

# HEALTHY CHOICES

## FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES

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University of Kentucky  
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## Budget-friendly holiday celebrations

**W**hen you reflect on past holiday gatherings, what comes to mind? Sharing stories, making memories, laughter, and probably enjoying food. Often food can become a focal point for our celebrations but this is also a time of year when money can be tight. Here are some tips for planning a budget-conscious gathering with your family this holiday season:

- **Plan your menu.** Check your cupboards, pantry, and freezer for items that you have on hand that can make a special dish. Look for items such as nuts, dried cranberries, or frozen appetizers you already have that can be easily included in your menu. If you are including a more expensive dish, balance it with less costly recipes and side dishes.
- **Research ways to save.** Next look at what stores are advertising on sale and plan your menu around those best buys. Often staple items used in holiday cooking will be on special pricing to entice customers to shop. Take advantage of online and paper coupons to save even more.
- **Make a list.** Write out the ingredients you need after checking what you already have on hand. A list can help you stay focused on the items you need and avoid impulse purchases that can make your grocery trip costly. This can also help you get everything you need in one trip and save you from making additional trips which will cost you in gas and time.



- **Shake up tradition.** If your budget is tighter than normal this holiday season, it might be a good idea to create a new family tradition. Suggest a potluck menu that would allow everyone to contribute and reduce the financial burden falling on one person. Instead of a full meal, have family enjoy other activities together to celebrate along with a snack or refreshment. For example, you could host a card-writing party, cookie-decorating event, or gift-wrapping session with hot chocolate.

Source: Amy Singleton, Regional Extension Agent for Kentucky Nutrition Education Program

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## PARENT'S POW-WOW

# Teaching children healthy lifestyle skills

Involving children in meal planning and preparation can help teach them the skills they need for a healthy lifestyle. Children can learn how to plan meals that are balanced, nutrient-dense, and include variety by involving them in weekly meal planning. A bonus for parents is that children are more likely to eat what they have selected and/or prepared themselves. Encourage kids to share the foods they like and select new foods they want to try.

Get children involved in meal preparation and save time. Provide children quick and easy tasks they will enjoy. Measuring ingredients, washing fruits and vegetables, pouring and mixing are all simple ways kids can help. Don't stress the mess. Spills will happen and children can assist in learning to clean them up. Remember to provide positive feedback when children do a good job and let them know you appreciate the help they are providing.

Source: Amy Singleton, Regional Extension Agent for Kentucky Nutrition Education Program

## FOOD FACTS

# Cholesterol

Nearly 1 in 3 American adults has high cholesterol. Too much cholesterol puts you at risk for heart disease and stroke, two leading causes of death in the United States. High cholesterol has no signs or symptoms, so the only way to know if you have it is to get your cholesterol checked. Blood cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance made by your liver. Blood cholesterol is essential for good health. Your body needs it to perform important jobs, such as making hormones and digesting fatty foods. Your body makes all the blood cholesterol it needs, which is why experts recommend that people eat as little dietary cholesterol as possible while on a healthy eating plan. Dietary cholesterol is found in animal foods, including meat, seafood, poultry, eggs, and dairy products. To keep your cholesterol in a healthy range, eat a diet low in cholesterol, maintain a healthy weight, get physical activity, quit smoking, and limit alcohol.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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## BASIC BUDGET BITES

# Food waste can cost you

Food waste simply put is food that goes uneaten and is thrown away. This is a costly habit many families make. Reducing the amount of uneaten food you purchase will reduce the amount you buy at the store that, ultimately, results in less money spent at the grocery. Here are some tips to help you reduce food waste:

- Be aware of how much food you throw away.
- Don't buy more food than can be used before it spoils.
- Plan meals and use shopping lists. Think about what you are buying and when it will be eaten. Check the fridge and pantry to avoid buying what you already have.
- Avoid impulse and bulk purchases, especially produce and dairy that have a limited shelf life. Promotions encouraging purchases of unusual or bulk products often result in consumers buying foods outside their typical needs or family preferences, and portions — potentially large portions — of these foods could end up in the trash.

Source: Food and Drug Administration

## COOKING WITH KIDS

# Sweet Potato Fries

- 2 large sweet potatoes, scrubbed clean
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

1. Set the oven to 425 degrees F.
2. Cut each sweet potato in half lengthwise, then cut each half in half again, and then each quarter in half once more. You will end up with 8 wedges from each potato.
3. Put the sweet potatoes, oil, and salt in a bowl, and use your clean hands to mix well.
4. Dump everything onto a baking sheet, spread the potatoes out evenly, and bake until golden and tender, about 35 minutes. Serve right away.



**Number of servings:** 4  
**Serving size:** ¼ recipe

**Nutrition Facts per serving:**  
90 calories; 3.5g total fat; 0g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 0mg cholesterol; 180mg sodium; 13g carbohydrate;

2g fiber; 3g sugar; 0g added sugar; 1g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 2% Daily Value of calcium; 0% Daily Value of iron; 4% Daily Value of potassium.

Source: Chop Chop Magazine



## RECIPE

# Autumn Sweet Potato Chili

- 1 15-ounce can sweet potatoes (do not drain)
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 16-ounce jar salsa
- 2 15-ounce cans black beans (do not drain)
- Water to achieve desired consistency

### Optional garnishes:

- ½ cup reduced-fat sour cream
- Shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- Dried or fresh chopped cilantro

1. Combine sweet potatoes, chili powder, and salsa in a large saucepan.

2. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to simmer, and cook until heated through, stirring as needed.
3. Add beans with liquid and cook another 3 minutes to blend flavors.
4. Thin with water if needed. Heat through.
5. Serve with sour cream, cheese, and cilantro on the side.

**Number of servings:** 8  
**Serving size:** 1 cup

**Nutrition Facts per serving:**  
160 calories; 0 g total fat; 0 g saturated fat; 0 g trans fat; 0 mg cholesterol;



790 mg sodium; 32 g carbohydrate; 9 g fiber; 12 g sugar; 7 g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 4% Daily Value of calcium; 10% Daily Value of iron; 6% Daily Value of potassium.

Source: Kentucky Nutrition Education Program 2018 Calendar

## LOCAL EVENTS

### SMART TIPS

# What made you sick?

**W**hile the American food supply is among the safest in the world, the federal government estimates that there are about 48 million cases of foodborne illness annually — the equivalent of sickening 1 in 6 Americans each year. And each year these illnesses result in an estimated 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths. It's easy to blame foodborne illness on the last thing we ate, but, foodborne illness can take minutes, hours, days, weeks, or longer before you show symptoms. For example, hepatitis A on average takes 28 days from ingestion to onset. A few simple tips for avoiding foodborne illness include regular handwashing, using a food thermometer, and proper food storage.

Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration



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