

**Family & Consumer  
Science News**

**Ford County**

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The mission of KSU Cooperative Extension Family and Consumer Sciences is to link education with life experiences to help people improve their lives, their families, and their communities

*“Knowledge  
for Life”*

## Greetings and Happy Holidays!

With Thanksgiving just getting over, Christmas will be here before we know it. We have a few winter events coming up that I wanted to update you on. Hope you will consider participating or attending.

Also, the east elevator is still not working in our building. You can use the west elevator, go to third floor and walk down the hallway and then go down one flight of stairs or take the stairs up to second floor from the lobby. If you give us a call, we can also meet you in the lobby if needed!

Sincerely,

*Ethel*

Ethel Schneweis, Family and Consumer Science Extension Agent

## CHRISTMAS FANTASIES - 2024

Our Annual Christmas Fantasies program will be held this year on **TUESDAY, December 10** at the **Dodge City Senior Center, 2408 Central, Dodge City, KS at 1:30 p.m.** The theme is “Christmas Fantasies Through the Years”.

Everyone wanting to attend are encouraged to purchase their ticket prior to December 6 to guarantee a seat. Tickets are \$5 a person and are available for purchase at the Dodge City Senior Center and Ford County Extension Office. They can also be purchased at the door on the day of the event. If you have questions, please call the Extension Office. See the enclosed flier.



## **PDC EXTENSION ELECTION!!**

The Ford County Extension Program Development Committee Election was held earlier in October. It was great to see a few of you come and vote. Thanks! During the election and presentation on Brazil by Andrea, candidates were elected to serve on the four Program Development Committee (PDC) areas listed below.

<b>FCS PDC</b>	<b>4-H PDC</b>	<b>Ag and Natural Resources</b>	<b>Community Vitality</b>
Julie Ellis	Ashley Fischer	Todd Durler	Jane Longmeyer
Marlene Littrell	Ruth Morton	Travis Goetz	Heather Trent
Beth Vogel	Cassie Sanko	Tanner Rumbaugh	Jan Stevens

We thank all for their willingness to serve on our committees and boards.

At the Extension Council's Annual Meeting, nine members were elected to serve on our Extension Council's Executive Board for 2025. Those elected from the 24 members of the four PDC's are: Chelsea Deges – Chairperson; Casey Pemberton – Vice Chairperson; Jan Stevens – Treasurer; Beth Vogel – Secretary; Board Members – Todd Durler, Ashley Fischer, Rick Konecny, Dave McCollum, and Tammie Mink. Congratulations and we look forward to working with you in the new year!

## **FORD COUNTY FAIR BOARD ANNUAL MEETING**

The Ford County Fair Association held their annual meeting to elect board members in November. Currently Fair Board Members are responsible for maintaining the facilities/building and for opening/closing the building for rentals.

Members elected at the meeting were: Chelsea Gleason, Regina Lix and Kent Muncy for three-year terms. Three members appointed to a one-year term were: Lindsey Durler, Todd Durler and Brandi Stein. These members will join six previously elected members: Brooklyn Droste, Ruth Morton, Jake Ring, Brad Wasson, Curtis Williams and Jeremy Woydziak to complete the 12-member board.

The board is continuing to work on fund raising for future improvements to the building and grounds. They have received several area grants, but if you would be interested in providing a donation they are a 501 3c organization. Contact the Extension Office for more information and how to donate.

## **FORD COUNTY 2025 FAIR DATES – July 17-21, 2025**

The Fair Board selected the 2025 Fair theme to be – “All American Fun at the Ford County Fair”.

## **KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE Meeting Series...**

I am working on a meeting series concerning information on issues around aging – falls, nutrition, etc. Watch the next newsletter for more details.

## **DINING WITH DIABETES CLASS**

I am planning on scheduling a Dining with Diabetes class to start after the beginning of the new year. Please let me know if you would be interested in participating in these in-person trainings. Details are still being worked out. If you would prefer, there are online classes offered throughout the year which might fit your schedule better. Contact me for more information for online classes.

## **2025 Women Managing the Farm Conference**

The 2025 Women Managing the Farm Conference will be held in Manhattan, KS on February 12-14, 2025. The theme is Forging the Future.



This conference is for women to gain resources and training for today's farm or ag business. It is a great opportunity to make connections with like-minded farm women.

Learn more and sign up for email updates at <https://womenmanagingthefarm.com/>.

## **Leaving a Lasting Legacy for Farm Women – A Succession Planning Series**

This is a four-part farm succession planning workshop series produced through a partnership by K-State, University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Purdue University. Sessions will be held at in-person sites across Kansas, Nebraska and Indiana. It will feature livestreamed keynote presentations and local hands-on activities. Meeting schedule is January 21, 28, February 4 and 11 with all of the programs beginning at 5:00 pm for dinner, 5:30 pm program starting, ending around 8 pm. Local sites include Greensburg, Liberal, Hays, Great Bend, St. John, LaCrosse, and Dighton. Call the office for more details if interested.

## **Tips on Saving Leftovers**

Leftovers are either loved or hated. But leftovers can save you meal prep time when you need a meal in a hurry. So what are the options for saving leftovers?

1. If perishable foods have been left at room temperature (above 40°F) for more than two hours, they should not be saved. Best practice is to refrigerate leftovers within two hours and use or freeze the leftovers within four days time.
2. Many foods can be frozen for later use. Divide into small portions and package in freezer safe packaging such as freezer bags or plastic containers designated for the freezer. Remove as much air as possible for best results. Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator or reheat in the microwave for a quick meal.
3. There are no recommendations to home can leftovers. No safe tested process has ever been developed for this type of canned food. The heat processing can greatly decrease the quality also. As a reminder, there are no safe canning methods for re-canning larger containers of canned food. Learn more at <https://nchfp.uga.edu/faqs/miscellaneous-questions/category/faq-canning>.

**Leftovers: The Best Part!**

**Store leftovers within 2 hours of serving**

Divide into small portions, place in shallow containers, the refrigerate or use within 4 days.  
Freeze for longer storage.

Use in soup, sandwiches and more!

**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

## Don't Ignore Food Recalls

There have been a few food recalls in the news lately, with the latest recall linked to [organic carrots](#). A recall is issued to inform consumers to look through their pantry, refrigerator or freezer and identify any foods in the recall. Research has shown that fewer than 60% of Americans check their homes for recalled food. If you have a recalled food, what should you do?



1. **Don't panic!** Most food recalls are not associated with a foodborne illness outbreak, and many recalls are issued because there is a potential for the food to be contaminated. Often, food manufacturers issue a recall as a precautionary measure. Besides bacterial contamination, recalls are issued for many other reasons such as physical contamination or food allergen issues.
2. **Don't open the food.** Resist the temptation to open the food and check it. You can't see, smell, or taste the bacteria or viruses that cause foodborne illnesses. If you do open or handle the product, remember to wash your hands thoroughly with warm water and soap for 20 seconds after handling it.
3. **Check the recall notice to find out what to do with the food.** When a manufacturer recalls a food product, they provide instructions on what to do with the product. Typically, the instructions will indicate that you need to do one of the following:
  - o Return the product to the store where you bought it for a refund.
  - o Dispose of the product properly so that other people or animals cannot eat it. (This is particularly important if you opened the product.)

For information on the latest food recalls, see the [Food and Drug Administration](#) website.

## It's Cookie Time!

It's not just the raw eggs that cause food safety problems. All kinds of flour are raw and must be baked for safe consumption.



The holidays bring the joy of time with family and friends! One tradition is making cookies to share. It is important to handle cookie dough safely to not spoil holiday fun.

You may not realize it, but most [flour is a raw food](#). And it hasn't been treated to kill any bacteria (germs) it may contain. Cooking and baking is what kills any bacteria in flour, as well as in raw eggs that are often used with it.

To stay safe, don't eat or taste raw (uncooked) flour, dough or batter. Also, don't let children use raw dough for crafts or "play clay." Even if children don't eat the dough, they may put their hands in their mouth after handling it.

Many cookies are shaped with your hands. Resist the temptation to lick your fingers or sample the cookie dough! Risks from eating raw eggs and now uncooked flour, can increase your risk of getting a foodborne illness. Regardless of the brand or source of flour or eggs, the risk of foodborne illness is present when consumed raw.

Be sure hard surfaces to roll out cookie dough are clean and sanitized before and after dough has been in contact with the surface.

As always, wash your hands before and after handling cookie dough or any raw foods. Follow recipe instructions for baking cookies at proper temperatures and specified times.

Learn more from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

## **Prep and Freeze Pie Now, Save Time Later**

As the holidays approach, now is the time to plan for holiday meals. If the menu includes pie, make and freeze it now to save time later. Here are some tips from [Penn State Extension](https://extension.psu.edu/freezing-pies-and-pie-fillings) (<https://extension.psu.edu/freezing-pies-and-pie-fillings>)

For unbaked pie, it is best to freeze the filling and crust separately for better crust quality later. The filling can be frozen in a freezer bag and placed in a pie pan to get the pie shape. When ready to use, unwrap the frozen filling, place in an unbaked pie crust. Add an extra 20-25 minutes of baking time.

For the crust, make the pie dough and roll into flat circles to freeze. Several pie crusts can be stacked with parchment paper or foil between the layers. Pie dough can also be placed into pie pans and frozen in the pan.

When freezing a whole double-crust pie, do not cut vents in the top crust in an unbaked pie before freezing. Make those cuts just before baking.

Fruit, pecan or pumpkin pie freezes best. Custard, meringue or cream pies do not freeze well. See more tips at [Michigan State University Extension](https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/tips_for_freezing_homemade_pies) ([https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/tips\\_for\\_freezing\\_homemade\\_pies](https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/tips_for_freezing_homemade_pies)) and [Oregon State University Extension](https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/catalog/files/project/pdf/pnw296.pdf), (<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/catalog/files/project/pdf/pnw296.pdf>).

## **After the Hunt**

Hunting season is in full swing for a variety of wild game species. Take time to safely handle and preserve wild game to safely provide wholesome and nourishing food for family and friends.

Key factors in keeping field dressed wild game safe are temperature control and preventing cross contamination. Meat is susceptible to foodborne pathogen contamination such as *E. coli* or *Salmonella*. This can come from the surroundings, from the gastrointestinal tract, or other handling and transport.

Start with proper equipment when going out hunting. Suggested equipment includes:

- Sharp knives
- Small hatchet
- Several feet of rope or nylon cord
- Rubber bands
- Clean towels or paper towels
- Resealable bags
- Large cooler with lots of ice
- Disposable plastic gloves
- Fresh water

Field dress as soon as possible and chill the carcass quickly with ice or snow. Learn more information at [www.rrc.k-state.edu/preservation/canning.html](http://www.rrc.k-state.edu/preservation/canning.html) in the Canning Low Acid Foods section. For more resources, including freezing meat, see <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/foodsafety/topics/animal.html#game>.

**Check out the website for more information on the following topics:**

- Beef Products
- Dairy Foods
- Pork Products
- Lamb Products
- Turkey, Chicken and Eggs
- Avian Influenza
- Meat Jerky
- Alternative Protein Sources
- Wild Game and Birds

## **Eggnog Tips for Ringing in the New Year!**

As we turn the calendar to a new year, many are planning to celebrate with New Year's Eve parties. One festive beverage commonly served is eggnog made with raw eggs. Here are some tips to safely ring in the new year and keep [\*Salmonella\*](#) bacteria away from your party.



- Alcohol does not kill bacteria. Heat is the only way to kill bacteria.
- Adding hot coffee to eggnog made with raw eggs will not make it safe. When adding cold eggnog to hot coffee, the temperature drops too much. The best tip is to cook the eggnog to a minimum 160°F to kill *Salmonella*.
- Store-bought eggnog is pasteurized and is a safe alternative to raw egg eggnog recipes. This heats the eggs to a high temperature for a short time to kill any bacteria that may be present.
- Use egg substitutes or pasteurized eggs in place of raw eggs.

Making your own eggnog? Cook the eggs in part of the milk, along with other ingredients to make a hot custard mixture. Heat gently in a large heavy saucepan or double boiler, to prevent scorching, to a minimum 160°F. Chill this mixture and add other ingredients before serving. Here's a recipe from the [American Egg Board](#).

Happy New Year!

Source: <https://www.foodsafetynews.com/2021/12/busting-eggnog-myths-for-new-years-eve-safety/>

## **Last Minute Food Gifts!**

Gifts from the kitchen are popular and can be easy gifts for guests, neighbors, co-workers and others. Here are some resources to put together a quick gift in a jar from soup mixes to cookie mixes.

- [Mix It Up to Expand Your Gift-giving Dollar with Food Mixes in a Jar](https://www.ndsu.edu/agriculture/extension/publications/mix-it-expand-your-gift-giving-dollar-food-mixes-jar) – North Dakota State University Extension <https://www.ndsu.edu/agriculture/extension/publications/mix-it-expand-your-gift-giving-dollar-food-mixes-jar>
- [Maine Holiday Gifts from the Kitchen](#) – The University of Maine Cooperative Extension
- [Christmas Magic for Pennies](https://www.uaex.uada.edu/counties/miller/Christmas%20Magic%20for%20Pennies%20-%20accessible.pdf) – University of Arkansas Research & Extension <https://www.uaex.uada.edu/counties/miller/Christmas%20Magic%20for%20Pennies%20-%20accessible.pdf>

As always, use safe food handling practices for your gifts. Wash your hands. Use clean containers and equipment. Be sure the closure fits well to prevent damage or spills. Don't forget to add the instructions to the container!



## **Still Time to Bake Holiday Cookies!**

There are thousands of cookie recipes in a variety of shapes, sizes, textures, and flavors. During the holidays, cookies are a special treat and everyone has a favorite. Let's see how a traditional chocolate chip cookie can be altered for a different look.

Chocolate chip manufacturers have made special holiday shapes. Simply replace the regular chips with these fancy chips. Try adding some frosting and colored sprinkles for extra sparkle.

To change the texture and color, try these tips, one at a time, from the book *CookWise* by Shirley O. Corriher:

### **For More Spread**

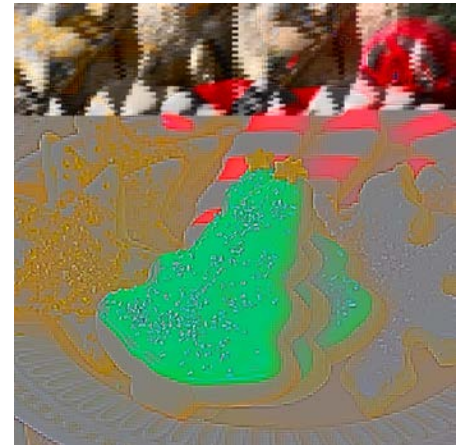
- Use butter
- Increase liquid 1-2 tablespoons
- Increase sugar 1-2 tablespoons
- Warm cold ingredients to room temperature, don't refrigerate dough

### **For More Puff**

- Use shortening
- Use cake flour
- Reduce sugar a couple tablespoons
- Use all baking powder
- Use cold ingredients or refrigerate dough

### **For More Tenderness**

- Use cake flour



## **Healthy Food Options for Christmas and New Years**

If you want to try for a healthier meal for the holidays, here are some suggestions on how to use some substitutes when preparing your meal.

**Christmas** -- Mashed potatoes made with skim milk and low-fat broth, mashed sweet potatoes, vegetable or fruit-based stuffing, turkey or poultry without skin, ham baked without a glaze, gravy made from low-fat broth, baked white or sweet potatoes, fruit or vegetable platter, unsalted nuts, whole-grain breads, fruit crisp topped with oatmeal, quick bread made with one cup of prepared mincemeat, crustless sweet potato or pumpkin pie made with evaporated skim milk and egg whites or substitute, chocolate pudding made with skim milk, broth-based soups, frozen yogurt, cakes made with unsweetened applesauce, reduced-fat eggnog.

**New Year's** -- Reduce temptations by not standing near food tables at parties.

Watch the liquid calories! Space out alcoholic drinks with a glass of water, club soda, or other unsweetened beverages in between.

Be physically active 30 or more minutes on five or more days a week to relieve stress, improve sleep, and for overall health.

## **Holiday Candies**

When it comes to making holiday candy, K-State Research and Extension food scientist Karen Blakeslee says it's a cooking process that usually turns into a science experiment.

"Really, any kind of baking – whether we're talking about making candy or something else – it really is a science, and that's one of the reasons why we encourage people to follow directions and use trusted recipes," Blakeslee said.

Blakeslee said there are two types of candies: Crystalline and non-crystalline. Fudge and fondant are examples of crystalline, while lollipops, taffy and caramels are examples of non-crystalline.

"Crystalline candies have tiny crystals in them," Blakeslee said. "The trick in making successful crystalline candy is how small or big those little crystals are."

"I've heard people say, 'My fudge is grainy.' That's because the crystals didn't get dissolved, or you didn't stir the fudge fast enough or at the right temperature. Many factors influence the size of the crystals and the smaller they are, the smoother the fudge will be."

Non-crystalline candy relies heavily on temperature and moisture.

"If it's a humid day, or it's raining outside, that's probably not the best day to make (non-crystalline) candy," Blakeslee said. "As you're cooking, the candy mixture can absorb moisture from the environment, and then it takes longer to remove the excess moisture."

To achieve the correct temperature, Blakeslee says:

- Use clean utensils. "It's better to use a wooden spoon as opposed to a metal spoon, because metal holds a lot of heat that can affect how your candy turns out."
- Use a heavy, stainless steel pan, rather than an aluminum pan, because it conducts heat more evenly.
- If the recipe calls for bringing the candy mixture to a boil, bring it to that point slowly. "Be patient," Blakeslee says.

"Probably the most critical thing in making any kind of candy is making sure you've got a good candy thermometer, whether it's one that has a bulb on it, or an instant read thermometer," Blakeslee said. Check the thermometer accuracy by boiling water and inserting the thermometer to see if it reads 212 degrees F. A candy thermometer with a clip allows you to attach it to the pan. Keep the bulb off the bottom of the pan to get the most accurate temperature reading.

More holiday candy tips:

### **Don't substitute key ingredients**

"If the recipe calls for cream, you don't want to use whole milk," Blakeslee said. "The fat is key to making the candy successful. This is one time when it's not a good idea to substitute key ingredients because it will affect the outcome of the product." Also, use fresh ingredients for the best results.

### **Don't double the batch**

Make one recipe at a time. "If you double the batch, it could affect how it heats up and the ability to cook the product properly," Blakeslee said. "And it will probably fail."

### **Follow cooking steps in the proper order**

Don't just dump everything in a pan and think that it's going to turn out properly. Adding ingredients in order helps the entire recipe mix together in the best way possible. For some, leaving out add-ins, such as nuts, is appropriate especially if nut allergies are known.



## **Adding other ingredients to candy recipes**

If adding nuts, peppermint candy or chocolate chips, they should be at room temperature before adding them to a mixture,” Blakeslee said. For example, toasted nuts should be cooled to room temperature before adding them to the candy. This prevents temperature changes that can change the final candy texture.

### **Peanut brittle: A Holiday favorite**

Peanut brittle is known for its airy texture, a result of using baking soda in the recipe. It also makes it easier to eat. “Most brittle recipes include a small amount of baking soda, which reacts with the small amount of acid that forms when heating sugar. It releases bubbles of carbon dioxide and the sugar traps the bubbles to create the foamy texture,” Blakeslee said. “Spread it out immediately on to a pan and let it cool.”

For a hard, crunchy texture, leave the baking soda out of the peanut brittle recipe.

### **Storing holiday candy**

Once done, candy should be stored in an airtight container at room temperature and out of sunlight. Cold storage can cause candy to absorb extra moisture and get sticky. Temperature changes in chocolate can cause chocolate bloom and a white dusty coating on the surface. Some candies should be wrapped individually in plastic wrap or wax paper, such as caramels or taffy. “That helps prevent moisture absorbing back into the candy and prevents them from sticking together,” Blakeslee said.

## **Recipes, Recipes, Recipes....**

If you are interested in new recipes to try or need information on cooking/baking terms, guides or video’s, check out some of the following websites:

The Home Baking Association -- <https://www.homebaking.org/recipes/>

King Arthur Baking Company -- <https://www.kingarthurbaking.com/learn>

Fleischmann’s Yeast -- <https://www.fleischmannsyeast.com/>

Red Star Yeast -- <https://redstaryeast.com/>

Eat Wheat -- <https://eatwheat.org/>

Wheat Foods Council -- <https://www.wheatfoods.org/>

K-State Human Nutrition website has information on Nutrition Topics and Cooking Basics. The Cooking Basics is especially helpful for someone new o cooking or need a refresher. There are various fact sheets that are available to help you prepare meals <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/humannutrition/nutrition-topics/cookingbasics.html>



Ford County Extension Office  
100 Gunsmoke Street  
Dodge City, KS 67801

Dear Friends,

Christmas Fantasies will be on Tuesday, December 10 this year. Tickets are available at both the Dodge City Senior Center and the Ford County Extension Office for \$5.00 or at the door on December 10. This is the 25<sup>th</sup> year for the Holiday event. We hope to see you all there.

We hope you all have a safe and happy holiday season! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!

Watch for future information concerning upcoming meetings by checking our website at [www.ford.ksu.edu](http://www.ford.ksu.edu) or you can email me if you have questions at [eschnewe@ksu.edu](mailto:eschnewe@ksu.edu) or give us a call.

Sincerely,



Ethel Schneweis  
County Extension Agent, Family and Consumer Sciences



**K-State Research and Extension**

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620-227-4542

Extension Districts, and  
U.S. Department of  
Agriculture  
Cooperating.

K-State Research and  
Extension is an equal  
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*"Knowledge  
for Life"*