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D. Pauline Williams

Pauline Williams

Family & Consumer Science
Extension Agent

Paula Scott

Paula Scott

Family & Consumer Science
Extension Agent

Marilyn K. Albertson

Marilyn Albertson

Family & Consumer Science
Extension Agent



SALT LAKE CO. EXTENSION

Utah State
UNIVERSITY

2001 South State Street, S1200
Salt Lake City, UT 84190-2350

Phone: 468-3170

Fax: 468-3174

www.extension.usu.edu

www.usuextslco.org

www.usuextension.slco.org

Selecting Baking Pans

by Pauline Williams, MPA, RD, USU Extension Agent

Cinnamon, sugar, peppermint and more – the aromas of holiday baking lift spirits and bring joy to the kitchen. To guarantee your baked goods look as wonderful as they smell, you need some holiday cheer and the right pan.

Getting Started

- Use the size and type of pan the recipe suggests
- Follow directions for greasing the pan
- Preheat the oven
- Adjust oven temperature for glass, dark metal, and thickness of pans
- Place pan in center of oven
- Use only one pan in conventional ovens; if you need to place more than one pan, leave at least two inches of space in between

Choosing the Right Type of Pan

Baking pans are made from different materials, each with distinctive properties. Glass and ceramic absorb heat slowly while aluminum is an excellent heat conductor. Stainless steel is non-reactive and easy to clean, but a poor conductor of heat. Dark or dull pans shorten baking time and produce crisp edges while shiny pans give even color and light edges. So should you choose glass, metal, shiny, or dark? It depends on what you will be baking and how brown or crisp you want your holiday goodies.

Shiny aluminum, an excellent conductor of heat, is a good choice for most baked goods. Shiny aluminum gives baked goods a consistent color and prevents quick breads from becoming too dark on the edges. Shiny pans are good for cakes, quick breads, and cookies.

Nonstick dark metal is great for keeping baked goods from sticking, but watch the time as food may brown quickly around the edges and bottom if the nonstick coating is dark. Dull or dark surface pans heat quickly so reduce the oven temperature by 25 degrees F. to get an evenly browned product. Dark pans are good for yeast breads and pies where you want a crisp brown crust.

Insulated metal helps keep goods from over browning. Items may not brown well on the sides or bottom and thick items may be doughy in middle. Increase baking time by a few minutes to improve browning. Insulated pans are great for soft pale cookies, such as sugar cookies.

Glass browns evenly and the baker can see how goods are progressing. Glass absorbs heat more slowly, but holds heat better than metal. Glass is best used for casseroles and acidic foods such as fruit cobblers and crisps. When baking with glass reduce oven temperature by 25 degrees F.

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Walking In The Cold

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

Walkers don't need to hibernate for the winter. Here are some good ideas to keep you walking in cold weather.

Where You Walk

- ✓ Try to start your walk into the wind so you will finish with it at your back.
- ✓ Select routes sheltered from the wind when ever possible.
- ✓ Select routes that are cleared of snow or ice, watch out for standing puddles and mud slicks.
- ✓ Use extreme caution when walking on roads, cars may have difficulty maneuvering around you.
- ✓ Plan for refuges along the way - store, park restroom, or other places you can duck into to warm up during your walk if needed.
- ✓ Check the local tracks to see if they may be a good outdoor alternative.
- ✓ Consider walking in a mall as a cold-weather alternative.
- ✓ Consider walking on a treadmill as a cold-weather alternative.



What To Wear - Layering to Stay Dry and Warm

- ✓ Base layer - Next to the skin: Your base layer should wick sweat away from your body to keep your skin dry. Good long underwear pieces are appropriate, made from fabrics such as polypropylene, Capilene, Thermion, Thermax, Thinsulate, and silk. Avoid cotton as it does not wick sweat and will cool you rapidly if it gets wet.
- ✓ Insulating Layer: This layer will keep you warm and can be shed once you warm up. Shirt and pants of wool, fleece, pile, or down.
- ✓ Outer Layer: To protect you from the elements, a windproof and water-resistant jacket. It should be worn loosely.
- ✓ Pants: If the weather is frigid, long underwear bottoms or tights underneath another pair of pants

will keep you warm. If long underwear is too warm for you, try tights or leggings under unlined cotton sweat pants. The two layers cut the wind that will otherwise seep through one pair of pants or sweats. Running pants or running tights made of synthetics that wick moisture will keep you more comfortable in rain and snow. Don't wear denim jeans as they give zero protection from the cold.

- ✓ A hat should be worn to insulate your head and retain heat. A scarf or a neck gaitor can also be worn, if needed. Chapstick and sunscreen should be worn to protect skin and lips. Wind chills may damage the skin on your cheeks if you do not protect yourself. Sunglasses should be worn to cut the glare on snow and ice. They also filter UVA and UVB to protect your eyes on sunny days.
- ✓ Gloves or mittens should be worn to keep your hands and fingers from getting cold.
- ✓ Shoes and Socks: A good pair of shoes and socks are essential for winter walking. Shoes that stand up to snow and rain will keep you from the misery of damp cold feet. A light weight hiking boot would be a wise investment. Never wear smooth soled walking shoes in wet or snowy weather, as their traction is negligible on wet leaves or icy patches. Choose Thorlo or any socks made of cool max, rather than the standard cotton sock. Your feet will be much more comfortable, dryer and more likely to stay blister free in this fabric.

Tips

- ✓ Warm up longer and at a moderate pace before switching to your fast pace.
- ✓ Remove layers as you warm up. If the temperature begins to rise as you are walking, take the outerwear layer off and tie it around your waist.
- ✓ Drink 8 oz. Of water every 15-30 minutes while walking.
- ✓ Have a change of clothing ready at the end of your walk to prevent rapid cooling from wet clothing.

Dress and prepare yourself to stay warm and comfortable while walking in cold weather.

Don't Give Away Your Hard-Earned Tax Return Dollars

Have you thought about how much of your hard-earned money you give to someone else when you pay for professional tax preparation just so you can get an instant refund? Try visiting a free tax preparation site to have your taxes processed and you can have your return electronically filed and receive the refund within days in your checking or savings account. If you don't have a checking or savings account, there are services available to help you open one in order to receive your refund quickly.

Free TAX Preparation and Electronic Filing sites are available in Salt Lake County for individuals and families earning less than \$35,000 in 2003. Make sure you get all the tax credits you deserve!! To find the free site nearest you call 211, Information & Referral Service after January 1, 2004. *Prepared by Marilyn Albertson and Kathy Kessler.*

Are You Giving More Joy or Getting More Debt From Your Holiday Spending?

Tiffany Sherwin, *USU Extension FCS Educator*

With the first crunch of the snow beneath our feet, carolers at our doors and tiny lights outlining the houses in our neighborhoods it's easy to see that the holidays are upon us. Along with the excitement, the holidays bring with them a wonderful spirit of giving. The season reminds us "tis better to give than to receive" and we respond by pulling out our checkbooks and credit cards and purchasing gifts for the ones we love. The joys we receive from giving last just long enough for us to get through the holidays and into the New Year before reality arrives with the dreaded bill or bank statement of the past season's purchases.

Right then and there you resolve to not spend so much next year and to make spending time, not money, with those you love during the holidays a priority and not the gifts. But, alas, another year passes and resolutions are once again forgotten and replaced with the desire to give from our paychecks, and thus the cycle continues.

Is there any help for those of us whose hearts are bigger than our paychecks? The answer, with some simple planning, is yes.

Pay extra on existing debts. If you paid for the holidays on credit and will be paying for them throughout the year, consider paying some extra money toward the principal. Interest is charged on the amount of principal owed, so the lower the principal drops the less interest you will have to pay. Even paying \$5 more than the minimum required payment on the bill each month will help bring your balance down and save you months, if not years, of payments.

Calculate your holiday expenses. The first thing to do is to look back and calculate how much you spent the past holiday season. Keep in mind that gifts are not the only thing we spend additional money on for the holidays. Food, gasoline, and events are just a few items that

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The Holidays: A Stress of Success

Tiffany Sherwin, *USU Extension FCS Educator*

Next year get as much joy as you give by avoiding the cycle of holiday debt!

Holiday Stress Survey

Answer yes or no to the statements below:

- I want this holiday to be the best ever.
- It is okay to spend beyond what I've planned to make people happy.
- I spend most of my time shopping or at social gatherings during the holidays.
- I tend to eat and drink more at parties throughout the holidays.
- Everyone is happy during the holidays and I should be too.

If you answered yes to any of these questions you may be susceptible to post-holiday let down. Though it is common to feel "blue" or let down after or during the holidays, these feelings do not indicate that our holiday season was a failure. It's true the holidays can be a time of fun and excitement, but they also come with their share of stress. Though we may not recognize it as stress, these additional activities, events, and obligations can be physically and mentally

draining, leaving us feeling tired, sad, or depressed. The let down after the holidays is often a result of our bodies trying to recuperate from the stresses of the holidays.

Post-holiday blues are common and natural, and can't be prevented entirely. However, the following steps can help minimize some of those feelings during the holidays:

- Try to maintain as many regular routines as possible. Make sure to get enough sleep.
- Eat healthy meals at their regular times. Avoid situations that promote over eating and over drinking.
- Make a list and prioritize the most important activities. Avoid over scheduling, and remember to schedule time for yourself.
- Remain as calm as you can.

Realize that the holidays are stressful for everyone including children and offer them as much support as possible. *Source: University of Missouri Outreach and Extension <http://missourifamilies.org/features/healtharticles/health7.htm>*

Baking Stones are designed to mimic the baking qualities of a brick oven. Stones take longer to heat and cool than metal or glass. Baking stones provide even browning and when well seasoned keeps goodies from sticking.

For the best results use the pan size recommended in the recipe. If the pan is oversized your baked product may be too thin, dried out, or burnt. If the pan is too small the food may overflow into the oven or the product may be under baked. In a pinch you can substitute pans that have similar heights, widths, and capacity. When using pans with similar capacities, but differing depths adjust the cooking time. If the pan is shallower than the pan in the recipe reduce the baking time by 25 percent; if the pan is deeper, increase baking time by 25 percent.

PAN AND SIZE	CAPACITY
Loaf Pan 8-1/2 X 4 inch	8 cups
Loaf Pan 5-1/2 X 3 inch	2 cups
Round Pan 8 X 2 inch	7 cups
Round Pan 9 X 2 inch	8 cups
Square Pan 8 X 8 X 2 inch	6 cups
Square Pan 9 X 9 X 2 inch	7 cups
Baking Dish 13 X 9 X 2 inch	12-15 cups
Jelly-Roll Pan 15 X 10 X 1	10 cups
Spring Form Pan 9 X 3	11 cups
Tube Pan/Angel Cake 9 inch	12 cups
Bundt Pan 10 inch	12 cups

increase around the holiday season. Keep track of your expenses this holiday season to help plan for the next.

Make your holiday budget. Once you know how much you spend decide where you can cut back, if you feel the need to. Did you plan your purchases before you went shopping and did you go with your money budgeted out? When you know what you want to buy and have a spending limit your money can go so much farther than when you buy on impulse at the last minute.

Save a little for the holidays each month. After you decide how much you are going to spend for the holidays, start saving for that amount. If you spend an additional \$350 for the holidays you would only need to save \$32 each month, from January to November. Divide your holiday budget amount by the number of months you have to save. This calculates the amount you need to save monthly. (This also works for other large expenses like car registrations and taxes!)



Nutrition Bites

By Pauline Williams, MPA, RD; USU Extension Agent



Antioxidant pills are not a substitute for fruits and vegetables. “Just as apple slices turn brown and fats become rancid in the presence of oxygen, some body tissues “degrade” in response to oxygen as a natural part of breathing. But trying to offset a low fruit and vegetable intake by swallowing a supplement with just a couple of antioxidants won’t work.” Researchers at University of California, Davis and Tufts found no difference between supplements and a placebo. “Food is always the first defense. . . Fruits and vegetables are rich in hundreds of important chemicals not available in supplements.” (Source: *Tufts Health and Nutrition Letter*, October 2003).

Oatmeal offers a number of health benefits including reducing cholesterol levels, maintaining blood glucose

levels, and lowering blood pressure. These health benefits appear to come from the soluble fiber found in oatmeal. So eat up. Add oatmeal to lean ground beef or turkey and shape into meatloaf; substitute 1/4 cup oats for 1/4 cup flour in muffins, cookies, and quick breads; add rolled oats to yogurt/fruit smoothies; or just enjoy a bowl of steaming hot oatmeal for breakfast. (Source: *Communicating food for health 2003*).

Trans Fat to be included on nutrition labels. By January 1, 2006 you will start seeing the amount of trans-fatty acids included on food labels. Trans fats are formed when liquid oils are made solid by a process called hydrogenation. Trans fats occur naturally in small amounts in some animal products, but are mainly found in baked and fried foods which use hydrogenated fats. Limiting total fat, saturated fat, trans fats, and cholesterol can reduce your risk for heart disease. (Source: *Food Insight Jul/Aug. 2003*).