

Consuming Thoughts

by
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Sweet Spanish onions, on the market from September through March, have long been recognized for their mild flavor and subtle sweetness. Moreover, they still are the largest variety of onion grown, reaching diameters up to 5 inches. The Sweet Spanish onions can be identified by their round, globular shape and thin, parchment-like skin that crackles to the touch. Their familiar nickname, the "Gentle Giant," has made it easier to remember the unique features of these onions.

Thirty percent of all of the onions on the market during the fall and winter are grown in and shipped from southwestern Idaho and eastern Oregon. There, ideal growing conditions prevail and informed growers take pride in producing a quality product. Consumers will be pleased to know that all onions are USDA inspected.

Sweet Spanish onions are marvelous "keepers." Like all varieties of onions they should be stored at home in a cool, dry, well ventilated place. A loosely woven bag, basket or crate is a good receptacle. Once cut, place the onions in a plastic bag or tightly covered container and keep them refrigerated.

Nutrition-wise Sweet Spanish onions provide important benefits, including vitamin C and B-vitamins and several minerals. And for weight watchers, they're a joy! One hundred grams contain only 38 calories.

Sweet Spanish onions are a perfect match for the convenience of modern-day kitchens and energy saving methods of cooking. Be it the microwave oven, the slow cooker or the pressure cooker, these plump onions can be turned into taste-appealing dishes quickly and efficiently. Handy

appliances such as a food processor, blender and deep fryer also make cooking with Sweet Spanish onions a simple task. Even the freezer, long-time favorite, brings the onions up-to-date since they freeze beautifully for all year use.

Here are the most popular methods. **Frozen Chopped Onions:** Peel and chop Sweet Spanish onions and place them in plastic them in plastic bags or freezer containers. When ready to use, simply scoop out as many as you need with a fork and return remainder to the freezer.

Frozen Sliced Onions: Remove bronze skins from Sweet Spanish onions and slice in desired thickness. Place in single layer on baking sheet and quick-freeze. Remove from freezer and pack in plastic bags or freezer containers. Return to freezer. To use frozen onion slices, saute them in oil or butter and season to taste. Or, drizzle oil or melted butter over the slices, sprinkle with Parmesan cheese or your favorite herb, and broil or bake until tender.

This blender special can be served hot or cold. A low-fat soup may be made by using a lower fat or non-fat milk and a richer soup may be made by using cream in place of the milk.

Workshops For Childcare Providers

LEESPORT (Berks Co.)—Penn State Cooperative Extension is offering a series of workshops especially for adults who care for preschool and school-age children.

These childcare provider workshops are designed for center-based, group-home, and family childcare providers as well as parents and anyone who cares for children. The workshops meet training requirements as specified by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. Training credits and reimbursement of costs are provided by KURC Childcare

Directed Training Program.

Workshop I—"M" Show: Music, Movement and Math on Tuesday, October 17, 7:00-9:00 p.m. This program will feature activities incorporating math principals into music and math. The fun activities will include homemade musical instruments, clap your hands activities, and African-American music and movements.

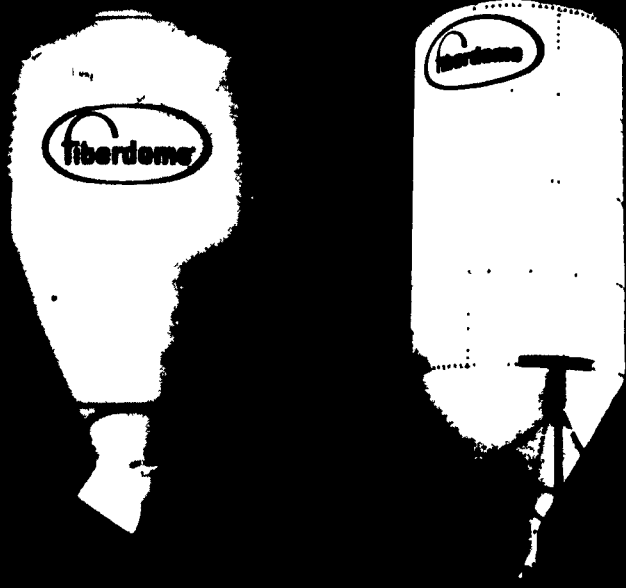
Workshop II—Space Matters will be the topic on Tuesday, December 5, 1995, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Making your space work for all childcare activities is crucial to functioning successfully in a safe workable area that will encourage children to learn as they play. Special features will include storage and labeling, safety concerns and personal space for the caregiver.

Each workshop is held at the Berks County Agricultural Center from 7-9 p.m. with a cost of \$5 per session. More information is available by calling (610) 378-1327.

Advance registration is required. To make a reservation, send a check (\$5) payable to Berks County Extension Special Account with your name, address and phone number and the name of the workshop(s) you wish to attend.



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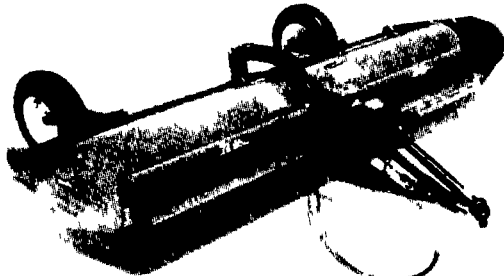
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