

Knowledge @ Noon  
*Christmas Drive Through*



*Wednesday, December 9, 2020 at 12 p.m.*

104 S. Brayman, Paola, KS  
Marais des Cygnes Extension District, Paola Office

***The Paola Extension Office is moving in January 2021!***

***Our new address will be:***

***913 North Pearl Street, Paola, Suite #1  
(the old Sutherland Shopping Center)***

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## **Food for Thought during the Pandemic of 2020 Holiday Season**

**By Cheryl Sigel, Master Food Volunteer**

Recently there was a news report of the 2020 pandemic causing an upward weight gain of individuals during this time. The report stated that due to the quarantine times of the pandemic that the average person can put on up to 15 pounds. We have also been told to avoid large groups of people during the holiday season due to the spread of the COVID-19. We are told to just stay put at home. If you are like me, you wonder...how can we have a wonderful holiday season being cooped up at home 24 hours a day, 7 days a week? Many of us have been using websites to have our food delivered or picked up without interactions with the staff at the grocery points. We have been using the internet to communicate with our holiday shopping. We have been using Face Time or Zoom or other means of digital gatherings to communicate with our loved ones, etc. The list goes on and on...

The Master Foods Volunteers came up with the Drive thru approach to help with this time spent alone. It is so good to see your smiling faces via mask coverings...we want you to stay healthy during this time. So, in our true Master Food Volunteer style, we have some tips!!

As the holiday season rolls around, sticking to a healthy eating plan can prove challenging for all of us. Many dine a little more richly during the holidays: With comforting family dinners, festive cocktails, frosting-covered cookies and the like, it can seem like temptation lurks around every corner throughout the months of November and December. There's nothing wrong with indulging on occasion, especially when it comes to beloved dishes that only make an appearance once a year. But that doesn't mean you have to totally ignore your meal plan this holiday season.

There are many processed foods we are eating which is not helping with the way we feel or our waistlines during this time...chips, sandwiches, cookies, ice cream, etc. Using fresh foods helps with this. There are many ways to use fresh foods during the holiday season. Maybe this could be a goal you could set during this time...

Over the last week, I made a Butternut Squash Soup. Wow, it is filling and pretty at the same time. It also took some time to prepare, which helps fill the day. It could even be a family project to do together before the holiday time. Leftovers can be used for a few days afterwards as well as for lunch. Here is the recipe:

## **Butternut Squash Soup**

2 T. Butter

1 small onion, chopped

1 stalk celery, chopped

1 medium carrot, chopped

2 medium potatoes, cubed

1 medium butternut squash, peeled, seeded and cubed

1 (32 ounce) container chicken stock

Salt and pepper to taste

### **Step 1**

Melt the butter in a large pot. Cook the onion, celery, carrot, potatoes, and squash 5 minutes or until lightly browned. Pour chicken stock over the veggies to cover. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low. Cover the pot and simmer 40 minutes or until veggies are tender.

### **Step 2**

(This is the tricky part...you may need help.) Transfer the soup into a blender or food processor. Blend until smooth. Return to pot. Mix in any of the chicken stock you did not use earlier to attain desired consistency. Season with salt and pepper.

### **Nutrition Facts:**

Pre serving: 305 calories, protein 6.9 g, carbohydrates 59.7 g, fat 6.8 g, cholesterol 20.9 mg

For your holiday table, our family loves a cranberry salad made with fresh cranberries. It is fun to put together. If you live alone or with one other, cut the recipe down in half because this salad does not keep well. Here's the recipe cut in half:

## Cranberry Salad

Grind 2 cups of whole fresh cranberries. Put into a colander. Pour 1 cup of sugar over the cranberries. Be sure to put a bowl underneath the cranberries/sugar mixture to catch the drippings. Let set on the counter overnight.

In the morning, put the cranberries/sugar mixture in a large bowl. Add 1 cups of cut up grapes, and one small can of pineapple chunks, drained.

Whip up a package of Dream Whip. Fold the Dream Whip into the fruit mixture.

Can add nuts if you want. Refrigerate until serving time.

A few ideas on side dishes when making your holiday meal(s):

- Make a fresh green salad and have a favorite dressing (be mindful of the amount of dressing you use).
- Chop up fresh veggies like broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, add some cheese and nuts like sunflower seeds with a dressing cutting back the amount of dressing used.
- Make up a roasted veggie dish using potatoes, carrots, celery, pepper, broccoli, squash, etc. by cutting up the veggies and roast in the oven with a dressing of olive oil and herbs of your desire to enhance the flavors.

Keep active by developing a new hobby or exercise by taking a walk around the block can keep you healthy during this holiday season.

Sources:

- KSHB Channel 41 news report (11/23/2020)
- 45+ Christmas Salads That Are Anything But an Afterthought by, TRISH CLASEN AND AMANDA GARRITY, Nov 18, 2020

## Christmas Salad with Creamy Poppy Seed Dressing

Submitted by Franny Eastwood, FCS Agent

- 5-6 cups "Spring Mix" lettuce I like to get mine from Costco
- 1/2 cup mandarin oranges
- 1/3 cup dried cranberries
- 1/3 cup pomegranate seeds (optional)
- 1/3 cup Feta cheese
- 1/2 cup candied walnuts or pecans optional

## Poppy Seed Dressing:

- 1/3 cup [mayonnaise](#)
  - 1/3 cup [Greek yogurt](#)
  - 4 Tbsp [sugar](#)
  - 2 Tbsp [apple cider vinegar](#)
  - 2 tsp poppy seeds
1. Combine all ingredients in a small bowl.
  2. Whisk until smooth. Store in the fridge until ready to serve.

Nutrition: Calories: 242kcal | Carbohydrates: 24g | Protein: 4g | Fat: 15g | Saturated Fat: 3g | Cholesterol: 13mg | Sodium: 228mg | Potassium: 128mg | Fiber: 2g | Sugar: 19g | Vitamin A: 525IU | Vitamin C: 13mg | Calcium: 83mg | Iron: 0.6mg

Source: favfamilyrecipes.com

## Holiday Honeycrisp Salad

Submitted by Franny Eastwood, FCS Agent

### INGREDIENTS

½ c light vegetable oil (such as sunflower, safflower, or extra virgin olive oil)  
¼ c apple cider vinegar  
¼ cup unsweetened apple juice or apple cider  
2-3 Tb honey  
1 Tb lemon juice  
½ t salt  
Ground black pepper to taste  
3 medium Honeycrisp apples (about 1 pound), thinly sliced  
Juice of 1/2 lemon  
12 ounces salad greens, spring mix, baby spinach, arugula, baby romaine, etc,  
1 cup pecan halves, toasted or candied  
3/4 cup dried cranberries OR dried cherries  
4 ounces crumbled blue cheese

### DIRECTIONS

1. To prepare Apple Cider Vinaigrette, measure oil, apple cider vinegar, apple juice/cider, honey, lemon juice, salt, and pepper into a mason jar. Tightly screw on lid and shake vigorously until everything is thoroughly combined. Alternatively, you may briskly whisk the ingredients together in a medium bowl, or blend them in a blender or mini food processor

2. Place apple slices in a large plastic baggie and squeeze the fresh lemon juice (from the lemon half) over them. Close bag and shake to coat. In a large salad bowl, layer salad greens, apple slices, pecans, dried cranberries, and blue cheese. Just before serving, dress with desired amount of Apple Cider Vinaigrette and toss until salad ingredients are evenly coated.

### Notes

You may prep the individual components of this salad ahead of time and then assemble everything just before serving.

A day or two ahead of time:

- Make the vinaigrette and store in the refrigerator. Before using, allow it to come to room temperature and then shake well.
- Toast the pecans, allow to completely cool, and store in an airtight container.
- Wash and dry the salad greens (if they're not already washed).

A few hours ahead of time on the same day:

- Cut the apples and shake the slices with a generous amount of lemon juice. Squeeze the air out of the bag and store in the refrigerator until you're ready to assemble the salad. *Honeycrisp apples will typically hold their bright color (shaken with lemon juice) for several hours. Other varieties of softer apples (such as Gala) will brown more quickly, so those shouldn't be sliced and shaken with lemon juice until just before serving.*

Calories: 280kcal | Carbohydrates: 24g | Protein: 5g | Fat: 20g | Saturated Fat: 9g | Cholesterol: 11mg | Sodium: 356mg | Potassium: 238mg | Fiber: 3g | Sugar: 17g | Vitamin A: 635IU | Vitamin C: 15mg | Calcium: 93mg | Iron: 1mg

Source: [fivehearthome.com](http://fivehearthome.com)

### Mexican Wedding Cookies

Submitted by Gayle Plummer, MFV

Ready in 45 min. Serves 36

1 c. softened butter  
1/2 c. powdered sugar  
2 1/4 c. sifted flour  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1/4 tsp. salt  
3/4 c. walnuts or pecans  
extra powdered sugar for rolling cookies in

Cream together butter and powdered sugar until light and fluffy, stir in vanilla. Whisk together flour and salt; add gradually to butter mixture, stir in chopped nuts. Chill if dough seems too soft. Form dough into small balls and place onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 400 degrees for 10 - 12 minutes or until light golden brown. Remove from baking sheets and roll a few at a time in powdered sugar until coated. Cool completely and roll a second time in powdered sugar if you want.

### **Chocolate Mexican Wedding Cookies**

Submitted by Gayle Plummer, MFV

Makes about 36 cookies

1 2/3 cups flour  
1 c. pecans toasted and finely chopped  
1/3 c. unsweetened cocoa powder  
3/4 tsp. ground cinnamon  
1/4 tsp. salt  
1/8 - 1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper  
2 sticks unsalted butter, at room temp.  
1 1/2 c. powdered sugar, divided  
1 tsp. vanilla

Whisk the flour, pecans, cocoa, cinnamon, salt, and cayenne together in a med. bowl; set aside. Place the butter and 1/2 c. powdered sugar in a large bowl. Beat until light and fluffy. Beat in vanilla. Gradually add in flour mixture until just combined. Transfer dough onto a piece of plastic and wrap completely. Refrigerate until firm for about 45 min.. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Place remaining powdered sugar in a small bowl. Form dough into small balls or logs. Bake for 8 minutes. Rotate baking sheets and bake until tops of cookies are set, 7 to 8 minutes. Let cool for about 10 min. While still warm, roll in powdered sugar and let cool completely. Roll in powdered sugar again if you would like.

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