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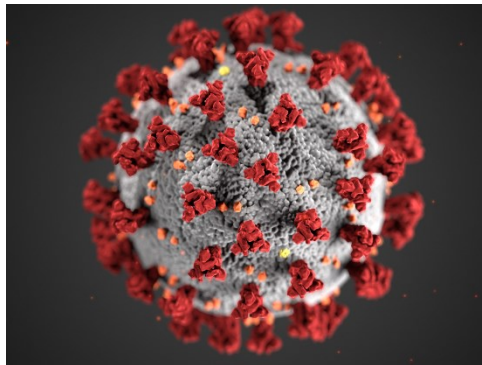
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Farmers Markets, Food Safety, and COVID-19



COVID-19 is the official name of this new virus. The 'CO' stands for 'corona,' 'VI' for 'virus,' and 'D' for disease. The '19' is for year 2019.

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus. It is a respiratory disease transmitted from person-to-person.

Currently, there is no evidence that food transmits COVID-19. What is important is to use safe food handling practices, most importantly, washing your hands frequently and cleaning surfaces with soap and water, then disinfectant.

It is almost farmers market season. Whether or not a market will be open near you depends on the decisions of local leaders. The sale of food and food products is considered an essential function.

The [Kansas Department of Agriculture](http://www.kansas.gov) offers guidance for those markets that will be open. The primary concern is the safety of customers, farmers and staff.

Social distancing must be a priority. No unpackaged foods can be offered for self service. Keep hands as clean as possible by using a portable handwashing station or hand sanitizer. Clean surfaces and frequently touched areas often. Anyone, including customers, with signs of illness must stay home.

For more information on food safety related to COVID-19, see www.ksre.k-state.edu/foodsafety/topics/covid19.html.

Food Science in Action Competition

Do you know a budding videographer? The Institute of Food Technologists is having a video competition for K-12 students.

This year's theme is "Serious Ink: Know What's on Your Food Label!"

The goal is to improve

label literacy through a 1- to 5-minute video to help consumers understand food package labels.

There are three categories, Elementary school (K-5), Middle school (6-8), and High School and above (9-12, higher education.)

Submit your video by May 11, 2020. Information and how to submit a video can be found at www.ift.org/news-and-publications/scientific-journals/journal-of-food-science-education/jfse-food-science-in-action-competition.

How Safe is Grocery Shopping?

We have to give grocery stores a lot of credit for going above and beyond to keep their doors open these days. So, while they do their part to keep food safe, we must do the same.

Do you need to let groceries sit in the garage for a few days after bringing them home? This can have some other serious food safety implications for perishable

foods such as milk and meat. There is some indication that COVID-19 can inactivate at room temperature. But all groceries would have to be contaminated to be an issue. Simply wash your hands after shopping, put away groceries safely, then wash your hands again.

Cleaning food packages or washing fresh produce with soap is not recom-

mended. Fresh produce can be safely washed and scrubbed in plain water. After handling packages, simply wash your hands again before food preparation.

Reusable bags are not recommended for use in some stores. Wash these bags often to keep them clean. Throw away plastic bags.

Source: <https://bit.ly/34zMjyR>



Plan ahead! Shop your kitchen first. Make a list to make your shopping trip efficient.

Ask an Expert!



Do you have questions about food? We are here to help.

This online form directs your questions directly to us so we, at K-State Research and Extension, can help. This tool was

created by eXtension.org. When we receive your question, we will respond to you through this system.

So what kind of food questions do you have? Our Food Science team

will do our best to provide you research-based answers in a timely manner.

Try it out at www.rrc.k-state.edu/ask-an-expert.html

Guidance for Face Masks

Some really creative versions of face masks are appearing everywhere to protect each other from COVID-19. Here are some resources to guide you in your choice of face mask for you and your family.

- [Children and Masks](#)—Kansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
- [Kansas Homemade Mask/Cloth Covering Guide](#)—Kansas Department of Health and Environment
- [Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Multi-layered, tightly-woven 100% cotton.

Save surgical or N95 masks for healthcare providers! Use cotton thread counts of 100+.



Avoid your face. Remove it from behind.

Never touch the front of the mask. Always remove it from behind your head.



Scrap it if it's damaged, soiled or doesn't fit.

Make sure it's breathable & fits snug. Don't use damp, wet or dirty masks.



Keep it clean — the mask & your hands.

Wash your hands before you put it on & after you take it off. Use a clean mask each day.

Practice Now for the Fair!



Seeded Hearth Bread

Whether or not county fairs happen this summer, take advantage of this time to practice baking for the fair!

While there are millions of recipes to try, not all recipes are safe for the fair. Research now so it is not a last minute decision. Practice recipes to learn how they bake with your equipment and in your home oven.

That practice can also help improve measuring, mixing and shaping skills. Take notes to help you remember what worked well, along with what didn't work. Another idea is to video yourself so you can see your progress.

Use fresh ingredients. Leavening agents, such as baking powder, baking soda, and yeast, can expire and lose their leavening action. Whole grain flour and fats can become rancid if not stored properly. Old spices will not produce optimum flavors.

If you made a great product, freeze it! Cool it completely, double wrap and freeze. This works best up to four weeks prior to the fair.

Source: Home Baking Association



Food Preservation Online

Looking for ways to learn about food preservation? Videos can help! There are several available to help guide you.

From selecting recipes to storage, the process of preserving food safely is

in your hands! Start with reliable, tested recipes and follow them exactly. A lot of science goes into food preservation, so using researched recipes is the best choice. Using untested recipes, methods or outdated equip-

ment can lead to spoiled food or foodborne illness.

So let us help! See the video selections at www.rrc.k-state.edu/preservation/videos.html

Many publications are also available at your fingertips! Learn more at www.rrc.k-state.edu/preservation/index.html



Many recipes can be found at www.homebaking.org/recipes/

Virtual Baking Instruction

It seems that flour is flying off of grocery store shelves these days! Baking is a great way to incorporate STEM education during these days of online education and school at home.

To help in this endeavor, the Home Baking Association has a vast list of resources at the click of your computer mouse. Resources are grouped by age category including Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary ages.

The Home Baking Association strives to teach essential living skills while connecting with agricultural and food science, retail baking, milling and baking engineering and technology.

Learn more at www.homebaking.org/distance-learning/.

Kansas State University
Research & Extension

Rapid Response Center
221 Call Hall
Manhattan, Kansas 66506

Phone: 785-532-1673
Fax: 785-532-3295
Email: kblakesl@ksu.edu

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Fighting Norovirus with Cranberries



Maine cranberries

Cranberries have beneficial properties for our health, including kidney and urinary tract health. New research has found another use for cranberries, to fight the foodborne illness Norovirus associated with fresh produce.

This preliminary study is a new treatment using cranberry juice

and fruit extract to make an edible coating that is sprayed onto produce. When used along with a low dosage of gamma irradiation, or cold pasteurization, the study showed the coating eliminated contamination. Without the coating, the dosage of irradiation needed to kill norovirus is three kilograys. But with the cranberry coating, that dosage can be cut in half. This reduction can help preserve the quality properties of produce.

Norovirus is caused by person-to-person contact, touching contaminated surfaces, and consuming contaminated food or water.

Sources: www.ift.org/iftnext/2020/april/a-new-tool-in-the-fight-against-foodborne-infections and <https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/index.html>



Karen Blakeslee, M.S.



On the Web at
www.rrc.ksu.edu



Produce Traceability App

To help small produce farmers track their produce operation from farm to buyer, a new

Traceability App for Produce Growers is available.

The app allows the grower to map their fields, designate a code for each commodity

grown, generate a harvest date and lot code, and create a product sticker to print out the information and adhere to the packaging. These lot codes can also be added to invoices for the buyers.

This tool will enhance the small produce growers ability to track their crops and in the case of a recall, that product can be easily tracked back to a specific field.

Learn more at www.ksre.ksu.edu/foodsafety/produce/index.html.

