

# TAKING TIME

by Rebecca Escott

Extension Home Economist



**National Consumers Week**  
National Consumers Week begins tomorrow. For the past 13 years, the last week in October has been set aside to raise awareness of the need for consumers to be active and informed members of the local and national economy.

This year's focus is on consumer fraud. The seven most common areas of consumer fraud are auto repairs, home improvements, credit agreements, investments, mail-order business, telemarketing and health care.

This past week I had a personal experience with consumer fraud. Actually it probably can't be labeled "consumer fraud," but it was consumer confusion, and I took the opportunity to express my concern and get the problem resolved.

What was the situation? I bought a tablecloth that had a sticker price of \$9.99. Because it and five or six other identical tablecloths were stacked in a wire basket with a bright yellow label of \$7.99, I assumed (incorrectly) that they must be on sale. I didn't notice the price as it was recorded at the register, but when I got to the car, I checked the receipt. I had been charged \$9.99 not \$7.99. I didn't think that was fair, so I walked back in and spoke to a manager. (Those of you who shop

with children may be tempted to take the \$2 loss and go home, but I encourage you not to. Your children learn tremendously from your example.) The manager agreed that the display was confusing and that their stocking staff had made a mistake. She refunded my \$2.

I felt pleased to get the \$2, but I felt more pleased that this store was willing to recognize and rectify a deceptive label.

In a second incident, this past week I observed a family asserting its right to complain at a local restaurant. Several times during the meal, the parents commented to their waitress about unsatisfactory items. This establishment posts a policy that if a customer isn't pleased with the meal, they (the restaurant) will pay the bill. Well, this family took them up on that policy and had their entire meal bill waived. Now I don't condone taking advantage of these policies without reason, but I do encourage consumers to give appropriate feedback to businesses and officials.

Too often consumer fraud continues because individuals don't speak out about their experiences. It takes the combined efforts of many concerned consumers to stop fraudulent, unsatisfactory practices. You can be a part of that

Here's an idea you may find easy to swallow: Scientists say you can eat your way to good health.

Researchers at Harvard, the National Cancer Institute, MIT, Johns Hopkins and other major institutions have done hundreds of thousands of studies tracking down the connection between diet and health.

Now, you can read all about it in a new book, **Food — Your Miracle Medicine: How Food Can Prevent and Cure Over 100 Symptoms and Problems** (Harper Collins, \$25.00), by bestselling author Jean Carper, a noted medical writer.

Diet, she says, can help prevent and treat numerous diseases, not only alleviating suffering and postponing death, but saving mil-

lions of dollars a year in health costs. Overwhelming scientific evidence finds food a remarkably effective and inexpensive preventive medicine and remedy, often equal to, or superior, to expensive and hazardous drugs," she adds. Here are some hints from the book:

- Eating a cup of yogurt a day can cut cold symptoms 25 percent.
- Two daily garlic cloves cut heart attack risk in half.
- Half an avocado a day improves cholesterol more than a low-fat diet.
- Spinach can prevent depression.

process. First, stay informed. Read recognized consumer watchdog magazines. They often highlight illegal or misleading labels or advertising claims. Also your local legislator's newsletter or the state attorney general's pamphlets also list announcements regarding fraudulent consumer practices. Secondly, report any questionable experiences to the consumer protection agency, your local police department, Better Business Bureau or the parent company involved. Unless action is taken, unless fraud is reported, change cannot occur. Fines cannot be issued. Criminals cannot be stopped. These efforts take time, but without consumer input, disreputable business tactics will continue. Do your part to fight fraud during National Consumer Week beginning tomorrow.

## Food: Your Miracle Medicine?

Here are some hints from the book:

- Celery can dramatically lower high blood pressure.
- Too much fat impairs immunity.
- Eating oats may help you stop smoking.
- The fat found in seafood may incite cells to make chemicals that break up undesirable blood clots, fight off joint pain and frustrate cancer cells.
- While your doctor is your best advisor about preventing and curing diseases, a healthy diet, which can be achieved with the aid of this new book, can be a tremendous help.

## Training For Child-Care Providers

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — The Lancaster County office of Penn State Cooperative Extension is offering a "Better Kid Care" Training for child care providers in Lancaster County to be held on Saturday, November 13 from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at the Farm and Home Center.

Cost of the training is \$20 and includes lunch. Registered Family Day Care Home providers, Licensed Group Day Care Home providers and Group Day Care

Home Assistants are eligible for full reimbursement of the \$20 fee following their attendance at the training through the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, KURC-HBC Directed Training Program. Individuals will have the opportunity to earn .5 Continuing Education Units for their participation.

To register or for more information, call the Penn State Cooperative Extension office at (717) 394-6851.



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FREE Brass Touch Lamp or 20 Piece Stoneware Dinner Set with Purchase*	Single...Reg. Ret. \$ 589.95...OUR CASH PRICE <del>\$259.95</del> ★ SPECIAL! \$119.95
	Double...Reg. Ret. \$ 729.95...OUR CASH PRICE <del>\$309.95</del> ★ SPECIAL! \$149.95
	Queen...Reg. Ret. \$ 859.95...OUR CASH PRICE <del>\$399.95</del> ★ SPECIAL! \$199.95
	King.....Reg. Ret. \$1099.95...OUR CASH PRICE <del>\$519.95</del> ★ SPECIAL! \$259.95

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9-5 (All Other Stores)  
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