

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

March / April

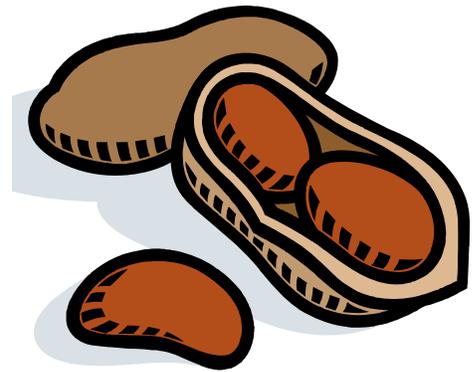
Salmonella Scare

Hundreds of people have fallen ill, and some have died, because of a salmonella outbreak linked to peanut products.

Tracing the Outbreak

The 2009 investigation traced the salmonella outbreak to peanut butter and peanut paste made at a peanut processing plant in Blakely, Georgia. The Georgia company had deficiencies in their manufacturing process and in their equipment cleaning procedures. The company filed for bankruptcy in February 2009.

The recalled products made by the peanut processing plant in Blakely are common ingredients in cookies, crackers, cereal, candy, ice cream, pet treats, and other foods. However, major brands of jarred peanut butter found in grocery stores are **not** affected by the peanut products recall. This has been one of the largest food recalls ever in the United States.



Consumer Recommendations

The Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that consumers take these actions:

- Visit the website www.fda.gov to determine if you have any of the cookies, crackers, cereal, candy, ice cream or other foods that have been recalled.
- Do not eat products that have been recalled. Return them to your store for a refund, or throw the products away in a manner that prevents other people or animals from eating them.
- If you think you may have become ill from eating one of the recalled products, talk to your health care provider.
- Always use safe food handling practices, such as washing your hands and the food preparation area before cooking.

Source (Accessed 2/26/09): [Peanut Product Recalls: Salmonella Typhimurium](http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/salmonellatyp.html), U.S. Food and Drug Administration, www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/salmonellatyp.html

Newsletter developed by Erin Henry, R.D., L.D., and Mary Meck Higgins, Ph.D., R.D., L.D., CDE, K-State Research and Extension Human Nutrition Specialist and Associate Professor, Department of Human Nutrition.

Stevia

Stevia (pronounced steve-ee-uh) is the “newest” sugar substitute available. Stevia is a sweetener that is approximately 250 times sweeter than table sugar. It provides no calories or carbohydrates, and has no effect on blood sugar levels. One packet of stevia (as a white powder extract) is almost one-half (1/2) teaspoon and has the sweetening power of about two cups of granulated sugar.

Many companies are introducing new foods using various trademark names for sugar substitutes made with stevia. For example, Coca-Cola is selling beverages made with Truvia and Pepsi is selling beverages made with PureVia.

The cost of stevia is very high, generally four or more times the price of table sugar.

Stevia Safety

In December 2008, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recognized stevia as being generally recognized as safe, or GRAS, when used as a general purpose sweetener for foods and drinks. More precisely, the FDA approved the use of rebaudioside A, a highly purified portion of the stevia plant.

In 1991, stevia was totally banned by the FDA because information was not adequate at that time to demonstrate that it was safe. From 1995 until the December 2008 ruling, the FDA allowed the sale of stevia in the U.S. only as a dietary supplement. It was sold as powdered leaves and as refined extracts from the leaves.

Sugar substitutes have been the subject of many health controversies over the years. For instance, some researchers think that sugar substitutes may increase a person’s desire for sugar, possibly making weight-loss dieting more difficult. However, unrefined stevia leaves have been used in other countries for many years, with no known harmful effects.

Cooking with Stevia?

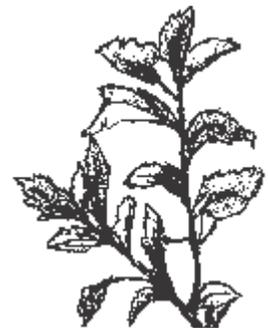
Baking with stevia currently poses problems unless it is mixed with sugar or another ingredient. But stevia works well with most fruit or dairy recipes, especially citrus-type drinks. It is stable at high temperatures and can be used with both high-acid and low-acid foods. Too much stevia may cause a food or beverage to have a bitter aftertaste, so use the exact amount specified in the recipe when cooking with stevia. Brands of stevia high in steviosides will yield a sweeter taste without the bitterness.



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

For more information about healthy eating, contact your local Extension office.

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.



Buying Beef? Ways to Save \$

This month's issue of *Dining on a Dime* gives tips on how to select beef, how to prepare various cuts of meat, and ways to save money when purchasing meat at the grocery store. A recipe for fragrant vegetable beef stew is on page 4.

How to Determine Freshness of Beef

- Look for raw beef with a bright red color. Exception: If the beef is in a vacuum-package, expect it to be a dark purplish color.
- Look for raw beef that is firm to the touch, not mushy.
- Select only packages of raw beef that feel cold, have no rips or holes, and without excessive liquid.
- Buy beef before the "sell-by" date shown on the package. Use or freeze raw beef within two to three days of purchase.

Choose Preparation Methods According to the Cut



Chuck, round, flank, plate, shank and brisket are less costly and less tender cuts. But after marinating or being cooked with liquids, such as in a slow cooker or boiled gently in stews, they become very tender.

Rib and loin cuts are more tender and can be cooked without added liquids, such as by stir-frying, broiling or grilling.

Tips for Getting More Value for Your Dollars Spent on Meat

- Lean cuts provide more meat for your dollar.
- A pound of raw meat without bones or fat will provide about 12 ounces after cooking. Plan on serving two to three ounces cooked meat per person per meal.
- If you can afford the initial cost, buying in bulk will save money. Compare two packages of the same cut of meat, and buy the one that costs the least per pound. Freeze the surplus in meal-sized portions, either before or after cooking the meat.
- Do the preparation work yourself. For instance, slice your own steaks or kabob chunks, make your own meat patties, and cook meats yourself to reduce costs.
- Serve meats in main dishes that include grains, rice or pasta, and plenty of vegetables. Flavor with low-fat sauces, herbs and spices.

These beef cuts are lean and less tender:

Chuck shoulder pot roast
Chuck shoulder steak
Eye round roast and steak
Top round roast and steak
Bottom round roast and steak
Round tip roast and steak
Round steak
Bottom round (Western griller) steak
Flank steak
Shank cross cuts
Brisket, flat half

These beef cuts are lean and more tender:

95% lean ground beef
Shoulder petite tender and medallions
Shoulder center (Ranch) steak
Tri-tip roast and steak
Tenderloin roast and steak
Sirloin tip center roast and steak
Sirloin tip side steak
Top sirloin steak
T-bone steak
Top loin (Strip) steak

Dining on a Dime's Cooks' Corner

Fragrant Vegetable Beef Stew (Makes 3 servings)

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 cup cold water
- 12 ounces raw beef without bones and trimmed of fat, cut into cubes
(such as bottom round, round rump, chuck shoulder, arm roast)
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano leaves
- 1 teaspoon or 1 cube beef-flavored bouillon
- 1 clove of garlic, finely chopped
- 1 cup sliced carrots
- 1 cup diced potatoes
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- 1 cup sliced celery

Meal Suggestion:

*Serve with apples,
whole grain bread
and low-fat milk.*

Directions

1. Place flour and water in a slow cooker. Mix well. Stir in remaining ingredients. Cover.
2. Cook on LOW for about 8 hours or HIGH for 4 hours.
3. Stir thoroughly before serving.
4. Cover and refrigerate, or freeze, leftovers within two hours.

Nutrition Facts: Each serving is about 1 1/2 cups and provides 280 calories, 6 g fat, 26 g carbohydrate, 29 g protein, 75 mg cholesterol, 300 mg sodium and 5 g dietary fiber. Daily Values: 160% vitamin A, 40% vitamin C, 8% calcium, 20% iron.



**Cooperative Extension Service
K-State Research and Extension**

K-State, County Extension Councils,
Extension Districts, and the U.S.
Department of Agriculture cooperating.

K-State is an equal opportunity provider
and employer.