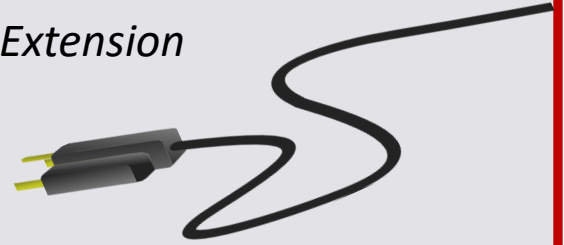


The Extension Cord

Plugging You into Macon-Bibb County Extension



Green Enchilada Chicken Soup

inspired by Seeking Good Eats

INGREDIENTS

- 2.5 lbs. boneless skinless chicken
- 28 oz. green enchilada sauce
- 24 oz. low sodium chicken broth
- 1 c. half & half or heavy cream
- 2 c. Monterey jack cheese
- 4 oz. Neufchâtel cheese
- 4 oz. green salsa (Salsa Verde)
- salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS (SLOW COOKER)

- Wash hands with soap and water.
- In a 6-quart slow cooker, add chicken breast or thighs, green enchilada sauce, and chicken broth. Cook on **LOW** 6 to 8 hours.
- Remove chicken and shred. Add shredded chicken, Monterey jack cheese, Neufchâtel cheese, half & half, and green salsa to slow cooker. Turn slow cooker to warm and stir until cheeses are melted. *Add hot sauce or additional salsa to taste.*
- Serve and enjoy! Delicious topped with avocado, cilantro, green onion, and sour cream.

DIRECTIONS (INSTANT POT)

- Wash hands with soap and water.
- Cook your chicken on high pressure with 1 c. of broth for 8 minutes. Do a quick release for 10 minutes. Remove chicken and shred.
- Add shredded chicken, enchilada sauce, half & half, Monterey jack cheese, Neufchâtel cheese, and green salsa to the pot. Stir and heat soup until its warm and the cheese is melted.
- Season with salt and pepper if needed.



Something for Everyone in the Family!

By Karol Kelly, ANR Agent

Late winter into early spring is always a 'hopeful' time of year. We are planning ahead, looking forward to what is new and exciting, better and healthier for us. The holidays have passed, we've made our resolutions (and maybe stuck to a few) and the warmer days make us excited for all of the blossoms, bees, and color that will soon explode!

Bibb County Cooperative Extension offers some great programs to support resolutions for a healthier happier you as well as support those of you plant addicts out there. Please enjoy our most recent newsletter which includes handy tips as well as information about upcoming programs, including VITA, Food Talk, gardening, and 4-H Camp. We are wishing you a healthy, happy year ahead!

UGA Extension, Macon-Bibb County

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Find us on Facebook at "Bibb County GA Cooperative Extension"

Macon-Bibb County Cooperative Extension extends lifelong learning to Georgia citizens through unbiased, research-based education in agriculture, the environment, communities, youth, and families.

An Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, Veteran, Disability Institution

If you are an individual with a disability who may require assistance or accommodation in order to participate in or receive the benefit of a service, program, or activity of UGA, or if you desire more information, please contact us.



“Making Tomorrow’s Leaders Today Through
Macon-Bibb 4-H”

Winter Activities at Home!

Looking for ways to stay busy when you are not in school?

Grow It

4-H agriculture programs equip young people with the skills they need to succeed. Discover ways you can engage with growing something from a seed.

4-h.org/programs/agriculture/



Cook It

Discover a delicious recipe from the 4-H Fresh Chefs Cookbook. The digital cookbook features 50 recipes from 4-H’ers and 4-H Alumni across the country.

4-h.org/programs/healthy-habits/



Build It

Dive into the world of STEAM where 4-H brings areas include computer science, robotics, aerospace, physics, chemistry, and veterinary science.

4-h.org/programs/robotics/



4-H help youth gain knowledge and develop life skills through hands-on learning experiences focused on leadership, citizenship, and S.T.E.A.M., which will enable them to become self-directing & productive leaders.



Join Our Clubs

Consumer Judging

Open to all 4th-12th graders. 4-H’ers learn and test their knowledge concerning agricultural commodities and make rational decisions when purchasing goods and services.

Livestock Team

Open to all 4th-12th grade. 4-H’ers to take responsibility in raising, showing and judging livestock.

Life Smarts

Open to all 7th-12th. 4-H’ers will prepare through online TeamSmarts quizzes gaining financial, environmental, health technology and consumer skills.

Outdoor Club

Open to all 5th-12th graders. 4-H’ers will gain skills related to plant identification and forestry techniques. 4-H’ers will compete against teams at competition.

Archery Team

Open to 4th-12th grade. 4-H’ers acquire knowledge relevant to teamwork, leadership, safety and the responsible use of archery.

Public Speaking

Open to all 4th-12th graders. 4-H’ers will enhance their public speaking skills and compete in topic of interest.

Contact Us For More Details On All Events & Activities

Macon-Bibb County Cooperative Extension
715 Oglethorpe Street, Macon, GA 31201

Extension.UGA.Edu/Bibb | 478-751-6358 | Bibb.Extension@UGA.Edu

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Beat the Winter Blahs!

By Keishon Thomas, FACS Agent

Dark mornings and evenings with gray overcast days in between means winter is here - and for a little razzle-dazzle, so are the “winter blahs.” Experts at the National Institutes of Health say the winter blahs are common and are usually marked by feelings of sadness, fatigue, difficulty concentrating and disruption of sleep schedule during the winter season.

The good news? There are things you can do to combat the winter blahs. Macon-Bibb Cooperative Extension recommends the following tips:

- * **Get Moving** — Getting at least 30 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity four times a week has been shown to boost mood, decrease the blahs and reduce stress. Remember there are a variety of ways to engage in physical activity. Dancing it out is one of my favorites.
- * **Sleep routine** — While it may be tempting to enjoy extra sleep, it is best to stick with a regular sleep schedule, which means waking up at the same time on both weekends and weekdays. You may also want to establish a soothing bedtime ritual, including minimizing distractions and making your sleep area comfortable and slightly cool.
- * **Laugh, Laugh, Laugh** — Experts believe that laughter stimulates processes in the brain that counter depressive symptoms. Queue up a stream of LOL movies; call or see that favorite friend or family member who keeps you in stitches.
- * **Seek out the sun** — Getting outside is important during the winter months! Symptoms of the blahs are enhanced by a lack of sun exposure. Being in sunlight helps to balance serotonin activity, increase melatonin production (important for sleep), and increase vitamin D levels, all of which in turn can lead to improved emotional state.
- * **Boost your mood with food** — Consider the food you eat. Consuming protein with breakfast (If you are not eating breakfast, you should begin.), lunch, and dinner can enhance mood and prevent sugar and carb cravings later in the day. Don't forget to include foods high in vitamin D, such as fatty fish, and vitamin D-fortified foods like milk and yogurt.
- * **Practice an Attitude of Gratitude** — Focusing on gratitude can improve overall happiness and help stave off blah symptoms by shifting the brain's focus toward positive experiences. Gratitude affects brain function on a chemical level, and its practice promotes feelings of self-worth and compassion for others.
- * **Seek help** — If these tips are not enough to get you out of the winter blahs, don't be afraid to ask for help. Blahs can also be a part of some other system. Chronic pain, headaches, sleep disorders, and even heart disease have all been linked to depression symptoms. Check with your healthcare provider to make sure winter blahs aren't something more serious.

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EXTENSION!**

**APPOINTMENTS
BEGIN JANUARY
31ST!**

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Summer Weed Control Starts Now

By Karol Kelly, ANR Agent

For many of us, our natural instinct is to solve problems when they occur rather than work to prevent them. This is especially true when we look out at all of the winter weeds popping up! Henbit, annual bluegrass and all of the other usual

suspects should have been treated last fall. However, this is the prime time to get a jump on those summer weeds - an ounce of prevention goes a long way. A split application of pre-emergence herbicide (with the first in mid-February and the follow-up 45 days later) will prevent a number of our summer weed problems.

There are a couple of things that you should know before you buy herbicide. First and most importantly, you need

to know what type of grass you have. Centipede and St. Augustine are more 'sensitive' and thus can be more easily injured if the wrong chemical is applied. Knowing the types of weed(s) you typically have in your summer lawn is also good to know. Herbicides offer varying degrees of control on different kinds of weeds.

Although heavily marketed in our area, 'weed and feed' products are not recommended for warm season grasses. Apply herbicides now, but postpone fertilizing lawns until they are totally greened-up and actively growing. Early-to-mid May is a good rule of thumb.

Herbicides should only be used on healthy, well-established lawns and watered in. Please call or email for herbicide recommendations for your landscape. Last, but definitely not least, always read and follow the product label recommendations.

The Gardens At Brookdale HOME GARDENING SERIES

Join us as we guide you through the essentials—from preparing the soil to reaping the harvest and all the steps in between! All classes will be held at The Gardens At Brookdale and registration will be required. Stay tuned for more information!

WINTER / EARLY SPRING

January 20, 2024

- Backyard Composting

February 3, 2024

- Soil Testing & Fertilizing
- Early Spring Planting

February 17, 2024

- 2nd Early Spring Planting
- Seed Starting

March 2, 2024

- Pruning Fruit Trees and bushes

March 16, 2024

- Potato Planting



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