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FLORIDA

EXTENSION

Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES HOTLINE

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Enjoying Strawberries

It's strawberry time! Enjoy locally grown strawberries during this harvesting season. They will be the freshest and the most flavorful. When picking strawberries, try to pick early in the morning or later in the day when the fruit is cool. Strawberries are best used within 2-3 days of picking.



Nutrition Information

- Low calories
- High in Vitamin C
- Good source of folate, potassium and fiber

Uses

Just before serving, rinse strawberries with the caps still attached under a gentle spray of cool water. For optimal flavor, allow strawberries to reach room temperature before serving.

How Much Do I Need?

1 pint = about 3¼ cup whole berries (12-36, depending on size of berry or 2¼ cup sliced berries).

1 cup sliced fresh berries = one 10 oz. package of frozen, sweetened, berries can be used as needed.

Freezing Strawberries

Spread a single layer of prepared fruit on shallow trays and freeze. When frozen, promptly package (to avoid freezer burn) and return to freezer. The fruit pieces remain loose and can be used as needed.



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Inside this issue:

<i>Enjoying Straw-berries</i>	1-2
<i>Are You Getting Ade-quate Nutrients?</i>	2
<i>Quiz: How Calorie Savvy Are You?</i>	2-3
<i>Credit Card Insurance, Do You Need It?</i>	3-4
<i>Holly Plants Offer Much for the Florida Landscape</i>	4-5
<i>HCE Hotline</i>	6
<i>Chicken with Spinach and Artichokes</i>	6
<i>Fresh Strawberry Salad</i>	7
<i>Strawberry Yogurt Breakfast Split</i>	



Strawberries

Pack into containers, leaving ½' headspace. Seal and freeze.

Sliced or Crushed Strawberries

Prepare berries: Using ripe berries, wash gently and remove caps. Slice or crush partially or completely. To 1 quart berries, add ¾ cup sugar. Mix thoroughly. Stir until most of the sugar is dissolved or let stand for 15 minutes.

Selection

Strawberries do not ripen after they're picked so choose plump, bright red berries with a natural sheen and fresh, green caps (the part with the stem.) The size of the strawberry is not important. All strawberries, large and small, are equally sweet and juicy.

Storage

Sort and remove any bruised or damaged berries as soon as possible and use in sauces, purées or jams.

Place the berries in cool, well-ventilated containers. The moisture content of fresh strawberries is high, so store unwashed, uncovered or loosely covered. Careful storing and handling will maintain their maximum flavor, color and texture.

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IFAS EXTENSION

Are You Getting Adequate Nutrients?

A lesson from the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans call for adequate nutrients without consuming too many calories. For most people, this means you have to concentrate on eating more nutrient-dense foods and fewer calorie-dense foods.

How do I get adequate nutrients without too many calories?

You need to get enough nutrients from high-quality foods but you need to also control the amount of calories that you eat. The key to this recommendation is to eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and nonfat dairy foods while limiting intake of fats and added sugars. Eat a variety of nutrient-dense foods from these basic food groups:

- Fruits
- Vegetables and legumes
- Whole cooked grains, seafood
- Nonfat dairy products

Source: Communicating Food for Health, April 2005

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Quiz: How Calorie Savvy Are You?

Nutrient-Dense Foods		Calorie-Dense Foods	
	Calories per ounce		Calories per ounce
Romaine lettuce	5	Bread	73
Broccoli	9	Pretzel, soft	82
Carrots	11	Muffin	86
Apple	14	French fries	87
Oatmeal	19	Cinnamon bun	110
Banana	25	Cookie	138
Baked potato	26	Potato chips	150

Take a look at the items above. You will see that the foods in the left-hand column are lower in calories per ounce than the ones listed on the right. Comparing foods by how much they weight gives you a good way to see their calorie density.

When you add white flour, sugar and refined oils to foods, the calorie density goes way up. Calorie-dense foods usually have a high fat or sugar content and contain little moisture or fiber.

Take our quiz to sharpen your calorie knowledge. Have fun tallying up the results! **(Answers on page 8)**

1. Per ounce, which potato food contains the least amount of calories (hint: think low in fat)?
 - a) baked potato
 - b) French fries
 - c) potato chips
2. Which grain food contains the least amount of calories per ounce (hint: think cooked with a higher water content)?
 - a) bread
 - b) soft pretzel
 - c) Oatmeal
3. Which choice below would be the lowest calorie breakfast (hint: think high in fiber)?
 - a) large bagel with cream cheese
 - b) Cooked oatmeal with skim milk
 - c) Fast food breakfast sandwich
4. Approximately how many ounces of a banana would equal the calories in just once ounce of French fries (hint: it's more than 2)?
 - a) more than 3
 - b) less than 1
 - c) about the same
5. If you eat one large muffin from our chart above that weighs 6 ounces, how many calories would you consume (hint: it is the biggest number)?
 - a) 340
 - b) 420
 - c) 516

Source: www.foodandhealth.com

Credit Card Insurance, Do You Need It?

Do you own a credit card? Most Americans do. You might even feel a need to protect yourself and your credit cards against credit card crimes.

You may be contacted by an agency offering credit card protection insurance. You may already have been
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contacted by one of these firms. Before you sign up for credit card protection, know what you are buying. Credit card protection firms -- for a fee ranging from \$15 to \$50 per year -- generally offer to keep a record of the cardholder's credit card account numbers, report lost or stolen cards, arrange for replacements, and notify card issuers of the customer's address change. Some services also provide stranded travelers with emergency cash advances and airplane tickets.

Many people think they need a protection service for insurance against having to pay for purchases charged to their account if their card is lost or stolen.

These services may sound inviting until you realize what your rights are as a holder of a credit card.

Your credit card losses are limited by law to \$50 per card if you immediately report the card lost or stolen. Some card issuers will not press the victim for this \$50 per card loss if the victim is willing to file charges against the thief, if caught.

By paying for credit card protection, you're unlikely to receive services that you do not already have by owning a credit card, or services that you cannot easily provide yourself -- with no middleman cost. You may be doing yourself a disservice by buying credit card protection, because of the likely time delays in agency reporting.

Protect yourself from unauthorized charges against your credit cards by keeping a record of each credit card number. It is as simple as a telephone call and a follow-up letter to report a lost or stolen card. It may be more important that you do the reporting yourself to eliminate the risk of being held liable for unmade purchases. A protection agency may not make a report to the issuer for several days to a week after you report it to them.

As for the other services offered by an agency, you already receive a form to be completed for an address change along with your charge card bill each month. And many credit cards provide emergency cash advances.

So think carefully before you decide you really need additional credit insurance.

Source: Money Management Newsletter, Dr. Jo Turner, Professor, Family & consumer Economics

Holly Plants Offer Much for the Florida Landscape

Hollies are excellent plants for Florida landscapes. As a matter of fact, I would go as far as to say that every landscape should include at least one type of holly. But I'll warn you, it may be difficult to select just one type with their great range of size, texture, shape and other ornamental characteristics.

The holly genus (*Ilex*) offers a terrific variety of plants from which to choose. Some horticulturists estimate that there are about 700 species worldwide. And there are a great number of cultivated varieties. Even though you may only find twenty to maybe forty types to choose from in local nurseries, you still need to realize that this genus offers great diversity.

Some people automatically rule out hollies for their landscape because they think of plants with spiny leaves. But not all hollies have spiny leaves. For example, many of the Japanese hollies (*Ilex crenata*) have spineless leaves. They are often mistaken for boxwoods with their small, shiny leaves. But unlike true boxwood shrubs, which are in the genus *Buxus*, all hollies have an alternate leaf arrangement along the stem. Boxwood leaves are attached directly opposite one another on the stem. Of course there are many types of hollies that have spiny leaves as well. But the main point (pun unintended) is that you have quite a selection of both types.

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Holly plants range in height from two to over sixty feet. Some of the dwarf types are great choices for foundation plantings. A few of these include *Ilex crenata* 'Helleri' (Helleri holly), *Ilex cornuta* 'Carissa' (Carissa holly), *Ilex vomitoria* 'Nana' (dwarf yaupon holly) and *Ilex vomitoria* 'Stokes Dwarf' (thought to be the same cultivar as 'Shilling Dwarf'). Don't let the word dwarf fool you. Many of the hollies in this category may reach a height of three to five feet. And 'Dwarf Burford', a dwarf selection of 'Burfordii', occasionally reaches a height of height feet but more often is seen at five to six feet in height. But comparing it to the standard 'Burfordii' (Burford holly), which grows to over twenty feet in height, the dwarf version is more compact and smaller.

Some of the "tree form" hollies can reach heights approaching sixty feet. Many of these can stand alone as specimen or accent plants. They also can be used to provide a dense, tall hedge to screen a view essentially forming a "living" fence or wall. A few of the hollies that grow into large shrubs or small trees include many of the American holly (*Ilex opaca*) cultivars such as 'Miss Helen', 'Hedgeholly' and 'Savannah'. There are more than 1000 cultivars of American holly and many of them will reach a mature height of forty to fifty feet. But, as is true with all hollies, they do respond well to pruning – even severe pruning if needed. But it's best to know the mature height before planting so that you can appropriately place plants based on the desired height to avoid unnecessary pruning.

There are other tree form holly hybrids developed by crossing two or more separate plant species within a given genus. A few include 'Foster', 'East Palatka', 'Nellie R. Stevens' and 'Mary Nell'.

There are hollies with variegated leaves such as the English holly, *Ilex aquifolium* 'Ferox'. And even though most hollies are evergreen, there are a number of deciduous hollies that make nice additions to North Florida landscapes such as *Ilex ambigua* (Ambiguous Winterberry) and *Ilex decidua* (Possumhaw holly). There are hollies that produce bright red berries, but berry color varies from red, orange, yellow and even black or white, depending on variety. It's important to realize that not all holly plants produce berries, though.

Holly plants are dioecious, which means male and female flowers are located on separate plants. Only female plants produce berries. The male flowers produce pollen that is required, in most cases, to pollinate the female flowers. There are exceptions. For example, the Burford holly can produce berries without pollination. Many of the dwarf types of holly don't produce berries because they are propagated from male plants in the nursery trade. To insure that your plants produce colorful berries, ask for female plants from a reputable nursery. Of course, if the plant already has berries on it when you buy it, you know that it is a female. A male plant must be in the vicinity to pollinate the female. Usually this is not too much of a problem though because it is thought that pollen can be transported one to two miles by bees. And there usually will be a male plant within that distance around most landscapes – either in the wild or in a neighboring landscape.

There are many other characteristics to consider when selecting hollies. There are weeping forms available such as the weeping yaupon holly. There are those that have a very narrow, upright habit such as the cultivar 'Will Fleming'.

Hollies are not fool proof. They do have some pest problems and must be planted and cared for properly. But for the most part, this group of plants has a lot to offer. And once established, they require little care and have very good drought tolerance.

Larry Williams
Extension Agent, Horticulture

HCE HOTLINE

Cultural Arts Day/Council Meeting will be Friday, April 15th, beginning at 10 a.m. All members should be finishing up items they plan to enter in the Cultural Arts Day competition. ALL members are strongly encouraged to participate in this event. Please refer to Handbook for guidelines. Clubs will also have table exhibits of cultural arts items made this past year. The meeting will be followed by a covered dish luncheon. Come and enjoy a delightful program and great fellowship. Come learn and have fun with HCE!

Remember that check in for items will be Thursday, April 14, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Don't forget the **District I Family & Community Education Camp is May 17-18** at Camp Timpooshee. Cost is \$46 for full time and \$17 for day campers, which includes lunch. There are six classes to choose from, plus a variety of other fun activities. Not to mention the great fellowship and beautiful location. Plan on joining us!! Call the Extension office or get a registration form from your HCE Club President. Registration Deadline is Friday, April 25th. After that time there is an additional late fee charged.

Country Store time is fast approaching. Be saving items, potting plants, and making your plans for June 18th. Each club should have a club chairperson.

Holiday Showcase—Remember each HCE club is to appoint two representatives to serve on this committee. These names should be reported at the Council meeting on April 15th! A meeting will be scheduled in May.

Okaloosa \$aves Coalition will meet at the Ft. Walton Extension Building on April 13th at 9 a.m.

Affordable Housing Expo-Santa Rosa Mall, April 16, 10-3:00. Look for the Okaloosa \$aves exhibit!

Raising Kids, Eating Right, Spending Smart, Living Well

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Chicken with Spinach and Artichokes

Nonstick cooking spray	1 cup frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained well
4 medium artichoke hearts packed in water, drained and chopped	1/4 cup (plus 2 tablespoons) grated Parmesan cheese, divided
1/4 cup chopped onions	1/4 cup fat-free mayonnaise
	1/2 teaspoon minced garlic
	6 ounces cooked chicken pieces (from roasted chicken)

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Coat 1-quart casserole with nonstick cooking spray.

Mix together spinach, artichoke hearts, 2 tablespoons cheese, mayonnaise, garlic pepper and onions in a medium bowl.

Place chicken in casserole; cover evenly with spinach mixture. Top with remaining cheese. Bake, uncovered 30 minutes or until cheese is browned. Makes 2 Servings

Cal. 328; Cal. from Fat: 30%; Total Fat: 11 g; Sat. Fat 4 g; Carb. 19 g; Protein 37g; Chol.: 89 mg; Sodium 797 mg; Fiber 8 g

Fresh Strawberry Salad

4 cups red leaf lettuce
2 cups fresh strawberries
2 kiwi fruit
1/4 cup honey
1/4 tarragon vinegar
1/4 cup salad oil
1/2 tsp. dill weed



Wash, dry, and tear leaf lettuce. Wash and hull strawberries; quarter. Peel and slice kiwi. Toss all gently in bowl. Combine remaining ingredients. Shake dressing until well mixed. Just before serving, drizzle dressing over salad ingredients. Yield: 4 servings.

Strawberries Trivia

The strawberry you eat is not really a fruit or a berry but is the enlarged receptacle of the flower.

Besides being versatile and delicious, strawberries also pack a nutritional punch. They are an excellent source of Vitamin C, fiber, folic acid and potassium. All that, and they're low in calories and fat-free too! So go ahead, add them to your cereal, load them onto desserts, throw a handful into your salad, or just pop them into your mouth for a sweet and healthy treat.

Strawberry Yogurt Breakfast Split

1 banana
4 ounces(1 cup) fresh strawberries
4 ounces (1/2 cup) vanilla yogurt
1 tablespoon chopped, toasted almonds



Peel and split 1 banana.

Place banana halves in serving bowl.

Top with strawberries, yogurt and almonds.

Yield 1 serving

Calories, 312; Fat, 7 grams; Cholesterol, 5 milligrams; Fiber, 5 grams; Sodium, 75 milligrams; Calories from fat, 19 percent.

Answers

1. **a) baked potato 26**
b) French fries 87
c) potato chips 150
2. a) bread 73
b) soft pretzel 82
c) oatmeal 19
3. a) large bagel with cream cheese 530
b) cooked oatmeal with skim milk 370
c) fast food breakfast sandwich 370
4. **a) more than 3**
5. **c) 516**

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