

Healthy Georgia Connections

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NEWS YOU CAN USE FROM **UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA** COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

EXTENSION FEATURE

COVID-19 guidelines for agricultural operations

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Farmers and food processors take routine steps to reduce the likelihood of foodborne pathogens, like Salmonella and E. coli, contacting our food and causing illness. The procedures that our food industry takes on a daily basis are also effective in reducing the chances that the coronavirus responsible for COVID-19 will come in contact with the food we eat.

There is currently no evidence that the coronavirus is spread through contaminated food. This is in part because the virus primarily targets cells in the respiratory tract (lungs) rather than organs in the gastrointestinal tract (stomach and intestines), and because acids in the stomach likely inactivate ingested virus before it can cause harm.

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The 2020 Census and Extension funding

The census, which occurs every 10 years, is a count of every person living in the U.S. For the government to properly distribute \$675 billion to communities across the country, every person must be counted. An undercount of the population could significantly affect federal allocations to Georgia. Medicare (10%), Medicaid (45%) and the USDA (15%) account for over 70% of the federal allocation of funds made available to states based on census data. Programs affected by these allocations include Cooperative Extension; school lunch and breakfast programs; Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); and the Emergency Food Assistance Program. Two-thirds of the federal funding for Extension is formula-based:

- 20% is equally divided between states
- 40% is based on rural population
- 40% is based on farm population

Georgia has a significant rural and farm population, so it is critical that every person is counted. The census deadline is Oct. 31.

Learn more at t.uga.edu/5WA or visit 2020census.gov.

Fill out your 2020 Census online today.



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FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES

With school out, access to dairy critical for children

Cal Powell

Director of communications, College of Family and Consumer Sciences

Widespread school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic have raised concerns about students' lack of access to dairy products.

"While kids are out of school, they may be missing out on an important part of their healthy diets: milk," said Ali Berg, a faculty member in the University of Georgia College of Family and Consumer Sciences and UGA Extension nutrition and health specialist. "When school is out, kids should still be encouraged to get enough dairy foods every day."

Berg urged parents and caretakers to check with their local school district to see if meals are being served in their area.

While most people may think of milk and dairy foods as only providing calcium, dairy is actually an important contributor of several nutrients to the diets of both children and adults, including potassium, protein, and vitamins A and D, Berg said.

Calcium and vitamin D are essential for bone health, while vitamin A assists in vision and immune function. Potassium helps with healthy blood pressure and protein is good for muscle development and a variety of other functions.



Milk consumption is especially important for children and adolescents who are still developing bone mass, Berg said.

"Kids go through stages of picky eating, but most kids will still drink milk during this time," Berg said. "Milk is a great way to make sure they're getting many of the healthy nutrients they need."

Read more at t.uga.edu/5Wv.

Guidelines, continued from previous page

Despite the safety of our food supply, during the current pandemic and other viral outbreaks there are further considerations farms and agricultural businesses must take in order to protect their workers and customers.

FARMS, PACKINGHOUSES AND FOOD PROCESSORS

Sick workers should never be allowed to come to work, and they should understand that there is no punishment for them if and when they call in sick.

Encourage distancing of at least 6 feet between workers at all time, including on buses transporting groups of workers

to the field and on the packing line when possible. Only one employee should be in the cab of a truck, and frequently touched surfaces like the steering wheel or door handles should be cleaned and disinfected when passengers leave or enter a vehicle.

Frequently touched surfaces within the farm or facility should be cleaned and disinfected throughout the day and between shift changes. The CDC recommends a list of EPA-approved disinfectants that are effective against coronavirus.

Read more at t.uga.edu/5WS.

4-H YOUTH**Interactive science-based resources for youth****Kasey Bozeman***UGA Extension 4-H specialist, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences*

Over the last few years, science education has evolved into a cross-curricular experience. Initially focusing on natural sciences and evolving into an all-encompassing experience with other disciplines, current science education programs are quite popular among today's children and youth.

With more families spending time together, simple science activities are great ways to engage in hands-on learning. Science and environmental education resources can be boredom busters while also developing critical life skills.

When looking for projects to complete with your family, consider activities that require minimal supplies that are easily found around the house.

Many times, resources also provide recommended age groups. This ensures that the challenge will not be too easy, which can lead to boredom, or too difficult, which can lead to frustration.

Be sure that you are consulting credible sources that also explain the science behind the project. Having research-based information that describes the “how and why” of the project is valuable for the participants.

It's great if a child can inflate a balloon using a chemical

reaction between baking soda and vinegar. It's even better if they can explain what happened — and that carbon dioxide was released as part of the process.

RECOMMENDED EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INCLUDE:

- **National 4-H Council's STEM Lab:**
4-h.org/parents/stem-agriculture/youth-stem-activities
- **James Dyson Foundation challenges:**
www.jamesdysonfoundation.com
- **Scientific American education resources:**
scientificamerican.com/education/bring-science-home
- **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration resource collections:**
noaa.gov/education/resource-collections

During this time, it is also important for families to spend time outdoors, maintaining proper social distancing guidelines. Being outdoors can foster creativity, promote physical activity, and relieve stress and tension. Some families have backyards, while others may only have small green spaces within their city.

Regardless of your setting, Georgia 4-H has created numerous activity guides to help youth explore the outdoors. From looking at logs to creating leaf rubbings, these simple activities allow for nature discovery.

Access these resources and others related to environmental education at tinyurl.com/4HvirtualEE.

AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

How to plan your garden

Robert Westerfield

UGA Extension horticulturist, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences



Determining how much of each vegetable you should plant in a garden can sometimes be confusing. Much of that decision should be based on the size of your family and what you like to eat. Available garden space can also influence how much you choose to grow.

I'll admit that I tend to overplant when it comes to vegetable gardening. There is something in my blood that says, if the ground is bare, it should be planted. When it comes to vegetable gardening, you need to put a little more thought into how much you truly need.

I believe the key is to think about how often you want to eat each vegetable or if you would like to prepare the harvest for long-term storage. That will definitely have an impact on how much you should grow.

If you do happen to plant too much, you can always share with neighbors or extended family. Many food banks at this time will be happy to accept your fresh vegetable donations.

For specific guidelines to help you plan the perfect garden and keep you with fresh vegetables throughout the season, visit t.uga.edu/5Wt.

EXTENSION PUBLICATION

Eating Healthier for Less: t.uga.edu/5f6

This publication includes information on how to spend smarter at the grocery store, including tips for using grocery shopping pick-up and delivery services.

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AG PRODUCTS CONNECTION

In collaboration with Georgia Grown and other industry partners, UGA Extension is using its network of county offices to connect agricultural producers with consumers looking for fresh, Georgia-grown products. Visit t.uga.edu/308.



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Our purpose: We translate the science of everyday living for farmers, families and communities to foster a healthy and prosperous Georgia.



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