



University of Nevada
Cooperative Extension

November 2013

Community Connection

University of Nevada

Clark County Cooperative Extension

Thanksgiving is the *American Feast*



Holidays like President’s Day and Martin Luther King Day, are just ours, but they have no particular ritual attached. July 4th has fireworks, but those are done on a large scale. On Thanksgiving, most US residents perform the same activity on the same day, and eat a similar meal.

While planning Thanksgiving dinner, I thought about making a meal where the whole menu evolved in this part of the world. Most comes from Central and South America, but nonetheless, America.

The turkey is North American. Benjamin Franklin wanted it to be our National Bird – that would be interesting on the great seal of the United States! The turkey must have stuffing; cornbread stuffing. Corn is another American, domesticated for 8,000 years. Sweet corn is a good

vegetable. It is a recent development; only started being produced shortly before the Revolutionary War. Instead of corn, we could have winter squash. A brightly colored turban would work, or a blue-skinned Hubbard for a big crowd. Most winter squash come from South America or Mexico.

More potatoes are grown around the world than any other vegetable: a great source of nutrients, high in minerals and believe it or not, low in calories.

What other vegetable? String beans are popular and easy. Some guests might prefer dry beans in chili. Whichever, they are all Americans.

(Continued on page 2)

Maintaining your weight during the holidays



Did you know that the average American gains four to eight pounds between Thanksgiving and New Year’s?

Here are a few things you can do to help yourself maintain your weight during the holidays.

Make time for some exercise. If you usually walk for

exercise, keep it up during the holidays. If you don’t exercise, it’s a good time to start. It’s best to check with your physician before starting an exercise plan.

Keep a food record. Research shows that many people actually curb their eating if they know they will have to include it in a food record.

Don’t skip meals. Before leaving for a party, eat a light

snack like raw vegetables or a piece of fruit to curb your appetite. You will be less tempted to over-indulge.

Go easy on the alcohol. Sometimes people forget alcohol has calories. Drink bottled water, diet soda, tomato juice or other low-calorie cocktails at parties.

~ Mary Wilson, Extension Specialist, Nutrition

Inside this issue:

Winter Safety for Older Adults	2
Master Gardeners at Acacia Park	3
4 Secrets of Lasting Weight Loss	4
Gluten-free Products	4

We’re on the Web

www.unce.unr.edu

www.unce.unr.edu/blogs/southernarea

www.YouTube.com/UNRextension

Thanksgiving

(Continued from page 1)

Would it be Thanksgiving without sweet potatoes? They are neither yams, which come from Africa, nor potatoes. Sweet potatoes are close cousins of the morning glory. How sweet potatoes came to be eaten in the South Pacific since prehistoric times, when scientists are pretty certain that they originated in South America, remains a question. We must have mashed potatoes and gravy. More potatoes are grown around the world than any other vegetable: great source of nutrients, high in minerals and believe it or not, low in calories (until the butter and gravy are added). Potatoes, the western hemisphere's great horticultural gift, kept my Irish ancestors alive, so they are definitely important to me.

Tomatoes moved from the Andes in South America to our table. Sliced, salted, ripe tomatoes laid out on a plate are gorgeous, but if they do not ripen before nighttime temperatures drop; they are tasty sliced and fried.

Salad vegetables are not major American crops, but there are interesting choices, like roasted sweet red peppers with a little oil

and vinegar. Those who wanted their beans in the form of chili might prefer hot peppers. Peppers can have different colors, shapes and temperatures, but all are the same species that evolved in Mexico and Central America. We might add some tomatillos into the chili. They originated in the same area.

Nobody **needs** dessert, but that hardly matters. What would better complete a Thanksgiving dinner than Indian pudding, made with corn meal, or pumpkin pie (cheat on the crust and spices)?

This is fun, but most of us are not only immigrants to Nevada, but also the **children** of immigrants from other parts of the globe. Serve tomatoes with lettuce (from Europe). Put onions from western Asia into your stuffing. Add spices from Africa to squash and to the pumpkin pie. Eat whatever you like.

And most important, give thanks.

~ Angela O'Callaghan, Social Horticulture Specialist



Winter Safety for Older Adults



The winter season brings holidays and good cheer along with cooler days and cozy nights by the fire. On the other hand, it may also bring short-term illness, isolation at home and even holiday weight gain.

Follow these prevention steps so Jack Frost doesn't nip at your nose!

Health Risks

Hypothermia—Just being “really cold” can make you very sick. Older adults lose body heat faster and tend to produce less body heat than younger adults. So being outside in the cold for too long or even in a cold house can cause a drop in body temperature resulting in hypothermia. Hypothermia is a serious

problem as an older adult with low body temperatures can suffer from heart attacks, kidney problems or liver damage. Symptoms include shivering, cold or ashy skin, feeling tired or confused and slowed breathing. Protect yourself and stay warm by dressing with hats, scarves and loose layers of clothing and stay indoors with heat when it's very cold or windy.

Short-term Illness—Winter is flu season and while the timing and duration of the flu varies, it usually peaks in January. The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness and at times can lead to death. According to the Centers for Disease Control influenza (and pneumonia) are the fifth leading cause of death among people 65 and older. Other common seasonal short-term illnesses include pneumonia and the common cold. Reduce your risk by eating healthy foods, getting plenty of rest, avoiding tobacco and getting a flu vaccine every year. The CDC also

states that keeping your hands clean is one of the most important ways to prevent the spread of infection and illness. Wash your hands often and effectively by scrubbing your hands with warm water and soap for 20 seconds then drying with a paper towel. Carry hand sanitizer as a back-up.



Accidents—Wintery weather conditions can increase your risk of various accidents.

One out of three adults over the age of 65 fall every year, leading to injury, loss of independence or even death. During the winter, watch for slippery ice patches and snowy walkways, wear shoes with non-skid soles and most importantly, be aware of your surroundings and take your time.

(Continued on page 3)

Winter Safety

(Continued from page 2)

An average of 500 older adults are injured in motor vehicle crashes every day. Winter driving can be especially dangerous so slow down or do not drive on icy roads or snowy, rainy days. Also be sure to winterize your car and stock it with a few emergency items like a flashlight, water, blanket, first aid kit and carry a cell phone.

Carbon monoxide poisoning (a deadly gas) increases during the winter as more people use furnaces, space heaters and fireplaces. Make sure your heating system or equipment is installed, serviced and used properly; this includes fireplaces and gas appliances too.



Also, check or install smoke and carbon dioxide alarms.

For more tips on winter safety for older adults, visit the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension's publication number: [FS-11-02](#).

Master Gardeners at Acacia Park

Southern Area Master Gardeners—for the 9th year—will offer two free classes at Acacia Park in November. Classes are offered in partnership with the City of Henderson Parks and Recreation Department, and are published in the “Henderson Happenings.” All classes are taught by University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Master Gardener instructors and begin at 9 a.m.

Pre-registration is requested by going online www.cityofhenderson.com/parks and clicking Online Registration.

Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners will have an “Ask a Master Gardener” table at the Park on class days. Acacia Park is located at 50 Casa Del Fuego (Intersection of 215 & 515) in Henderson.

November 9, 2013 Gardening with Physical Limitations



Gardening is a healthy habit for all ages, but sometimes a physical condition can affect our ability to enjoy gardening. Learn strategies for modifying clothing, equipment, and techniques to prevent injury to you and your garden. Bring your favorite gardening implement.

Master Gardener volunteers are available to answer questions through the Home Gardening Help Line, 702-257-5555.

November 23, 2013 Growing and Using Herbs

Herbs are easy to grow and have many uses. They can be grown indoors and as landscape plants in your yard, they can be harvested and a great addition to soups and salads, used for decorations in your home, and as gifts for the holidays. Come and join a Master Gardener and learn all about herbs.



Cooperative Extension and the South Valley Rose Society are collaborating and offering educational meetings throughout the fall. Free and open to the public, November's meeting topic is:

November 21 New Rose Varieties for 2014---Mary deCesare, Consulting Rosarian and Master Gardener

The 2014 rose varieties will soon be available for purchase. Find out the new names and types and where they can be purchased. Not all local nurseries will carry all varieties and so find out where else they can be found. Explore out of state nurseries and online nurseries.



All educational meetings are held at 7 p.m. at the Lifelong Learning Center located at 8050 Paradise Road, Las Vegas (I-215 and Windmill Lane). For more information, please call the Master Gardener Help Desk at 702-257-5555 or email lvmastergardeners@uncc.unr.edu.

Four Secrets of lasting weight loss



Even though September was Fruits and Veggies – More Matters Month as well as Whole Grains Month, focusing on eating nutritiously every month is key to weight loss/weight control. Four tips for lasting weight loss:

Eat breakfast. A good breakfast will set you up to make healthier food choices throughout the day and will keep you from getting too hungry and overeating at lunch.

Watch less than 10 hours of television per week. Between watching television and using a computer, the average adult logs in almost five hours of screen time a day. By replacing tube time with working on a hobby or even doing light housework, you'll probably burn between 100 and 200 additional calories every day.

Get at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. Sixty minutes may sound like a lot, but that's the equivalent of just one television drama.

Weigh yourself at least once a week: Stepping on the scale will give you a reality check and strengthen your commitment to healthy eating.

HopeHealth ~ No. 10569



For 17 years, the Desert Green Foundation has brought green industry professionals together to learn, network and share knowledge, skills and new technologies. This year makes a new partnership with the Las Vegas Springs Preserve. Desert Green XVII is an outstanding, affordable educational opportunity at an award-winning garden that serves as a model for landscape sustainability. Please plan to join us on November 14-15, 2013, at the Springs Preserve. Register online at www.desert-green.org (additional fees apply). For more information, call 702-454-3057.

Gluten-free products

I've noticed many gluten-free products in the supermarket. Should I eliminate gluten from my diet?

Unless you are diagnosed with celiac disease (CD), there is no reason to avoid gluten-containing foods. CD is an autoimmune, inheritable disease of the digestive tract triggered by the grains wheat, rye and barley. While eliminating processed wheat foods like white bread, cookies, cakes and snack foods can improve your diet, eliminating nutritious whole grain foods would not be recommended since whole grains are important sources of

nutrients and fiber which can help reduce the risk of many chronic diseases.



Cooperative Extension's mission:

Discover: by assessing community needs; understanding emerging issues; *Develop:* science-based programs to help resolve the needs of community residents; *Disseminate:* through evidence-based educational programs; classes and publications; *Preserve:* by publishing findings via curriculum and fact sheets and demonstrate knowledge to strengthen the social, economic and environmental well-being of people.

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