Supply

By Diane Whitten, Cornell Cooperative Extension Saratoga County

In our area a snow storm or high winds can disrupt power for days. Preparing an emergency food supply will allow you to feed your family for a few days, even if you have no electricity.

When preparing your emergency food supply keep in mind your families food preferences, and include some comfort foods which will help to elevate spirits in a stressful situation. Avoid salty foods that will make you thirsty because water may need to be conserved. The general recommendation for water is one gallon per person per day for drinking and sanitation.

The following items are suggested when selecting emergency food supplies. You may already have many of these on hand. By gathering them and storing them in one location it can help your household through the worst days of an emergency. If you put them in a Grab-N-Go tote, you can take them with you in the event that you can't remain at home. This list includes shelf stable foods that mostly require little to no cooking or added water.

- Canned meats, including soups (reduced sodium)
- Canned fruits and juices
- Canned vegetables, including soups (reduced sodium)
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal
- Ultra-pasteurized milk (only needs refrigeration after opening)
- Dry powdered milk
- Dehydrated potatoes and canned gravy
- Instant rice
- Peanut butter & jelly
- Crackers
- High energy foods, like nuts and dried fruit
- Comfort foods such as cookies, hard candies, instant coffee and tea bags
- Food for infants and for special dietary needs
- Staples, such as sugar, salt, pepper
- Water 1 gallon per person per day

Make sure you have a can opener and knife for opening products, and disposable cups, plate, bowls and utensils.

Q: Can I eat a food after the "sell-by" date has expired?

A: A "Sell-By" or "Expiration" or "Use By" date tells how long to display a product for sale. Buy a product before a "sell by" or "use by" date, but it is still safe to use if it is wholesome and of good quality. Some foods, like fresh meats and poultry, last 1 to 2 days after the sell-by date, if kept properly refrigerated at all times, such as during transportation, display for sale, and storage at home. Other foods may last 3 to 4 days, or even a week after the sell-by date expires. It is best to consult a home food storage chart for specific foods.



Store your emergency food supply in a cool, dry place that is rodent proof. Some foods can be stored indefinitely, while others have a six month or one year shelf life, so check your supply every six months, and replenish as needed.

Cooking – A grill or camp stove that heats with propane can be used outdoors. If you want to be able to cook indoors, consider purchasing a butane burner and canisters. You may reheat canned foods in the can if you remove the label first to avoid a fire hazard.

Emergency Preparedness resources can be found at the Cornell Cooperative Extension website, <u>www.ccesaratoga.org</u>, under the Food & Nutrition tab. You can also find the following suggested resources for preparing a 3-Day emergency food supply at other government websites.

Make An Emergency Food Supply Kit, http://www.ready.gov/food

Keep Your Food Safe During Emergencies: Power Outages, Floods & Fires, <u>https://www.fsis.usda.gov/</u> (search for title)

Determining Water Needs, <u>https://www.ready.gov/water</u>

A **"Best if Used By"** or **"Best if Used Before"** date is the date to use for eating the food at its best quality or flavor. It is not a purchase date or date of final safety.

A "**Use by**" date is the last date recommended for the use of a food product. The date has been determined by the manufac-

turer and indicates the last date for peak quality. Do not use a product after the "use by" date.

Candle Safety for the Holidays and Every Day

Written by Trudy Beirise, and last updated by Jessica Griffin, NC Cooperative Extension Lenoir County Center

Candles may be pretty to look at but they are a cause of many home fires—and home fire deaths. Remember, a candle is an open flame, and it can easily ignite anything that can burn. December is the peak time of the year for home candle fires. While candles cast a beautiful glow in our homes, there are guidelines for using them safely. Follow these safety tips when using candles, especially this time of the year.

- Read and follow the manufacturer's instructions for candle use. Most candles should be burned for only a couple of hours at a time.
- Blow out all candles when you leave the room or go to bed. Avoid the use of candles in the bedroom. Keep candles at least 12 inches away from anything that can burn or be blown into the flame.
- If you do burn candles in your home, make sure that you use candle holders that are sturdy, and cannot be tipped over easily.
- The National Candle Association recommends that candlewicks be trimmed to ¼ inch each time before burning. Long wicks can cause uneven burning and dripping.
- Keep the pool of wax in the candle clear of debris such as wick trimmings.
- Extinguish candles with a candle snuffer rather than blowing them out. Hot wax can splatter on furniture, clothing and skin. Take care!
- Put candle holders on a sturdy, uncluttered surface, at least 12 inches from any flammable objects or fabrics.
- Light candles carefully. Keep your hair and any loose clothing away from the flame.
- Don't burn a candle all the way down—put it out before it gets too close to the holder or container
- Never use a candle if oxygen is being used in the home for medical purposes.
- Have flashlights and battery-powered lighting ready to use during a power outage. Never use candles during power failures.
- Candles are often used in places of worship. Whether you are using one candle, or more than one on a candelabra, kinara, or menorah, make sure you take a few moments to learn about using candles in religious settings safely.
- Handheld candles should not be passed from one person to another at any time. When lighting candles at a candle lighting service, have the person with the unit candle dip their candle into the flame of the lit candle.



Light candles and leave them burning only when an adult is present in the room.

- Lit candles should not be placed in windows where a blind or curtain could catch fire.
- Candles placed on, or near tables, altars, or shrines, must be watched by an adult until extinguished.
- If a candle must burn continuously, be sure it is enclosed in a glass container and placed in a sink, on a metal tray, or in a deep basin filled with water.
- Consider using flameless candles in your home. They look and smell like real wax candles. These modern candles use LED lights to emit natural looking candlelight. Some even come with remote control technology to make candle lighting even safer and more convenient.

Finally, any talk of candle safety is incomplete without a reminder to check all smoke alarms in your home. Working smoke alarms greatly increase your chances of surviving a home fire, so check them every month to ensure they are working properly.

Source: National Fire Protection Association

December is the season to be safe, not sorry. As we deck the halls for the holidays, let's remember that safety comes first. Read about <u>Keeping the Holidays Safe for Your Family</u>. Topics include not only candles, but lights, decorations, trees, fireplaces, toys and gifts, poisons, and shopping with kids.



Homemade Eggnog Made Safe

Marlene Geiger, AnswerLine, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

Eggnog and holidays seem to go hand in hand. While prepared eggnog is readily available at the supermarket, there is nothing like homemade eggnog. But homemade eggnog has the potential to spoil holiday fun and cause *Salmonella* poisoning from the use of raw or undercooked eggs. *Salmonella* bacteria is a potential risk even when refrigerated eggs with clean, uncracked shells are used.

Since eggs are a standard ingredient in most homemade eggnog recipes, let's look at someways to convert a special family recipe into a safe recipe.

Use a cooked egg base. FoodSafety.gov recommends a cooked egg base for eggnog. This is especially important if you are serving people at high risk for foodborne infections: young children and pregnant women (non-alcoholic eggnog), older adults, and those with weakened immune systems. Eggs must be cooked to 160 °F to kill bacteria that may be present such as Salmonella. A cooked egg base or custard is made by heating half of the the milk and/or cream to almost boiling and ever so slowly adding the beaten egg yolks (or sometimes the whole egg) and sugar (or any sugar substitute). Continue to cook and stir the mixture gently until an internal temperature of 160 °F is reached. At this temperature, the mixture will firmly coat a metal spoon and remain separated when a finger is drawn through it. Do not let the mixture go beyond 160 °F as above that temperature, the eggs are likely to curdle. (If curdling occurs, put the mixture in a blend and blend until smooth.) Place the mixture in a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking action and prevent curdling or further curdling and then refrigerate.

Use pasteurized eggs yolks. Eggnog may be safely made at home by using whole, liquid or pasteurized eggs or egg substitutes in place of raw eggs. Pasteurized eggs are found next to regular eggs at the store. Commercial pasteurization of eggs is a heat process at low temperatures that destroys any *Salmonella* that might be present without having a noticeable effect on flavor or nutritional content. Even if you are using pasteurized eggs for your eggnog, both the FDA and the USDA recommend starting with a cooked egg base for optimal safety. When egg substitute products are used, some experimentation might be needed to figure out the right amount to add for the best flavor.



Use alcohol to inhibit bacterial growth. While alcohol will inhibit bacterial growth, adding alcohol (in amounts recommended by most recipes) will not be sufficient to kill bacteria. However, if one wants to use alcohol, <u>Cooks Illustrated</u> suggests that 1 1/2 ounces of 80 proof liquor per egg and three weeks of aging in the refrigerator is sufficient to kill bacteria when dairy is omitted until ready to serve. Such was conclusively proven by microbiologists at Rockefeller University where salmonella bacteria was purposely added to eggnog and analyzed over a three-week period. By the three-week mark, the alcohol had rendered the eggnog completely sterile.

Substitute egg whites. If a recipe calls for adding beaten egg whites to the hot egg/milk custard, use pasteurized egg whites. While pasteurized egg whites do not whip to the same volume as raw egg, they are safe. It has not been proven that raw egg whites are free of *Salmonella* bacteria; NOR has it been shown that when adding them to the hot milk/egg custard, the custard remains hot enough to kill any bacteria. Another good substitute is whipping cream whipped to soft peaks added at the time of serving.

Here's to a safe and worry-free holiday! Follow these suggestions for your favorite eggnog recipe to assure everyone can enjoy delicious, creamy homemade eggnog without worry of a foodborne illness.



Holiday Spending

University of Minnesota Extension

Holidays are definitely the time for giving and spending. And for many, holidays are also a season for taking on too much debt. It doesn't need to be that way if you develop a game plan ahead of time.

Start by setting a holiday spending target. Staying under target will help relieve the stress of being broke after the holidays. Here are some ideas to use:

- Make a budget of how much you want to spend and who you want to spend on. Have family conversations about limiting the number of gifts or limiting their cost.
- Use cash as much as possible. Limit the use of credit cards since they make it very easy to spend more than planned.
- Watch for sales and coupons for gifts , holiday decorations, and food items. Many free shopping apps can assist in getting the latest deals. Check your phone's app store for Flipp and RetailMeNot to help you find deals at the store you shop.
- Challenge stores to price match when you can.
- Buy items early when you see them on sale if your spending plan allows. Or take advantage of year-end sales for gift purchases that can wait until after the holiday. This may be



particularly helpful for saving money on big ticket items.

- Homemade gifts are a great way to personalize a gift without breaking your budget.
- Give a gift to an entire family or group instead of each individual. This option may save money as well as time searching out gifts for each person.
- Gift cards can also be a welcoming gift, but try to give cards for retailers that the receiver frequents.

Easy Homemade Holiday Gifts Give Spices as Salt Substitutes for a Gift

Try making and giving some salt alternative mixtures as gifts this holiday season. These could be made and put into fun glass jars. They do not need to be refrigerated, so they can be made anytime. These recipes would be a nice gift for anyone on your list that enjoys cooking—and they don't have to be on a reduced sodium diet to enjoy these seasoning mixtures.

SALT SUBSTITUTES

- 3 teaspoons dry mustard
- 3 teaspoons onion powder
- 3 teaspoons paprika
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ¹/₂ teaspoon white peeper
- ¼ teaspoon ground basil

Mix thoroughly. Store in salt shaker and use in place of salt.

SALT FREE SURPRISE

- 2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp basil
- 1 tsp. oregano
- 1 tsp. powdered lemon rind

Mix thoroughly. Store in salt shaker and use in place of salt.

5 SPICE SALT-FREE SEASONING BLEND

- ¹/₂ sweet leaf basil
- 1 Tbsp. onion powder
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- ¹/₂ tsp. ground marjoram
- ¹/₂ tsp. ground black pepper

In bowl, crush basil until fine. Stir in rest of ingredients. Spoon it into a shaker. Use to season meat, chicken, fish, casseroles, vegetables and salads.

HERBED SEASONING

- 2 Tbsp. dried dillweed/basil leaves, crumble
- 2 Tbsp. onion powder
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves, crumbled
- 1 teaspoon celery seed
- 1/4 teaspoon grated dried lemon peel
- Pinch freshly ground pepper

Combine all ingredients in small bowl and blend well. Spoon it into shaker and use with poultry and fish. Store it in a cool dry place.



Homesteading and Self-sufficiency



RUTGERS HOMESTEADING ACADEMY The Bread Tree—The Basics of Planting, Growing, and Processing

Rutgers Cooperative Extension introduces the "Homesteading Academy"—a once monthly lunchtime webinar series for anyone curious about home-grown sustenance and self-sufficiency. We invite you to join us on the second Tuesday of each month for live sessions with our invited speakers. The webinars will take place from **noon to 1 p.m**., so bring your lunch!

The series will be ongoing, with potential future topics of sheep/beef/goats, seed saving and heirloom varieties, trouble-shooting for two-cycle engines, fruit and nut crops, cut flowers, food preservation, small-scale grain milling, and more.

THE NEXT UPCOMING WEBINARS IS:

December 13: The Bread Tree—The Basics of Planting, Growing, and Processing Chestnuts with Presenter Sara Fern Fitzsimmons (Chief Conservation Officer for The American Chestnut Foundation at Penn State University)

This talk will cover some information about the current market for domestically grown chestnuts and establish some basic knowledge for growing chestnut trees. We will cover the basics of planting and growing chestnuts, along with recommendations on how to get information for other nut trees and join the growing community of nut growers in the eastern U.S.

FREE, but pre-registration is required.



View the most recent webinar <u>"Warm Remembrances of 50</u> <u>Years Heating with Wood"</u> with Jason Grabosky, Rutgers Professor of Urban Forestry as he describes the pros and cons of firewood and wood pellets for home heating. He explains how to choose and maintain a wood stove, and how to store and season firewood. Safety aspects of cutting your own wood plus safe installation and operation of wood stoves are also discussed.

Have a topic idea? Need help with Zoom? Send all your questions to Kate Brown, Program Associate in Commercial Agriculture with Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Burlington County: <u>kbrown@njaes.rutgers.edu</u> or 609-265-5050.



Making Balsam Fir Wreaths

The University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Bulletin #7012

Balsam fir wreaths consist of tips, a metal ring, and wire. A wreath is assembled by attaching bunches of tips to a ring. These bunches are held to the ring with the wire. The following instructions are for making double-face wreaths (wreaths with tip bunches attached to both sides). Single-faced wreaths are made the same way as double-face wreaths, except tip bunches are attached only on one side. Wreath making may vary slightly, depending on the wreath producer. Make sure you use fresh tips.

Material Needed

Wreath making material can be purchased from florists, garden centers and some wreath producers. To make wreaths, you will need:

• Rings—Common wreath rings have 8, 10, 12, 14 or 16-inch diameters. The ring's size determines the size of the wreath's

outside diameter. Crimped rings are recommended for double-face wreaths and double-rail rings for single-face wreaths to prevent tip bunches from flipping over.

- Wire—Wire should be 22 to 24 gauge. Green wire is more easily hidden by wreath.
- Clippers—Clippers are needed to cut the wire. They also may be used to cut the tips
- Gloves—Gloves may be worn to protect the hands.
- Balsam Fir Tips—A tip is the part of a fir branch that is used for wreaths. The amount of tips required for a wreath depends on the size of the wreath. <u>The approximate amount of tips required for each wreath is given in a chart along with the instruction in this link.</u>



FIELD TO **FORK** Butcher your own Local Meat **Greenwich, NEW YORK**

Date: TBD Time: Evening

Come and enjoy a FREE pop-up educational event this fall where you'll learn how to process an entire deer start-to-finish from someone who has commercial butchering experience and processed hundreds of wild game animals! Pre-register to be notified once a deer (or two) has been procured. Demonstration date and location will be provided with short notice and only scheduled 3-7 days out from harvest. Space is limited, and attendance will be admitted first-come, first-serve. Instruction will be geared towards new hunters; however, time-saving tips and butchering know-how will be provided for veteran hunters as well.

The following groups understand what it takes to become a new hunter. While the task may seem daunting, learning to hunt and becoming confident in your abilities are easy and obtainable to anyone.

Whether you want to acquire natural foods, gain a better connection to nature, or increase your self-reliance, we have programs and resources that are proven to create hunters through both in-person and at-home learning.

For more information or to pre-register, contact Nicolina Foti at nvf5@cornell.edu with your name, phone and email address.





Cornell Cooperative Extension Saratoga County

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