

On the Home Front



Improving Family,
Resources & Health

CLOSE TO HOME

March/April 2010

by Jana Darrington, Family & Consumer Sciences Agent

No-Fear Canning

by Jonathan Kershaw, BYU Food Science Intern & Jana Darrington, USU Extension Faculty

Arachnophobia? Fear of heights? Fear of public speaking? Fear of home canning? Despite a plethora of research-based information, many people lack confidence in proper home food preservation techniques. Due to lack of know-how and fear of inadvertently poisoning family and friends, many people may avoid home food preservation altogether. While the threat of foodborne illness in home preserved food is very real, using reliable resources can help you conquer any insecurity when preserving your own food.

What's to Fear?

Horror stories about contaminated canned carrots or tainted preserved meats intimidate many potential food preservers. In truth, improperly preserved foods have a great potential for making people sick. *Clostridium botulinum*, a spore-forming bacteria that produces a deadly neurotoxin, particularly instills fear in those that venture to can low-acid foods such as meats, vegetables, and combination foods like soups and salsas. Food spoilage can occur for a variety of reasons, including physical deterioration (from moisture loss and oxygen exposure), chemical deterioration (often due to naturally occurring substances already present in the food), and microbial deterioration. Most foodborne, disease-causing microorganisms (pathogens) can grow rapidly, depending on environmental factors such as moisture, temperature, acidity and oxygen levels. By carefully controlling these factors, you can ensure that your home preserved food will be pathogen free!

Dispelling doubts

Research-based food preservation techniques focus on controlling and minimizing the conditions that contribute to food spoilage. Home water bath canning, for example, uses high heat and a food's naturally acidic environment to ensure that all pathogens are destroyed. For foods that

are not acidic enough to prevent the growth of *Clostridium botulinum*, a pressure canner must be used in order to allow the processing temperature to get hot enough to destroy any harmful bacteria spores. Home canning also creates a low oxygen environment and seals the container to prevent entry and growth of other pathogens.



A variety of other preservation techniques use similar principles to minimize microorganism growth conditions. For example, drying removes water that microorganisms need to grow and pickling introduces enough acid to prevent pathogen proliferation. The USU Cooperative Extension Service is a great starting point to find reliable information. Call us with canning questions at 801-851-8460 or visit the Extension website at <https://extension.usu.edu/utah/> to find the best and safest way to preserve the food you love. By following research based recipes and techniques, you can confidently enjoy your home preserved foods.

Become a Pro

In order to help spread proper food preservation knowledge in the community, the USU Extension Service now offers a Master Food Preserver course. The course trains individuals to become expert food preservers and educators within their own community. This comprehensive training includes informative lectures given by Extension faculty and hands-on experience to practice and perfect preservation skills. The course will be held Mondays beginning March 28th from 10am to 2pm. No previous food preservation experience is needed to apply. See the website listed below for more details.

To apply:

<https://extension.usu.edu/utah/htm/masterfoodpreservers> and fill out an application

OR call 801-851-8460 and request an application.

Upcoming Classes

From Pantry 2 Plate

Additional information online

at: extension.usu.edu/utah—or call: 801-851-8460

Using Your Pressure Canner

March 17 \$6 pre-registration
6:00 - 9:00 pm \$8 at the door

Location: Utah County Administration Building
100 East Center, Provo, Rm. L700

Learn the safe and proper methods for canning low-acid foods such as meats and vegetables. Bring one regular (not wide-mouth) pint jar and ring. Lids and product will be provided. Due to length of processing times, this class will begin at 6:00 pm and end at 9:00 pm.

Top Ten Meals Under Ten Dollars

April 21 \$6 pre-registration
6:30 - 8:30 pm \$8 at the door

Location: Utah County Administration Building
100 East Center, Provo, Rm. L700

This class will focus on delicious and healthy recipes that will feed a family of four for under \$10!

Meals in Minutes Using a Pressure Cooker

May 19 \$6 pre-registration
6:30 - 8:30 pm \$8 at the door

Location: Utah County Administration Building
100 East Center, Provo, Rm. L700

Are you feeling the "pressure" to get delicious and inexpensive meals on the table fast? This class will show you how to cook less expensive cuts of meat, dried beans and vegetables in less time using a pressure cooker.

Couples Education

Make Your Relationship Soar!

March 11 \$10/couple pre-registration
7:00 - 9:00 pm \$15/ couple at the door

Location: Historic County Courthouse, Ballroom
51 S. University, Provo

Build a one-of-a-kind kite with your partner while also building your understanding of gender communication differences. Weather permitting, you and your spouse will get to see your kite (and hopefully your relationship!) fly. Learning materials, building supplies and tasty treats will be provided.



Cou
Are
You
Locat
100 E
Join u

Couple's Massage Date Night

April 8 \$15/ couple pre-registration
7:00 - 9:00 pm \$20/ couple at the door

Location: Historic County Courthouse, Ballroom
51 S. University, Provo

you stressed? Then now is the time to join us for a fun evening with guest massage therapists who will guide you to learn the benefits of positive touch and massage. Tips on how to de-stress and improve your relationship as well as simple massage techniques you can apply at home will be taught.

Stir, I'll Pour

May 13 \$15/ couple pre-registration
6:30 - 9:00 pm \$20/ couple at the door

Location: Utah County Administration Building
100 E Center Street, Rm. L700 Provo, UT

Join us for a delightful dinner-date discussion with guest presenters David and Tamara Gilliland about recipes for your most important relationship! This class will focus on making delicious crepes - both for dinner and dessert. Bring a cooking partner (spouse, date or friend!) for this fun evening of eating and enlightenment.

Financial Management Class

March 22, 24, 29 & 31 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Location: Community Action
815 S. Freedom Blvd., Provo

Register by going online to: <http://uidan.org/classes>

Bread in a Bag



At a recent Food Sense class the participants each got to make their own loaf of homemade bread. First we discussed wheat and learned a lot about which nutrients end up in a variety of popular foods. Did you know that more food products contain

wheat than any other grain? However, changes are made to the wheat that we find in many products that strips much of the valuable nutrients.

In the class, we all learned something we didn't know about wheat. But the highlight of the evening was making the bread! It is such a simple recipe, I've even practiced it with kids as young as five. They love squishing the dough around inside the Ziplock bag. It's also a fun and easy recipe to give them practice measuring ingredients. At the end, each child had their very own loaf of homemade bread. They were so proud and excited to eat it! This is a recipe that is fun and easy for all ages. The aroma of fresh bread will fill your senses and delight your taste buds. That's likely to put a smile on most anyone's face! For more information about this recipe, check the "RECIPES" section on our blog: cookingitsasnap.blogspot.com or call 801-851-8460.



Hinton Around the Yard & Garden

HORTICULTURE NEWSLETTER
by **Adrian C. Hinton,**
USU Extension Horticulturist

GREETINGS FROM YOUR COUNTY AGENT

It definitely feels like spring is in the air - at least I hope it is. Hopefully the ground will be dry enough soon to get all of our cool season vegetables seeded. If it's anything like the last two years, cool season veggies will do great this year.

Hopefully your fruit tree pruning chores are all done and be sure and watch for the bright yellow forsythia blooms to mark nature's indication that spring is really here.

Hopefully you are all on our IPM Pest Advisory for this year. If not, go to utahpests.usu.edu/ipm and sign up. This has been one of the greatest tools that USU has provided for a long time for gardeners.

Be sure to put the Utah County Hidden Garden Tours on your calendar. See page five for more details. Stop by or call anytime if you have questions or concerns.

Adrian C. Hinton

Timely Tips for March/April

by Carolyn Gleason

1. As soon as there is no longer a danger of extreme frost, hardy roses can be pruned back to remove dead branches. Pruning will help to produce larger blossoms. If planting new rose bushes, plant before the new growth starts and the buds swell.
2. Watch for insects, eggs and cocoons in your garden. Be sure to destroy them as soon as possible to prevent further damage to the plants.
3. Materials used as protective coverings for the colder months may be removed but this should be done on a cloudy day.
4. The following vegetables may be sown outside where they are to grow: peas, parsnips, spinach, beets, carrots, lettuce and parsley. Radishes, salsify and potatoes can be planted as soon as conditions are favorable.
5. Clematis may be cut down almost to the ground. This will stimulate rapid growth and fall flowering.
6. Rake your lawn to remove any unwanted winter debris. This will help kill molds of various kinds.
7. When your spring bulbs have finished blooming, deadhead the blossoms. However, do not remove the green stems and leaves. It is important to leave the stems and leaves intact until they droop and turn brown. They store the food for the next spring's blossoms.
8. Spring clean your smooth-leaved house plants by spraying the leaves with water and a spray bottle to remove dirt and dust so that the plants can utilize the necessary light.
9. As soon as the you can work the ground you can plant pansies. If the blossoms are regularly picked, the pansies will continuously bloom. Pansy blossoms make lovely dried flowers.
10. Make up a list of seeds you would like to get from catalogs and place your order.
11. Plant BARE root fruit trees for best growth and production.



Seeds - Smells Like Spring

There's nothing quite like the smell of freshly printed seed catalogs to get you out of your winter funk. But does it make any difference if you buy locally or from a catalog located in some foreign country—like New Jersey?

Columbus brought the first seed packets to the new world on his second voyage in 1493, claims Jerry Goodspeed, Utah State University Extension horticulturist. "This might have been the first example of sending away for seeds. It's likely that a few natives even got the wrong seeds, or received the message, 'that item is back ordered and will be shipped later.'"

Most of our vegetables and flowers are not native to America, and were literally shipped to our country, Goodspeed explains. Both seeds and small transplants have been introduced so we can grow what we like. Early colonists brought tobacco from Trinidad and planted it everywhere. Soon, other cash crops such as rice, cotton and indigo were introduced and grown throughout the colonies. The rise in demand for ornamental seeds along with small quantities for home gardens started in the late 1700s and early 1800s.

Today, seed-producing plants are grown by companies that specialize in just producing seeds, he says. The seed companies have contracts with growers who raise many acres for seed production. This company then brokers the seeds to different packaging or wholesale companies throughout the United States and world.

"Sweet corn is a good example of how this works," Goodspeed says. "A large percent of the sweet corn grown for seed is produced in southwest Idaho. These companies grow the seed and then sell it to packaging companies throughout the nation. This means that regardless of where you buy the package, the seeds were grown in Idaho."

A lot of the seeds we buy are actually grown in tropical climates throughout the world. Production is faster and less prone to plant diseases in warmer climates. Most growers have fields in more than one place throughout the world to prevent a natural disaster from wiping out their entire crop.

"Knowing that seeds bought from New Jersey or Ogden probably originated from the same field may help in determining where to buy seeds," Goodspeed says. "Buying locally is usually more convenient and you know what you are getting. Also, most of our local businesses sell seed varieties that have proven to do well in our area."



"When I can't find a certain variety in the local market, I order from catalogs that have a good reputation and that I have done business with in the past. I select companies that specialize in seeds and do not offer a lot of other products or gimmicks such as free seedlings or million dollar sweepstakes."

by Dennis Hinkamp

The Master Gardeners Corner

The Hidden Garden Tour

The Hidden Garden Tour, previously sponsored by Utah Valley Regional Medical Center, has been in existence for 14 years. Last year it languished because the hospital changed to a different fundraising effort and didn't host the tour again. But the hardy Master/Advanced gardening folks, like any good composter, didn't want a good thing to go to waste! So this year, under the guidance of Adrian Hinton and Larry Sagers the MG's are at the helm of the Hidden Garden Tour!

So what is it all about? Think of this as a parade of homes, except with glorious gardens to see instead of home interiors (who cares about those if there are bulbs to plant?).

We would like to find approximately twelve gardens in the Northern Utah county area: north Orem, Pleasant Grove, Highland, American Fork and those environs. In particular, we would like to find an outstanding vegetable garden, since the main focus of the tour will be home gardener education and the promotion of the Master Gardening program. We are also in need of sponsors—donors to help with the cost of guide book printing, posters, etc.

What will the proceeds go towards? The original idea of sending the chair-people and committee to Disneyland was sadly scrapped! Put in its place will be scholarships for future Master Gardeners and general support for master gardening programs, equipment, community outreach and education.

Utah County Office

100 East Center, Rm.
L600 Provo, UT 84606
Phone: (801) 851-8460
Fax: (801) 343-8463
extension.usu.edu/utah

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

No-Fear Canning.....	1
Upcoming Classes.....	2
Bread in a Bag.....	2
Master Food Preservers.....	3
Timely Tips for March/April.....	4
Seeds - Smells Like Spring.....	5
Hidden Garden Tour.....	5
Seedling Trees & Shrubs Available.....	6
Hazardous Waste Collection Day.....	6

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PROVO UT
PERMIT NO. 268

It's time to renew if your
expiration date is
March/April 2011

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.

Seedling Trees and Shrubs Available

Seedling trees and shrubs adapted to our area are on sale for \$1.50 - \$3.50 per seedling which are sold in bundles of five or ten, depending on the species. There are twelve tree species and six shrub species to choose from. They must be pre-ordered and pre-paid for. They are available on a first-come first-served basis.

Order forms can be accessed on the web at uacd.org. Be sure to click on the icon that says, "Timp-Nebo/Alpine Seedling Tree Sale," or call 801-377-5580 x 121.

The seedlings will be available on April 15-16, 2011 and can be picked up at two distribution points in Utah County.

This sale is sponsored by the Timp-Nebo/Alpine Conservation Districts, a non-profit organization for the conservation of our natural resources.

Thanksgiving Point Calendar

Daffodil Show - See over 100 different varieties of daffodils April 15 - 16, 10:00 am - 8:00 pm. Local gardeners are encouraged to bring blooms from their garden and enter them in the show - April 15 between 8:00 am - 10:00 am.

Tulip Festival - Featuring 250,000 tulips throughout 55-acres. The festival is an awe-inspiring sight that is redesigned each year. Fridays and Saturdays include music, vendors and food. Garden tours and demonstrations every day.

If you know of an outstanding garden (small, medium or large), a donor who would be willing to make a contribution, or a local artisan or musician who would like to paint, sing, sculpt etc., at one of the gardens, please notify either: Linda Priest at majordisneyfan@comcast.net or Denise Boyer cboyer1469@msn.com. Or contact Trish at the extension office at 801-851-8463 or trish.cutler@usu.edu.

We look forward to seeing you at the Hidden Garden Tour!

Utah County Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day

Utah County residents with household hazardous waste items such as old gasoline, paint and fluorescent light bulbs will be able to dispose of these items safely at a Household Hazard Waste Collection Day on April 9 from 9 am - 3 pm. The collection will take place at the Orem Public Works Facility, 1450 W 550 N. For details, visit www.utahcountyhealth.org/HHW or call 801-225-8538 (north) or 801-489-3027 (south).

"I appreciate the misunderstanding I have had with Nature over my perennial border. I think it is a flower garden; she thinks it is a meadow lacking grass, and tries to correct the error." —Sara Stein

