

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service



K-State Research and Extension Family Nutrition Program

DINING ON A DIME

Eating Better for Less

July/August

‘Plant’ Some Dollars at Farmers’ Markets

Nothing beats a nice summer morning or afternoon leisurely spent with your family at the local farmers’ market. Buying foods at a farmers’ market allows you to enjoy exceptional taste and freshness and feel good about “buying local” and supporting nearby farmers, all at the same time.

Not sure if your community hosts a farmers’ market? To find out, ask your local librarian or visit the website, <http://apps.ams.usda.gov/FarmersMarkets>



If you’re new to shopping at farmers’ markets, here are some tips:

- **Know what to expect.** You can download a guide to use throughout the summer to know which fresh Kansas-grown fruits and vegetables are likely to be available, and when. It’s on the web at www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/fntr2/mf2647.pdf After you get to the market, walk through it first without buying anything, to see what’s available. Talk to the growers about what will be coming in upcoming weeks.
- **Take big bags ... and small bills.** Take sturdy clean cloth bags to carry your purchases. If you buy perishable foods, be sure to refrigerate them within two hours, or within one hour if the temperature is over 90 degrees. Some Kansas farmers’ markets take Vision cards and debit cards. Most do not take credit cards. Your purchases will be completed faster if you can give vendors exact change.
- **Go early or go late.** Go early for the best selection. The most popular items are gone within the first hour in some markets. Go late for the best deals. Near closing time, vendors may be willing to sell for less so that they don’t have to take perishable produce back to the farm.
- **Get advice.** If you find a food that you’re not familiar with, ask the farmer how he or she likes to eat it. You can also check out recipes by visiting the websites, <http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov/index.php> and www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org

Source (Accessed 6/12/09): Adapted from [Shopping at Farmers’ Markets](http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/familydevelopment/00078.pdf), University of Minnesota Cooperative Extension, www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/familydevelopment/00078.pdf

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BPA Bans

Canada and Minnesota were the first to ban the sale of plastic baby bottles (and cups intended for use by children less than three years old) that contain the chemical bisphenol A, or BPA. BPA is used to harden plastic, making the bottles harder and more durable, shatterproof and heat resistant. These safety features have a down side, however. BPA leaches out of the bottles and is transferred into the milk, especially after it is heated.



The potential harm of BPA

The concern is that if enough BPA gets into the diet, it has effects similar to human hormones. Infants are especially vulnerable. Why? Because their exposure to BPA is high if they get their milk from BPA-containing bottles; their bodies are small and still developing; and they can't eliminate BPA as quickly as adults can.

Currently, scientists do not agree on how much BPA exposure is harmful. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration considers human exposure to BPA to be below the levels that cause harm to people of any age.

BPA products

Along with most baby bottles and child cups, BPA is in many pacifiers and plastic kitchen items, such as some reusable beverage and food containers, tableware, microwave oven dishes and bottle tops. BPA-containing plastics are also used as liners in some metal food and beverage cans. BPA is found in some, but not all, plastics with the number “3,” “6” and “7” recycling symbol.

Ways you can reduce your family's exposure to BPA

- Breastfeed your baby.
- Use “BPA-free” plastic baby bottles, water bottles and other kitchen products. Read product information labels to determine if they contain BPA. For example, use plastic baby bottles with the number “5” recycling symbol, or use plastic bag inserts.
- Use non-plastic containers. For example, use food-grade metal beverage containers without plastic liners and use metal tableware. Use glass, porcelain or lead-free ceramic dishes to microwave foods.
- Hand wash bottles and plastic food containers using mild non-abrasive detergent, instead of using a dishwasher. Allow them to dry thoroughly before re-use. Discard bottles and food containers that have cracks or scratches.
- Eat fewer foods sold in metal cans. Instead, choose foods packaged in glass jars or cardboard “brick” cartons, along with fresh, frozen and dried foods.

Sources (Accessed 6/12/09): [Bisphenol A \(BPA\), Plastic Bottles, Canned Goods, and You](http://www.govlink.org/hazwaste/schoollyouth/BPA.html), The Local Hazardous Waste Management Program in King County (WA), www.govlink.org/hazwaste/schoollyouth/BPA.html; [Learn More About Plastics - Bisphenol A \(BPA\)](http://envirocancer.cornell.edu/research/endocrine/videos/plastics.cfm#do), Cornell University, <http://envirocancer.cornell.edu/research/endocrine/videos/plastics.cfm#do>

For more information about healthy eating, contact your local Extension office. Contents of this publication may be reproduced for educational purposes. All other rights reserved. In each case, credit Erin Henry and Mary Meck Higgins, “Dining on a Dime,” July 2009.

Preserve Summer's Best Flavors

Do you wish you could enjoy your favorite garden or market fruits all year long? Freeze them! It's an easy way to have local fruits for months. Freezing saves time and nutrients and also keeps fruit more fresh-tasting and colorful, compared to other food preservation methods.

Read on for "how-to" guidelines to safely freeze peak-season fruit. Details about freezing specific fruits are available on the websites www.uga.edu/nchfp/publications/uga/uga_freeze_fruit.pdf and www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/FNTR2/C648.PDF



Choosing Freezer Containers. Freeze fruit in plastic containers with the number "2," "4" or "5" recycling symbol that are designed for freezer storage, or in plastic freezer bags. Containers not designed for freezer use do not resist moisture vapor well, and the food quality will suffer.

Preparing the Fruit. Choose ripe, unblemished, great-tasting fruit. Throw away parts that are poor quality. Rinse fruit under cool running water. Do not soak fruit in water. Let drain. Stem, pit, peel and/or slice enough fruit for just a few containers at a time. Do one of the following to prevent the fruit from browning during freezer storage:

- Dip fruit into a glass or stainless steel bowl that contains one quart of water mixed with three tablespoons bottled lemon juice.
- Sprinkle fruit with a commercial ascorbic acid powder (such as FruitFresh®).

Choosing How to "Pack" the Fruit, Based on How You Will Use It

- You can safely freeze fruit without adding sugar. However, it likely won't be as plump or colorful as sugar-packed fruit. Sugar substitutes give fruit a sweeter flavor, but do not protect the color of the fruit or thicken the syrup.
- Most thawed fruit has a better texture and flavor if it was frozen in dry sugar or in a syrup mixture you can make with sugar and water.
- Choose to freeze fruits unsweetened or in dry sugar if you will be using the fruit for cooking, because there will be less liquid. This method is also best if you prefer frozen fruit as individual pieces, where you can later remove just a few pieces at a time. Spread a single layer of prepared drained unsweetened or dry-packed fruit on shallow trays. When frozen, place into freezer containers.
- Freeze fruits in syrup if you plan to thaw and eat it uncooked, as a side dish, dessert or snack. A thin syrup is best for mild-flavored fruits. Medium syrup is best for whole fruits and fruits that tend to darken. Heavy syrup is best for very sour fruits.

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

The Food Assistance Program can help people of all ages with low income buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, call 1-888-369-4777.



Dining on a Dime's Cooks' Corner

Baked Peach Dessert (Makes 3 servings)

For variety, make this easy dessert with other fruits.

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons whole wheat or all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon or pumpkin pie spice
- 1/3 cup quick-cooking rolled oats, dry
- 2 tablespoons packed brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon vegetable cooking oil
- 1 1/2 cups fresh or frozen peach slices, or a 15 ounce can

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. In a bowl, mix together all ingredients except peaches, in the order shown. Stir after each addition.
3. Spray a 9- by 5-inch loaf pan with non-stick cooking spray.
4. If using fresh peaches, wash them and remove seeds. Slice. If using canned or frozen, drain or thaw peach slices.
5. Place peach slices in the pan.
6. Spoon oat mixture evenly over the top of the peaches.
7. Bake uncovered for 15 minutes, or until fruit is tender. Serve hot or cold.

Nutrition Facts: *Each serving provides 160 calories, 6 g fat, 27 g carbohydrate, 3 g protein, 0 mg cholesterol, 0 mg sodium and 3 g dietary fiber. Daily Values: 6% vitamin A, 8% vitamin C, 2% calcium, 6% iron*



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