

## Consuming Thoughts

by

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### Keep Children Safe From Foodborne Illness During The Holidays

Parties with mouth-watering food buffets are sure to be in abundance during this holiday season. Consumers need to be 'food smart' for themselves and their children when enjoying these holiday goodies according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Parents need to learn and use good food safety practices during the holidays and all through the year to protect the health of their children. Preventing foodborne illness during holiday parties is critical. Scientific data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that children under the age of 10 have higher incidences of Salmonella illnesses, a common foodborne illness, than any other age group.

When serving food at a holiday gathering, it is important to maintain safe temperatures. Hot foods like turkey, ham, stuffing, chicken fingers and meatballs

should be served hot and replenished frequently.

Cold foods, such as chicken salad or potato salad, should be served and kept cold. A helpful hint is to prepare extra serving platters and dishes ahead of time, store them in the refrigerator or keep them hot in the oven (set at approximately 200-250 F) prior to serving.

It is important to remember that any perishable foods on the buffet table that are not served with a hot source (such as chafing dishes or slow cookers) or cold source (such as by nesting serving dishes in bowls of ice) should be discarded after two hours at room temperature.

Bacteria can also multiply quickly in moist desserts that contain dairy products. Keep eggnog, cheesecakes, cream pies, and cakes with whipped-cream and cream-cheese frostings refrigerated right up until serving time.

A variety of holiday foods may contain raw eggs or lightly cooked eggs. Most commercially sold

eggnog is pasteurized, meaning that the mixture has been heated to a temperature high enough to kill harmful bacteria that may have been present in the raw ingredients. However, if you're making your own eggnog, be sure to use a recipe that calls for slowly heating the mixture to 160 F. This will maintain the taste and texture while also killing bacteria.

It might be tempting to let your child eat raw cookie dough or lick the beaters after mixing cake batter, but do not let the child taste raw dough or cake batter. If the dough or batter contains raw eggs, it could also contain Salmonella leading cause of foodborne illness.

Always follow the four basic food safety steps:

- Clean. Wash hands and surfaces often.
- Separate. Separate raw meat, poultry, and egg products from cooked foods to avoid cross-contamination.
- Cook. Raw meat, poultry, and egg products need to be cooked thoroughly. Use a food thermometer to ensure foods have reached a high enough temperature to kill any harmful bacteria that may be present.
- Chill. Store leftovers within two hours of cooking.

NOTE: To obtain a complimentary copy of the recipe for "Classic Cooked Egg Nog," send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Classic Cooked Egg Nog, Berks County Cooperative Extension, PO Box 520, 1238 County Welfare Road, Leesport, PA 19533-520.

## Union County Extension Conducts Annual Meeting

MIFFLINBURG (Union Co.) — Penn State Cooperative Extension in Union County conducted their Annual Meeting Nov. 14 at Christ's United Lutheran Church in Millmont.

Donald Shirk, board president, opened the event by welcoming staff, board members and special guests. Andrew and Douglas Richard (Lucky Clover 4-H members) led the Pledge of Allegiance and the 4-H pledge.

Following dinner, Shirk recognized the outgoing board members — William Callahan, Stacie Katherman, Rebecca Rishel, Barbara Wiand, John Zimmerman and Madeline Zimmerman — and welcomed the incoming members — Crystal Bollinger, Robert O. Brouse, Jr., Andrew Richard, Guy Temple and Charles Tressler.

Jill Broschart, 4-H agent, presented the 4-H Community Service and Superclub Awards to the Lucky Clovers 4-H Club. Also recognized were teen leaders Andrew Richard and Douglas Richard, Lucky Clovers 4-H Club, and Cayce Walter and Sarah Weltoth, Union County Valley Riders 4-H Club.

Patricia Grenoble (Lewisburg teacher and director of SIMON House 4-H Club) presented an award to Rick Mills of Weis Markets for their support of cooperative extension programming in Union County.

Grenoble's class piloted "Exploring the Food Business," a new 4-H program that focuses on careers available in the food industry.

The 4-Hers followed one food commodity from the field to the table. The group chose dairy products and visited a local dairy farm, Weis dairy processing plant, a local Weis Market, their testing lab and visited the CEO of the Weis Markets during a board meeting.

The students participated in testing a new Weis Market product and were encouraged to develop their own dairy product. The students developed a product, planned the advertising campaign and test marketed the product at Linntown Elementary School.

Grenoble contributed to its success. Ms. Grenoble and her students will showcase their program at Penn State's In-Service training in March of 2004. Because of the success of this pilot program it will now be a statewide initiative.

Mark Madden from Sullivan County, representing the National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA), presented the "Distinguished Service" Award to Norman Conrad, extension multi-county agronomy agent. Norman was recognized for his programming in nutrient management, crops and soils and Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

Guest presenter, Keith Phelps, Manager of Country Farm and Home, Mifflinburg, walked us through "Getting Your Garden Ready for Winter." Phelps ended with a great spring flower idea that three lucky volunteers got to complete at the program. Ask Cara Brouse, Madeline Zimmerman and Elizabeth Overcash how to plant a beautiful daffodil, tulip and crocus flower pot.

The Central Susquehanna Counties' (Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder and Union) Annual Report was distributed to all attendees. Community members can pick a copy of this report at the Union County extension office at 343 Chestnut Street, Mifflinburg, between the hours of 8:00 and 4:30 weekdays.

The evening concluded with remarks about the "State of Cooperative Extension in Pennsylvania" by Shirley Bixby, Regional Director for the Susquehanna Region, Penn State Cooperative Extension and Outreach. She also reported on the status of the state budget for education.

M. Annette Kratzer, county extension director recognized Stein's Flowers, Lewisburg, and Phyllis Swanger, board member, for the lovely table center pieces. She also thanked the planning committee, board members, county commissioners, staff and 4-H volunteers for their continuing support of the cooperative extension programming.



## One-of-a-Kind Farming Cookbook Perfect Gift for Christmas



Lancaster DHIA has compiled a cookbook, consisting of recipes submitted by members of their organization. There are 1053 "tried and true" recipes, printed in easy to read format, along with doubling indexing, making it easy to find the same recipe twice. The cookbook is encased in a hardbound cover, with large D-rings for ease in page turning. They are ready to be picked up at the office or shipped directly to your home, in time for Christmas.

Please see ordering information below.

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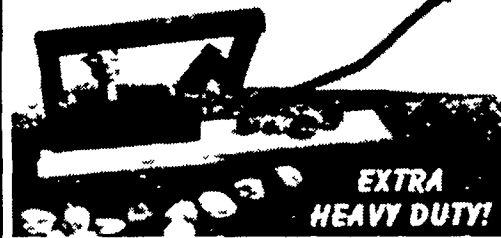
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### Do You Suffer From Fibromyalgia?

When I was introduced to New Image I was 50 pounds over weight and suffered from fibromyalgia I was so depressed and in pain the majority of the time. I was taking steroids and four other medications one of which made me so 'groggy' I could hardly get out of bed and another gave me ulcers. I began taking New Image secretly because I thought my family would make fun of me. After a month I discovered I had lost eight pounds and seven inches. Wow! Then it dawned on me I was feeling better the depression and pain were gone in two months I was off all medications "I feel SUPERIFIC!" Now two years later I have lost 43 pounds and 30 inches. Thank you New Image for giving me a new life again. Judy Swift Mt. Washington KY

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