



DECEMBER 2019

Prairie County Homemakers,

Seasons Greetings!! I hope you enjoy this time of celebrations and visits with friends and family. If you are looking for some holiday entertaining and gift ideas, we have copies of past Holiday Potpourri recipes and craft ideas. Stop by the Extension Office or give us a call if you would like a copy of any of these booklets. This issue of the *Domestic Engineer* contains some seasonal tips that may also be helpful to you.

As we look toward the New Year, I would like to let you know that our annual Extension Winter Series will take place in Terry on January 23rd. Tara Andrews will be our guest speaker and give a presentation on the pros and cons of different kinds of cookware (copper, granite, stainless, etc.). Tara will also share some arthritis exercises to help with mobility. Be on the lookout for more information in the coming month.

Amy and I wish you a joyful holiday season!

Sincerely,

Sharla Sackman

Prairie County Extension Agent



Holiday Potpourri

December 9 at 1:30 p.m. ~ American Legion Banquet Room

Laura from the Enchanted Room in Glendive will be sharing Holiday craft and decorating ideas with us again at this year's potpourri. Your clubs are also invited to share holiday recipes for this year's Potpourri.

Contact Potpourri Chair Eileen Nielsen if you have questions.

Prairie Fare: Victory Garden Lessons Ring True Today

By Julie Garden-Robinson, NDSU Extension Food and Nutrition Specialist

As I grow older, my interest in history continues to increase. When a colleague sent me an article about the World War II-era Victory Gardens, my attention was drawn to the emailed newsletter on my computer screen. Memories were stirred.

The 2019 newsletter had been assembled by faculty and students from North Carolina State University. I will share a few of the tidbits I learned, as well as some information from my own exploration.

You might recall living through difficult times of war or hearing about it from parents or grandparents. Victory Gardens were launched during World War I to help with the extreme food shortage in Europe. Agricultural fields had become battlegrounds and farm workers were fighting in a war. Food was scarce.

Families were encouraged to eat more fruits and vegetables, which were very perishable and difficult to ship. In turn, families were asked to eat less meat, wheat, fat and sugar so these foods could be transported to the soldiers.

Although school gardens and children's gardening research seem novel in today's world, the concepts go back more than 100 years. Children played a valuable role in helping grow food.

During World War I, 1.5 million children became part of the U.S. "School Garden Army" and 20,000 acres were planted to avoid a food crisis.

Schools, 4-H clubs and FFA (formerly Future Farmers of America) clubs became involved in gardening. Teachers taught the scientific concepts of food production and preservation in classrooms.

Thinking back, when I was young, my dad and I used to watch a TV show about Victory Gardens on public TV. My dad spent four years overseas during World War II and he probably remembered the Victory Gardens firsthand.

Watching those gardening TV shows many years ago probably planted a seed in my mind about a future career in nutrition and a hobby as a gardener. I used to call my dad "Victor Garden" as he watered our backyard garden. He'd look up and grin at his silly kid, who, of course, shared his last name. I was just happy my parents didn't name me "Rose Garden."

As I think about it, the backyard garden of my childhood home probably had been a Victory Garden during one if not both World Wars. My grandparents had owned our home, which was built a couple of years before World War I.

During the early 1940s, much of the country's agricultural harvest was shipped overseas to feed soldiers. Railroads were overloaded, steel and tin shortages occurred, and fewer people were available to work in agricultural production. Food ration books were issued during World War II, and Americans could spend their stamps on various food items such as sugar. Recipes were reinvented to substitute other ingredients for the rationed ones.

By 1943, an estimated 18 million families were growing Victory Gardens. Educational materials provided background on planting, pest control, preservation and preparing nutritious meals with what was available. Posters beckoned potential gardeners with slogans such as "Plant a Victory Garden. A garden will make your rations go further."

The nationwide Cooperative Extension System was part of the community educational efforts to promote gardening. The gardening plans suggested one-tenth of an acre for each family member and included detailed charts for a variety of vegetables.

People know of my interest in food history and anything antique, so I have a stack of "Health for Victory" cookbooks dated 1942 to 1944, which were companion pieces to the gardening plans. Many of the concepts in those nearly 80-year-old cookbooks ring true today.

These are some direct quotes from the book:

"Don't waste food." In 1944, the cookbooks said "15% of America's food gets thrown out in the garbage can." Unfortunately, in 2019, 40% of the food in the U.S. is wasted.

"Don't overbuy because food is a bargain. Get only those you can use."

"Use fresh fruits in season."

"Plan your meals by the week."

Continued on the next page

“Plant a Victory Garden this year, no matter where you live. Beg, borrow or hire some land.”

We are at the end of our growing season in the Midwest, but the last point provides some food for thought for next year. Learn about growing food this winter, but try your hand at preserving food this fall, whether you grew the food yourself or purchased it from a store or farmers market.

See the NDSU Extension Field to Fork website at <https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/fieldtofork> to view recorded seminars (webinars) from our many experts at NDSU, as well as colleagues from other colleges and universities. The website also provides opportunities to learn about preserving fruits and vegetables through freezing, canning, drying and fermenting.

This colorful, tasty recipe is not from the World War II-era cookbooks I have, but it features peppers and onions that are in season right now. One-pan meals are a time-saving cooking style.

One-pan Chicken Fajitas

1 1/2 pounds chicken breasts cut into 1/2-inch strips

2 red bell peppers, sliced into strips

1 green bell pepper, sliced into strips

1 onion, sliced

3 Tbsp. olive or canola oil

1 packet taco seasoning, reduced-sodium

1 lime

12 whole-wheat tortillas

Optional toppings: shredded cheese, salsa, sour cream, avocado

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Prepare food as directed and place in a bowl. Drizzle oil over chicken, bell peppers and onion. Sprinkle with taco seasoning and toss to coat. Spread contents on greased sheet pan. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until chicken is fully cooked. Squeeze lime juice over pan and serve with whole-wheat tortillas. Garnish as desired.

Makes 10 servings (one fajita per serving). Without added toppings, each fajita has 280 calories, 9 grams (g) fat, 20 g protein, 27 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber and 380 milligrams sodium.

*****SAVE THE DATE!*****

2020 Extension Winter Series

Tentative: Thursday, January 23

Watch for more information



Watering Evergreen Trees in the Winter

From the 2012 Big Sky Small Acres MSU Extension Magazine

Dry air, windy and sunny days, fluctuating temperatures, and little soil moisture in fall and winter make conditions especially challenging for growing and maintaining evergreen trees. Long, dry periods in fall and winter often result in injury or death of trees or to parts of trees, such as roots, although the damage may not be evident until late spring or summer the following year.

Watering in winter, while seemingly unusual, is beneficial when conditions are right because evergreens use water even during winter. Watering trees should be done when the air temperature is above 40 degrees F. Apply enough water to soak the top 12 inches of soil at mid-day to allow it to fully soak into the soil before potential nighttime freezing. Water at the drip line of the tree (i.e., at the tips of the branches where water would “drip off” if the canopy were an umbrella) with a sprinkler, and even a few feet beyond the dripline for large trees. Watering should occur only when there is no snow cover on the ground below the tree to prevent forming a layer of ice under the tree. As a general rule, try to apply 10 gallons of water for every one inch of diameter of the tree trunk. Trees in exposed, windy areas, in areas with sandy soils, or planted next to buildings, walls, or fences where they receive reflected heat may need extra water.



Salt Can Damage Landscapes and Hardscapes Around the Home

by Sara Adlington, 2018 Lives & Landscapes MSU Extension Magazine



To avoid slipping on ice in winter, we apply de-icing salt to our sidewalks, walkways and driveways. That salt dissolves and spreads to adjacent soil and plants, and also impacts the surface it is applied to. There are a few alternatives to using salt, and ways to protect plants.

The most commonly used de-icing salt is sodium chloride, and though it comes in different particle sizes, it has similar detriments to plants. Accumulation of salt in plants and soils affects nutrition and water absorption. When salt dissolves, the ions (sodium and chloride for example) separate, and the sodium ions can damage the soil and cause crusting that reduces the ability of water to enter the soil. Increased salt concentrations in soil can also make it harder for plants to absorb water, causing dehydration (similar to what would happen if a person tried to get hydrated drinking ocean water). Salt spray along roadsides can damage a plant's leaves, buds and

stems, making it more susceptible to frost damage. Salt spray injury along roadsides can be seen as one-sided damage to both needles/leaves and branches, and the degree of injury can vary from year to year.

De-icers commonly used on concrete pavement include sodium chloride, calcium chloride, magnesium chloride and calcium magnesium acetate (CMA). These de-icers can affect concrete physically with cracking and salt scaling.

Sodium-free de-icing agents like calcium chloride or CMA may be better for plants because they lack sodium, but they can

potentially cause more damage on concrete surfaces. Sodium chloride may remain a preferred method for de-icing roadways because of its lower cost.

Research from Brigham Young University for the Utah Department of Transportation (2013) found in 9 of 10 studies that concrete exposed to sodium chloride experienced only minor, if any, adverse effects, while concrete exposed to calcium chloride, magnesium chloride, or CMA experienced significant deterioration, including scaling, cracking, mass loss, and compressive strength loss.

Preventing salt damage to plants can be accomplished by not using it or using less of it, especially near sensitive plants. Alternatives include using coarse sand instead of salt on sidewalks and driveways for traction. Plants can be protected near driveways and roadways with barriers made of burlap, or plastic fencing or mesh. Plants showing injury and dieback from salt exposure can be watered, pruned and fertilized in the spring. Weakened plants may be more susceptible to attack by insects or disease. Improving drainage with permeable pavers can also reduce water ponding and ice formation.

If salt runoff is a certainty, extra irrigation in landscape plantings can aid in leaching salt out of root zones (University of Tennessee Extension, Tree Susceptibility to Salt Damage, 2003). Alternatives to avoid salt damage on plants near driveways can include using raised planters or modifying runoff permanently (re-grading or adjusting landscaping) or with temporary barriers in winter to keep surface drainage away from plants.

Pressure Cooker Refried Beans

Ingredients

16 oz. pinto beans, dry
1 1/2 c. onion, diced
7 c. low sodium vegetable broth
6 oz can green chilies, undrained
1 1/2 tsp. seasoned salt
2 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar
1 tsp. tabasco

Directions

Place all ingredients in a pressure cooker and stir until combined. Close the lid and set to high pressure for 60 minutes. Allow pressure to naturally release for 15 minutes, then release the remaining pressure. Remove lid and turn off cooker. Stir mixture and then drain, reserving some liquid for blending. Blend beans, adding liquid as needed to reach desired consistency. Serve immediately.

Makes 16 (1/2-cup) servings. Each serving has 220 calories, 0 g fat, 12 g protein, 40 g carbohydrate, 5 g fiber and 860 mg sodium.

Recipe courtesy of NDSU Extension





PRAIRIE COUNTY HOMEMAKERS' FALL BANQUET



****SAVE THE DATE!****

2020 Homemaker Luncheon & Bake Sale

February 7, 2020

Watch for more information in the next newsletter!

Cabin Creek & Ash Creek will be heading things up this year!



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development • Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control



HEALTHYHOMES
Healthy Families | Healthy Children

CARBON MONOXIDE

"You can't see or smell carbon monoxide, but at high levels it can kill a person in minutes."

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Did you know...?

- Over 500 people in the United States die from accidental carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning each year.¹
- Over 10,000 people seek medical attention for CO poisoning each year.²
- Infants, people with lung or heart disease, or people with anemia are more seriously affected.

What is it?

Carbon monoxide is a gas that cannot be seen, smelled or tasted, and can be fatal when breathed. The symptoms that occur with carbon monoxide poisoning, such as a headache, can be similar to those of common illnesses. These similarities often lead to an incorrect diagnosis, such as flu, allergies, migraine headache, stroke.

Carbon monoxide poisoning is caused by:

- Operating fuel-burning products such as electrical generators without proper ventilation. Read manufacturers' instructions before operating any fuel-burning device in your home.
- Car exhaust entering the home from the garage.
- Combustion equipment such as furnaces or hot water heaters that are not working properly or have blocked exhaust systems.

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www.hud.gov/healthyhomes



U.S. Department of Housing and
Urban Development
Office of Healthy Homes and Lead
Hazard Control



CARBON MONOXIDE

Do not run your car in a closed garage.



What can you do?

- Make sure fuel burning appliances are installed by a professional and are working properly.
- Never idle your car in the garage, even if the garage door is open to the outside.
- Never use a gas range or oven to heat a home.
- Choose vented appliances (like gas fireplaces) whenever possible.
- Have your heating systems and chimneys inspected and cleaned by a qualified technician every year.
- Replace dirty air filters on heating and cooling systems.
- Never run a generator, pressure washer, or any gasoline-powered engine inside a basement, garage, or other enclosed structure, even if the doors or windows are open, unless the equipment is professionally installed and vented.
- Never use a charcoal grill, hibachi, fuel lantern, or portable camping stove inside a home, tent, or camper.
- Make sure there is good ventilation at all times. Install proper ventilation for interior combustion appliances, and consider installing air exchangers or air conditioning for "tightly-sealed" homes.
- Install carbon monoxide detectors near sleeping areas and replace batteries on a regular basis.

For more information...

Visit HUD's website at www.hud.gov/healthyhomes for more information about addressing health hazards in homes or to learn if HUD has a Healthy Homes program in your community. From this website, you can download a copy of "Help Yourself to A Healthy Home" for more practical steps you can take to make your home a healthy home.

Other Federal Resources

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/co

US Environmental Protection Agency
www.epa.gov/iaq

Ask your doctor or contact your local or state department of health.

Install carbon monoxide detectors in your home.



¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Fact Sheet" www.cdc.gov/nceh/airpollution/carbonmonoxide/cofaq.htm August 25, 2004

²Community Environmental Health Resource Center (CEHRC) "Carbon Monoxide Background Materials" www.cehrc.org/tools/carbon/cobacmat.cfm August 25, 2004



A nutrition Fact Sheet



Make Holiday Times Family Times

Food and family fun are a very important and positive part of celebrations and holidays. Sharing a meal, time with loved ones, or a homemade gift is a way of sharing the joy and love of the holiday spirit.

OLD and NEW Holiday Traditions

1. Light a nightly holiday candle.
2. Read a holiday book to your children every night.
3. Listen to holiday music at meal times.
4. Make holiday crafts with your children.
5. Sing carols with family and friends.
6. Do family activities such as sledding, walking, or playing games.
7. Make gifts from your kitchen - quick breads or ornaments.
8. String popcorn or make paper chains to decorate your home.

Low Cost Gift Ideas

Fruit basket - Choose a few apples and oranges and arrange in a basket or decorated paper bag.

Homemade bread - Make a loaf of yeast bread or rolls from scratch or frozen bread dough and share while they are warm. Or make a loaf of quick bread to share with friends.

Homemade gift certificate - Make gift certificates on old Christmas cards or with paper and stickers. List what you will do for that person; for example, give a free hug, wash the dishes, babysit for one hour, make a cup of hot cocoa, etc.

Play dough - Make play dough, place in plastic bag and decorate the bag with stickers or ribbon.

Bake Your Own Ornaments

- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup salt
- 1 cup water

1. Combine flour and salt in a large bowl. Add water, a little at a time, mixing as you pour.
2. Form into a ball and knead 7 to 10 minutes until dough is smooth.
3. Shape into ornaments. *Remember to put a hole in the ornament for hanging. A straw works well to make the hole!*
4. Bake at 325°F for 30 minutes or until dry. Dough can be made ahead and kept in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.
5. Decorate, if you wish, with paint, glitter, or craft products.

Make Your Own Play Dough

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup water
- 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 Tablespoons cream of tartar
- ¼ cup salt
- Food coloring or flavored drink powder

Stir all ingredients together and cook over medium heat until thick. Keep in a plastic bag or wrap and put in refrigerator.

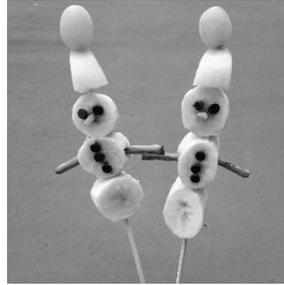


www.pinterest.com/buyeatlive

Snowmen on a Stick

Yield: 2 servings • Serving Size: 2 snowmen

- 1 banana, cut into 12 thick slices
- 4 grapes
- ¼ apple, cut into 4 slices, then cut in half
- 4 carrot slivers
- 24 mini chocolate chips
- 8 pretzel sticks
- 4 bamboo skewers



1. For each snowman, you will need 3 thick slices of banana, a grape, a sliver of carrot, and a triangular piece of apple.
2. Let kids slide the fruit onto the skewers. Then use the carrot slices for the noses, the mini chocolate chips for the eyes and buttons, and the pretzel sticks for the arms.

Tortilla Snowflakes

Yield: 2 servings • Serving Size: 1 tortilla

- 2 8-inch whole wheat tortillas
- Cooking spray
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon (optional)
- Lowfat or nonfat yogurt (optional)



1. Preheat oven to 400° F.
2. Warm tortillas in microwave until soft and pliable.
3. Fold into quarters. Use kitchen scissors to cut out shapes. Unfold.
4. Place tortillas on foil-lined baking sheet and spray with cooking spray (1 second spray per tortilla). Mix sugar and cinnamon if using cinnamon. Sprinkle with sugar (or cinnamon sugar).
5. Bake 5 minutes or until golden brown around the edges.
6. Cool until easy to handle. Eat plain or dip in yogurt.

Contact Us

Visit www.buyeatlivebetter.org
for more information.

Nutrition Facts

2 servings per container
Serving size **2 snowmen**
(100g)

Amount per serving
Calories **100**

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 1.5g	2%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 35mg	2%
Total Carbohydrate 24g	9%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 14g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 1g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 7mg	0%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 259mg	6%

*The % Daily Value tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Nutrition Facts

2 servings per container
Serving size **1 tortilla (49g)**

Amount per serving
Calories **130**

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 3.5g	4%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 270mg	12%
Total Carbohydrate 22g	8%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 3g	
Includes 3g Added Sugars	6%
Protein 4g	
Vitamin D --mcg	--%
Calcium 80mg	6%
Iron 1mg	6%
Potassium --mg	--%

*The % Daily Value tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact the Montana Public Assistance Helpline at 1-888-706-1535 or www.apply.mt.gov. Montana State University Extension is an ADA/EO/AA/Veteran's Preference Employer and Provider of Educational Outreach.



Save Money by Opening an MSA (Montana Medical Care Savings Account)

A Montana Medical Care Savings Account (MSA) allows Montanans to save money for medical expenses and long-term health care and reduce their state income taxes at the same time.

FACTS

- All Montana resident taxpayers are eligible to establish MSAs even if they have another health care plan provided by their employer.
- Maximum contribution limit to reduce Montana taxable income is \$3,500 (\$7,000 married couple) during 2018.
- Joint accounts are not allowed. Spouses must establish separate accounts.
- MSAs can be established at a bank, savings bank, credit union, or mutual fund company.
- Money deposited into an MSA is not subject to Montana income taxation while in the account or if used for eligible medical care expenses.

Example:

Barbara, a county employee, established an MSA at a local bank and deposited \$3,500 in the account on January 31. During the year, she had \$2,000 in eligible medical expenses. On Barbara's Montana Individual Tax Return, her taxable income of \$49,000 is reduced by her \$3,500 MSA deposit, not the \$2,000 she withdrew for eligible medical care expenses. Thus, her Montana Income is \$45,000 (\$49,000 - \$3,500 = \$45,500)



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

(Answers on back)

1. What is **NOT** an eligible Medical Care Expense?

A. Eyeglasses	D. Hearing Aids
B. Prescription Drugs	E. Medicare A premiums
C. Dental care	F. Doctor's visits

2. What percent of Montanans have MSAs?

A. 95.6%	D. 20.2%
B. 82.9%	E. 76.4%
C. 59.3%	F. 1.4%

- C. Who are eligible to use funds in an MSA? (*Circle all that apply*)

A. Account holder
B. Account holder's spouse
C. Child of account holder younger than 19
D. Child of account holder younger than 23 enrolled as full-time student at an accredited college or university
E. Grandparents staying with adult children
F. Friends
G. All of the above

MONTANA 2018 TAX BRACKETS AND RATES

At least	But less than	Then your tax rate is:
\$0	\$2,900	1%
\$2,900	\$5,200	2%
\$5,200	\$7,900	3%
\$7,900	\$10,600	4%
\$10,600	\$13,600	5%
\$13,600	\$17,600	6%
\$17,600 or more		6.9%

www.revenue.mt.gov

MSU Extension has a fact sheet titled **"Montana Medical Care Savings Accounts"**.

This fact sheet can be downloaded at www.msuextension.org. Then search for "MSA" or contact your local county Extension office.

HOW MUCH IS SAVED ON STATE INCOME TAXES? QUIZ



Question 1:

Nina reduced her Montana taxable income of \$34,500 by the \$3,500 she deposited into her MSA at a local credit union. Because her taxable income is above \$17,900, her tax rate is 6.9%.

By what amount does her \$3,500 MSA deposit reduce her 2018 Montana Income tax? _____



Question 2:

Rob and Sheila deposited \$3,500 each in an MSA at a local bank. The deposits lowered their Montana taxable income by \$7,000. Their tax rate is 6.9%.

By what amount does their MSA deposit reduce their 2018 Montana Income tax? _____

WHAT ARE ELIGIBLE MEDICAL CARE EXPENSES?



The Montana Department of Revenue accepts eligible medical care expenses that are also allowed as itemized deductions for federal income tax purposes such as:

- Medical insurance premiums
- Prescription Drugs
- Insulin
- Medical, dental, and nursing care
- Eyeglasses
- Crutches
- Hearing aids
- Transportation for medical care
- Certain lodging expenses

A listing of eligible Medical care expenses for Montana MSA is available in IRS Publication 502 "Medical and Dental Expenses" at www.irs.gov.

Answers

Test Your Knowledge:

How much is saved on State Income Taxes Quiz:
 Question 1: $\$241.50 (\$3,500 \times 6.9\% = \$241.50)$
 Question 2: $\$483.00 (\$7,000 \times 6.9\% = \$483.00)$

1. E. Medicare A Premiums
2. F. 1.4%
3. G

Credit: Keri D. Hayes, MSU Extension Economics Publications Assistant