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Think Citrus For The Holidays

Pauline Williams, MPA, RD, CD; USU Extension Agent

Fresh citrus has a strong traditional association with the holidays and gift-giving. Oranges, grapefruits, lemons, and limes are readily available and delicious during the holiday season. Citrus fruits make a great holiday gift packed with nutrients. Eating just one orange provides 130% Daily Value (DV) for vitamin C, 28% DV for fiber, 12% DV for folic acid, only 70 calories, and is fat free, cholesterol free, and sodium free.

- **Vitamin C** improves your immune system; acts as an antioxidant; helps form collagen a protein needed for healthy skin, teeth, and bones; and aids in iron absorption.

- **Fiber** reduces risk for certain types of cancers, helps lower blood cholesterol levels, and helps control blood glucose levels.

- **Folic acid** helps prevent serious neural tube birth defects and may lower the risk for heart disease.

When shopping for citrus look for fruits that are firm and heavy for their size, with bright colored skins. However, don't worry if you see a valencia orange with a slightly green-colored skin. Green-tinged valencias are actually at their best — fully ripe, sweet, and juicy. The fully ripe fruit occasionally "regreens" in warm weather. After the fruit turns a bright orange color, the skin reabsorbs chlorophyll causing a ripe orange to look partly green. Avoid fruit with bruised, wrinkled or discolored skins; this indicates the fruit is old or has been stored incorrectly. The peel thickness will vary depending on the season, weather, and growing conditions. Oranges will store at room temperature for several days. For longer storage, refrigerate in a plastic bag or in the crisper.

(source: SunKist education releases)



Fresh Fruit and Cheese Sandwich

1 pkg. (3 oz.) light cream cheese softened
 1 small banana, chopped
 grated peel of ½ orange
 1 tsp. brown sugar
 8 slices raisin or whole wheat bread
 2 oranges peeled and cut into slices
 In a bowl combine cream cheese, banana, orange peel, and brown sugar. Spread 4 slices of bread with cream cheese mixture; top with orange slices and remaining bread. Makes 4 sandwiches.

Holiday Three-Citrus Tossed Salad

1 head romaine lettuce torn into bite sizes pieces (about 8 cups)
 1 grapefruit peeled and cut into cartwheel slices and slices quartered
 1 orange peeled and cut into cartwheel slices and slices quartered
 1 cup red bell pepper strips
 1 small avocado, peeled, sliced crosswise

Lemon Sesame Dressing

3 Tbsp. lemon juice
 3 Tbsp. vegetable oil
 1 Tbsp. sesame oil
 1 Tbsp. honey
 In large bowl, combine all salad ingredients; chill. Mix dressing ingredients together and shake well. Toss salad with dressing. Sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds, if desired. Makes 6 servings (about 10 cups).

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Celebrating Diversity

Compiled by Paula Scott, MS, CFCS - Extension Family & Consumer Science Agent



Because of diversity, a wealth of important holidays and cultural celebrations occur in the winter months traditionally known as the “holiday season.”

With the hustle and bustle of this busy time of year, it is easy to overlook traditions that are different than those you and many of your friends and family members may celebrate. Holiday celebrations can be wonderful opportunities for people to learn about the traditions and values that are cherished parts of people’s lives.

Learning about celebrations, customs, and holidays can help people gain an appreciation and an understanding of the contributions that each culture brings to make this country unique.

To live joyful lives and to be at peace with each other, people must appreciate each other’s differences, as well as their similarities.

December Holidays

Hanukkah (Festival of Lights or Feast of Lights), celebrated for eight days during the month of Kislev (in the Jewish lunar calendar).

St. Nicholas Day: Europe, 12/5.

Daikon Daki: Japanese, 12/9 & 10.

Luciadagen: Sweden, 12/13.

Winter Solstice: International

The Winter Solstice is the day when the distance between the Tropic of Capricorn and the sun is the shortest. Because of the earth’s tilt, the Northern Hemisphere is leaning farther away from the sun than at any other

time during the year. This makes the Winter Solstice the shortest day in the Northern Hemisphere where it marks the beginning of winter.

Because ancient cultures were unaware of the changes in the Earth’s position, they feared that the sunlight would never return. To bring it back, they engaged in many celebrations and ceremonies. In fact, there are more ceremonies and “rituals associated with the winter solstice than any other time of year”.

Hundreds of years ago, a Roman culture celebrated its major festival on the Winter Solstice. When Julius Caesar instituted a new calendar in Rome, the festival fell on December 25, a date that was retained for many years. About 1600 years ago, Pope Julius I chose this date for Christmas in order to replace the pagan tradition with a Christian one.

Many Christmas traditions, including the Yule log, evergreen, and mistletoe are rooted in ancient Yule traditions.

Las Posadas: Mexico (Spanish for “the inn”) 12/16-24.

A traditional Mexican festival which re-enacts Joseph’s search for room at the inn. Each Christmas season, a processional carrying a doll representing the Christ Child and images of Joseph and Mary riding a burro walks through the community streets. The processional stops at a previously selected home and asks for lodging for the night. The people are invited in to read scriptures and sing Christmas carols called *alguinaldos*. Refreshments are provided by the hosts. The doll is left at the chosen home and picked up on the next night when the processional begins again. This continues for eight nights in commemoration of the journey of Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

Night of the Radishes: The town of Oaxaca is the site of this unique festival commemorating the introduction of the radish to Mexico from Spain, 12/ 23.

Christmas: Christian, Roman Catholic, International, 12/25.
Boxing Day: Canada, United Kingdom, 12/26

Kwanzaa: African-American, December 26 - January 1.

Incwala Day: Swaziland, a small country in southern Africa, celebrated in either December or January each year.

New Year’s Eve: United States, International, 12/ 31.

Diversity should be celebrated every day in many different ways. Diversity is all around us.

Utah Marriage Website Available

You may access the website at UtahMarriage.org or through our county extension website at www.usuextslco.org. This website is designed to provide current, research based, information to individuals and couples who desire information on maintaining and strengthening the bond of marriage. On the website there are various topics you may choose to learn more about. They include: Marriage Statistics and Research, Obtaining a Marriage License, Marriage Preparation, Evaluating your Marriage, Marriage Week USA, Alternatives to Divorce.

Taking Control of the Holidays

The holiday season is quickly approaching and we all want to make it a memorable and pleasant time for ourselves and those around us. Yet, we all know that things can get out of control and we can end up feeling stressed and can hardly wait for it to be over.

Begin now to develop a plan to do what is important to you and your family. People often feel the holidays get out of control with spending too much money on presents, attending too many holiday events, or just trying to do too much in too little time. The result is that a season that is about sharing love becomes drudgery and we cannot wait for it to be over.

Ask yourself, "What is really important about the holiday season?" Is it the gift giving, is it the spiritual meaning, is it the family time, or is it about giving something of ourselves to others? For many of us it is all of these

things. Yet, we let things get out of control by not developing a plan for balance, and we may spend so much time on gift-giving that we have no time for anything else. Develop a plan to do things that truly reflects what is important to you. For example, you may decide to spend less money on gifts to family and friends and use the money to support families who may not have money for gifts. If we decide giving of our time to others is important, build in time for visiting shut-ins or volunteering.

Family members can all contribute to decisions about what is really important about the holiday season and how time and resources should be spent. We are much more likely to feel positive about the holiday season if we spend it doing things we value. *(Source: Linda Skogrand, PhD, Family and Human Development Specialist, Utah State University Extension Service)*

Be Natural



Educators J. Vincent Peterson and Janette Shaw from Indiana University South Bend offer one strategy for getting in control of holiday stress.

- B** - Breathe deeply, it will help increase energy levels.
- E** - Exercise: 20 minutes, three times a week — and running from errand to errand doesn't count!
- N** - Nutrition: Three well- balanced meals each day.
- A** - Attitude: Negative attitudes are contagious and destructive. Try to see the glass half full.
- T** - Time management: Set priorities and don't take on more than you can handle.
- U** - Uniqueness: Recognize and treasure your own uniqueness. Say 'no' when necessary.
- R** - Relaxation: Private time to read and listen to music - - a time not to focus on the next item to do.
- A** - Associations: Maintain contact with nurturing support systems - colleagues, friends, family.
- L** - Laughter: Still the best medicine.

(Source: www.iuinfo.indiana.edu/oem/packages/holiday/stress.html)

Holiday Shopping Tips To Protect The Budget

- Scale down the shopping list but do make a list and stick to it.
- Identify a limit on the amount to be spent for each person for whom you are shopping.
- Don't go shopping when you are tired, hungry or depressed.
- Try thrift stores, discount stores and consignment stores.
- Consider giving gifts of essential items and storage items that every household uses.
- Buy gift certificates - they can help you spend the exact amount budgeted.
- Make a donation, equal to the money you allotted for a gift to a charity in the name of a loved one who "has everything".
- Look for containers and baskets for gift giving by recycling or purchasing at thrift stores.

- Purchase like new or new toys at thrift stores or garage sales.
- Make a cookbook including all your favorite recipes.
- Print recipes on cardstock, and place in an inexpensive photo album with plastic sleeves.
 - For someone far away, copy funny jokes you have seen in magazines that made you laugh and you wished you could share with them and make a "Family Joke Book" for the one you love.
- Try shopping in the early morning or evenings - many time stores are not as busy.
- Shop early in the month and consider shopping from a catalog.

(Source: Marilyn K. Albertson, MA; CFCS; USU Extension FCS Agent)

The Extension Family and Consumer Science (FCS) Advisory Council at USU Extension in Salt Lake County is looking for individuals interested in volunteering their time on the Salt Lake County Extension Family and Consumer Science Advisory Council. The council will advise Extension Agents on community needs related to nutrition, health, housing, finance, budgeting, resource management, parenting, marriage enhancement, clothing and other family life programs. The council will meet four times each year to advise extension agents and assist in planning programs. If you are interested and willing to be a member of the Extension FCS Advisory Council please contact Pauline Williams, 801-468-3176 or paulinew@ext.usu.edu



Nutrition Bites

Compiled by Pauline Williams, MPA, RD; USU Extension Agent

• One hour of physical activity new recommendation. The institute of medicine's Food and Nutrition board released their new recommendation for exercise. The new exercise goal is 60 minutes per day. The goal is based on the amount of energy expended, on average, by individuals who maintain a healthy weight. The 60 minutes is cumulative and includes daily activities such as housecleaning, yard work, stair climbing, plus moderate to vigorous activities such as walking 4 miles per hour. The recommendation does not mean you have to go to the gym or jog for 60 minutes, but accumulate 60 minutes of activity each day. Another option is to participate in higher intensity activities such as jogging

for 20-30 minutes at least four days a week. (source: American Dietetic Association – Dietetics in Practice Fall 2002)

• Large versus medium. Eating a large bagel (4 ½ ounces) for breakfast adds 78 more calories than eating a medium sized bagel (3 ½ ounces). Choosing the large bagel every day adds 28,470 calories per year – just over 8 pounds' worth if not burned off by exercise. (source: Tufts Health and Nutrition Letter November 2002)

• Hand-washing reduces respiratory illness. There were 45% fewer bouts of respiratory illness when Navy recruits were ordered to wash their hands at least five times a day. Hand-washing is a simple and effective way to stop the spread of illness. *(source: Hope Health newsletter October 2002)*