

# Living Well

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES NEWSLETTER FOR NORTHEAST COLORADO



## May-June, 2023

### Start Planning What to do With This Year's Produce

Canning season is upon us! If you love to garden or hate letting food go to waste, you should visit the Colorado State University's Preserve Smart Website:

<https://apps.chhs.colostate.edu/preservesmart/>

This website contains several recipes, and the website is user friendly! Simply select the category of fruits, vegetables, meat, or fermentation! Find the produce you plan to can in the alphabetized list and select it. After selecting the produce, you then get a variety of recipe options! The recipes range from canning, freezing, drying, and even pickling. Each recipe gives detailed instructions that have been tested and provide safely preserved foods! Another bonus of browsing the Preserve Smart Website is tasty new ideas or alternative routes of preservation such as freezing, drying, and other ways. For example, eastern Colorado is a great environment to grow zucchini and families often face food waste because of the abundance! Although sautéed zucchini and squash is delicious, finding new ways to cook and utilize the abundance in your garden can be difficult and lead to burnout. Find some new and unique preserving options at this link: <https://apps.chhs.colostate.edu/preservesmart/produce/index/squash-summer/>

Another option for any excess food that you may have towards the end of the growing season is Grow & Give. This program was created to address food insecurity in Colorado by connecting backyard community gardens to food donation sites across the state. Between 2021 and 2022 there were over 3,000 donations made across the state! If you are interested in learning more about this program or where to donate food, contact your local Extension Office or go to: <https://growgive.extension.colostate.edu/>



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**GOLDEN PLAINS AREA**  
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION

Colorado State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Kit Carson, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, and Yuma Counties cooperating.

Extension programs are available to all without discrimination.

## Family Activity as School is Out

Family Activities that are fun for both Kids and Parents!



The school year is nearing completion and summer is about to begin! As parents, we may have some fun activities, events, or trips already planned for the summer months, but it is those days in between that can become long and hard on both parents and children. It is often felt that ‘something’ needs to be occurring each day of the week outside of the house in order for the day to seem fun and exciting to prevent the dreaded, “I’m bored” statement being made. There are many activities that can be planned to take place right within our home, cost nothing and help keep our children entertained.

It is quite easy for kids to get in a summer slump and begin to spend too much time in front of a screen. Setting a schedule and creating a routine can be helpful tools to prevent the urge to want to sleep in all hours of the morning or play video games or electronics continually. Having a chore or task for the day also adds responsibility and disbursement of tasks, allowing parents more time to enjoy fun activities with their children as well.



There are many summer activities that are free and fun! Summer does not have to be expensive, so take advantage of events and resources in your community. Plan a picnic at the park, go for a bike ride, camp out in your backyard, or attend a local library or museum program. There are many activities you can do as a family in your home; you can build a blanket fort, have a cooking competition, make a time capsule to open in a year or even later, make an obstacle course, plan, and cook meals together, have a water fight, or complete a project or craft. While there are some activities that cost money, like going swimming, to the movies, or bowling, those spread out throughout the summer are relatively cheap and fun options for families. If you are lucky enough to have a state park or pond to take a nature walk or to fish, take the time to explore and get outdoors. Planting a family garden can be another fun option for families to spend time together both in the garden and cooking with the produce from the garden later.



Whether you are wanting a very structured summer with many activities planned weekly, or just want to spice up your days by adding a few different activities throughout, there are so many options once you start thinking outside the box. The idea is to make memories together and keep your children’s minds stimulated throughout the summer months. Relax and enjoy your time together during this fun season!

## Springtime Gardening

It is that time of year again... Spring! This is a wonderful season when our landscape turns from drab to beautiful vibrant colors. It is the perfect time to start working on your garden. Colorado's weather and varying elevations can make it challenging to grow fruits and vegetables. Early-season plants are often the easiest to grow and most productive in Colorado.



But before any seeds are planted, do some planning and preparation. Decide what plants you want to grow this year and read the information on the seed package to help with planting depth, days to maturity, and hardiness zones. Look for plant varieties that have a shorter growing period. Create a sketch of your garden, labeling which plants will go in different locations. Remember to plant crops of the same family in a different place every year (crop rotation).

Keep in mind which plants grow better next to each other (companion planting), and which plants need more space to grow. Some plants require direct sun and others need shade. Think about water access (garden hose, drip lines, or sprinklers). You might also consider raised beds for plants that require warmer soil temperatures.

Figure out if plants will be sowed directly into the ground, started indoors, or starter plants purchased. If seeds are started outside, the ground needs to be prepared. Take a soil sample to see what nutrients are present and what is needed to create a healthy soil mixture. Use a cultivator or spade to mix and fluff the soil. Then refer to your garden sketch and start pulling rows or creating space for your chosen vegetables or fruits. Plant some of your vegetables in succession of two- or three-week intervals to extend your harvest (i.e., lettuce or radishes). If seeds are started inside or plants are purchased, remember to "harden" your plants before they go outside. Be ready to cover plants to protect them from late season snow, hail, and early season freezes. Remember some plants need support, so use tomato cages, trellises, or bamboo stakes.

The hard work is finished, now sit back, and watch your plants grow. Keep close observations in a notebook, including when you planted various crops, temperature, precipitation, and harvest dates. This will help you figure out what works best for your garden or what you will change for next year. Happy Spring Planting!

More resources:

Growing Plants from Seeds <https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/growing-plants-from-seed-7-409/>

Colorado Vegetable Guide <https://growgive.extension.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/63/2022/12/CO-Vegetable-Guide-Updated-for-Print-Dec-2022.pdf>

CO-HORTS blog <https://csuhort.blogspot.com/p/csu-extension-spring-gardening-webinars.html>

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>

## Teaching Kids Smart Money Habits During Summer



Keeping kids entertained through the summer can be difficult, especially if you are trying to save money. Having an allowance can be a great way to keep from reaching into your wallet too much and teach your youth the value of money. Below are some ideas on how to teach your kids smart money habits during the summer break.

**Decide on the terms** – This is the first step when explaining the plan to your children. Discuss with them why they are receiving an allowance, whether they need to earn it, how much money they will receive, and how often they will receive money. You can also discuss under circumstances their allowance might be revoked.

**Specify how your child can use the allowance** – You should establish rules as to where and how their allowance may be spent. Use this opportunity to talk to them about saving money and creating a budget. Talk to them about saving up for a more expensive activity and make sure the activities they plan to participate in are safe. Another idea is to require a certain percentage of each allowance payment be put into savings.

**Set up a savings account** – As you establish the allowance terms, consider opening one for your child, depending on their age. This can be another learning opportunity to teach them how to open a bank account, how interest works, and how to track how much money is in their account. If you do not wish to start a bank account, using a jar or piggy bank is another great way to teach about saving money.

**Discuss money and each purchase with your child** – Each purchase they make can be another great learning opportunity. Ask your child to talk with you about their planned purchases. You can offer insight or expertise such as where to purchase discounted items or discuss the pros and cons of each one.

**Additional tips for implementing an allowance:**

- Be consistent. Set specific dates to pay the allowance.
- Establish who gets how much. If you have multiple children, determine if older siblings should receive more money than younger siblings or will each child receive the same amount.
- Pay allowance in cash. Prepaid debit cards are usually associated with high maintenance and over-the-limit fees.
- Remember, initially kids and teens will make mistakes with their allowances. They may spend all of their allowances right away, but this is a great opportunity for them to learn essential life skills such as saving, math, and budgeting.

Article adapted from: <https://www.deltacommunitycu.com/us/en/knowledge-center/blog/june-2013/teaching-kids-smart-money-habits-during-summer-bre.html>

And [https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs\\_ext\\_vt\\_edu/2912/2912-7042/2912-7042\\_pdf.pdf](https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/2912/2912-7042/2912-7042_pdf.pdf)



## Hydration & Infused Water



With water making up nearly 60% of the human body, it plays a vital role in your overall health. Consuming water has several health benefits, including appetite control, healthy skin, improved digestion, lubrication and cushioning of our joints, increased energy, kidney health, improved cognitive function, and more. As the weather turns towards warmer summer days, it is important to remember water is the healthiest choice when choosing a beverage to quench your thirst. However, some may struggle to consume enough water because they dislike the plain taste. Learning how to make healthy, nutritious flavored water with foods, herbs, and spices can help turn plain water into a refreshing, no-calorie, healthy beverage choice.

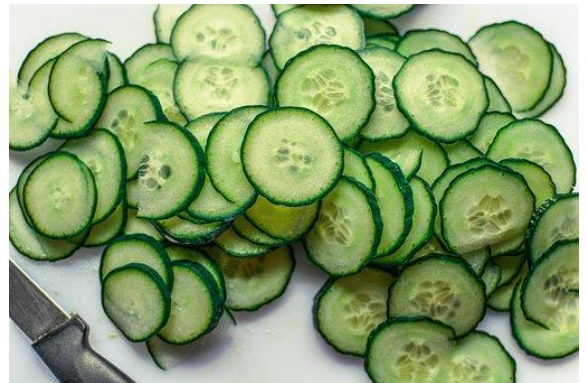
### Choose Your Infusion:

Think about fruits, vegetables and herbs that would be easy to infuse into water. Fruits and vegetables contain a high-juice content and herbs, spices or even edible flowers can be added for extra flavor. Here are some ideas:

- **Fruit:** berries, citrus, melon, tropical fruits, apples, grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums
- **Vegetables:** carrots, celery, cucumber, fennel, peppers (hot or sweet)
- **Herbs:** basil, cilantro, mint, parsley, rosemary, sage, tarragon, thyme
- **Spices:** cardamom pods, cinnamon sticks, cloves, fresh ginger, star anise, whole pepper, vanilla bean
- **Edible flowers:** citrus blossoms, hibiscus, lavender, pansies, rose, or violets. They must be 100% pesticide free.

### Prepare fresh fruit-infused water safely:

- Choose a container such as a lidded jar, pitcher, or water bottle.
- Inspect the fresh produce thoroughly to ensure it is intact without bruises or damage.
- When buying pre-cut fresh fruit or vegetables, such as melon cubes, only choose refrigerated items or items surrounded by ice.
- Before preparing, wash your hands thoroughly with soap under warm running water.
- Peel the citrus fruits from their skin to avoid a bitter taste. Use thin slices or small cubes so the flavor will infuse easier.
- Squeeze or slightly mash and break down the fruit/vegetables if desired. Gently tear, rub, or crush the herb leaf to release the natural extracts and oils.
- Add the washed fruit, vegetables, herbs, or spices to the container and fill it with cool water.
- Date the infused water, store it in a clean sealed container and refrigerate it for 24 hours at 40 degrees F or lower.
- Remove fruit from the water after 24 hours so it does not go rancid.



- Fresh infused water should be stored in a tightly covered container in the refrigerator for about six days.
- Try different flavor combinations. Be creative!

**Give these fruit-infused water recipes a try to help satisfy your thirst!**

**Watermelon and Rosemary**

- Dice two cups of watermelon.
- Cut two sprigs of rosemary.
- Add watermelon and rosemary to your water container.
- Add two cups or more of ice.
- Fill the pitcher with water to the top and stir.
- Refrigerate for a few hours or overnight for maximum fruit flavor infusion.
- Serve chilled or over ice.

**Give these other refreshing combinations a try!**

1. Blackberry + sage
2. Cantaloupe + honeydew + basil
3. Jalapeno + cucumber + basil
4. Peach + blueberry
5. Raspberry + lemon + rosemary
6. Pear or apple + cinnamon stick + cloves
7. Watermelon + honeydew + mint
8. Orange + blueberry + basil
9. Cucumber + lime + strawberry + mint
10. Lemon + thyme



Dehydration can lead to headaches, muscle spasms, and heat stroke. Drinking water infused with fruits, vegetables, or herbs is a smart and tasty way to stay hydrated all year.

Adapted from: <https://uwyoextension.org/uwnutrition/newsletters/thirst-quenching-infused-waters/>

Source: <https://www.eatright.org/health/>

## Keep Your Cool

**HEAT RELATED ILLNESS**

**HOW TO PREVENT HEAT RELATED ILLNESS**

**STAY COOL** **STAY HYDRATED** **STAY INFORMED**

**HEAT STROKE**

**WHAT TO LOOK FOR**

- Confusion
- Fainting
- Body temp over 104°F
- Hot, dry skin
- Nausea
- Rapid heartbeat
- Quick, shallow breathing

**HEAT EXHAUSTION**

**WHAT TO LOOK FOR**

- Heavy sweating
- Cold, pale, clammy skin
- Dizziness
- Weakness
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting

Summertime brings lots of sunshine and warm temperatures that give us many opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors. It is easy to get wrapped up in doing what we are doing outside and overlook the importance of taking precautions and staying safe. Heat related illnesses and deaths are preventable, yet over 700 people die in the U.S. each year. Stay cool, stay hydrated and stay informed this summer to avoid heat related illnesses.

High humidity and certain personal characteristics are two of the main things that affect our body's ability to cool itself

during hot weather. High humidity causes sweat to evaporate more slowly so our body cannot release heat as fast as it may need to. Age, obesity, dehydration, poor circulation, sunburn, certain medications, and alcohol use are some examples of personal factors that can impact how effectively our body cools. In general, people who are 65 and older, children younger than two, and people with chronic illnesses are at highest risk.

No matter what your age or condition, everyone runs the risk for heat related illnesses. Do your best to keep your cool and manage the summertime heat by practicing the following:

- Drink more water than usual even if you do not feel thirsty. Staying adequately hydrated is a great defense against heat related conditions.
- Limit outdoor activity on high temperature days, especially midday when the sun is hottest. If you want or need to be outside, try to schedule activities earlier or later in the day when the temperature is cooler.
- Wear loose, lightweight, and light-colored clothing.
- Take cool showers or baths to cool down.
- Check the local news for health and safety updates. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention also has a Heat and Health Tracker that tracks local heat and health information so people can prepare for and respond to extreme heat events - <https://ephtracking.cdc.gov/Applications/heatTracker/>.

Know the warning signs of heat-related illnesses and seek medical attention if needed. Symptoms of heat cramps include heavy sweating during intense exercise and muscle pain or spasms. Medical assistance is needed if cramps extend past 1 hour, you are on a low-sodium diet or have heart problems.

Heat exhaustion includes heavy sweating; cold, pale, and clammy skin; fast but weak pulse; nausea or vomiting; muscle cramps; weak or tired; dizziness; headache; fainting. Medical attention is needed if you are throwing up, symptoms get worse or last longer than 1 hour.

Heat stroke symptoms include a high body temperature (103° or above); hot, red, dry, or damp skin; fast, strong pulse; headache; dizziness; nausea; confusion; or loss of consciousness. Heat stroke is a medical emergency, so call 9-1-1 right away.

Summertime is a great time to be outside and stay active. Enjoy the outdoors even more this summer by staying safe on those extreme temperature days by keeping hydrated, cool, and aware.

## Program Highlights

CSU Extension is collaborating with Jane Barton, founder of Cardinal, LLC, to provide webinars for caregivers of older adults. In May, the topic will be Age-Friendly Health Care and in June, we will discuss Spirituality and Health. Scan the QR code in the flyer or email Ginger Williams as [ginger.williams@colostate.edu](mailto:ginger.williams@colostate.edu) to register to watch! Or you can check with your local Extension Office to see if they will be holding a watch party for the webinars.



**Caregiver Workshop Series**

CSU Extension is partnering with Jane Barton, founder of Cardinal, LLC, to share a series of life-changing FREE webinars for caregivers of aging family members or friends, or anyone who will be called to care. The monthly workshop series will cover topics such as: aging solo, age-friendly health care, spiritually and health, and THE conversation.

*Virtual Workshops*

10:30am - 12:00pm

- The Challenges of Aging Solo - 3/29
- Plotting & Planning - 4/26
- Age-friendly Health Care - 5/24
- Spirituality and Health - 6/21
- The Consequences of Caring - 8/30
- Your Final Act - 9/27
- THE Conversation - 10/25
- Resources for Caregivers - 11/29

To Sign up scan the QR Code  
or  
Contact:  
**Ginger Williams**  
[ginger.williams@colostate.edu](mailto:ginger.williams@colostate.edu)

Interested in hosting a watch party?  
**Contact your local  
Extension office!**

## Upcoming Events!

- **Morgan County Fresh Conversations**
  - During this monthly program for older adults, we will discuss a different food item, various forms of exercise, and sample a new recipe at the Gene Doty Senior Center in Fort Morgan. We will be meeting on May 9<sup>th</sup> and June 8<sup>th</sup> and July 11<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-3:00 p.m. For more information or to register, contact Katie Seelhoff at (970) 542-3540 or [Katie.seelhoff@colostate.edu](mailto:Katie.seelhoff@colostate.edu).
- **ServSafe Managers Training**
  - Tuesday, June 13<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Morgan County Fairgrounds. For more information or to register, contact Joy Akey at (970) 332-4151 or [joy.akey@colostate.edu](mailto:joy.akey@colostate.edu).
- **Be sure to check our Facebook page listed below to stay up to date on all our upcoming events.**



CSU Extension – NE Colorado FCS: <https://www.facebook.com/CSUExtensionNortheastFCS>

CSU Extension – Phillips County: <https://www.facebook.com/PhillipsCountyExtension/>

CSU Extension – Logan County: [https://www.facebook.com/csuextensionlogancounty/?\\_tn=%2Cd%2CP-R&eid=ARCS5-NbtiQryVnN5X513c5--hwVu-1ZfnhynwZsPotP7AZIVStJaoCEoaVYzZjBFhCH0tHJLHaJxQuQ](https://www.facebook.com/csuextensionlogancounty/?_tn=%2Cd%2CP-R&eid=ARCS5-NbtiQryVnN5X513c5--hwVu-1ZfnhynwZsPotP7AZIVStJaoCEoaVYzZjBFhCH0tHJLHaJxQuQ)

CSU Extension – Morgan County: <https://www.facebook.com/extensionmorgancounty/>