K-State food scientist urges families to share the baking fun

The Home Baking Association is promoting baking during the month of February

By Maddy Rohr, K-State Research and Extension news service

MANHATTAN, Kan. – While outdoor activities for the family can be limited in the winter months, baking is not one of those. February is Bake for Family Fun Month, promoted by the Home Baking Association.

“Each week, they have developed baking activities, recipes and opportunities to get the family together to bake. This can be a multi-generational activity with tasty treats to share,” said Kansas State University food scientist Karen Blakeslee.

The Home Baking Association has resources, recipes and activities to help families start in the kitchen. Week one focuses on the basics of baking and provides tips for those starting in the kitchen and feature videos and lessons for teaching kids to bake.

“Baking is a great way to teach basic food safety practices that can apply to all food preparation,” Blakeslee said. “Parents can be teachers to show the importance of hand washing, cleaning equipment, appliances and baking surfaces often, checking for doneness of foods with a food thermometer and more.”

Week two celebrates Valentine’s Day and features resources to bake for your loved ones. Week three is designed to build family baking traditions and learn about baking history.

Week four encourages positive connection by baking for others, featuring unique recipes and guides for allergies and other special food needs when baking. “Give baked goods to other family members, neighbors or teachers as a tasty way to keep in touch with family and neighbors or thank a teacher,” Blakeslee said.

When preparing food, one common food safety issue is sampling raw dough or batter. There have been several foodborne illness outbreaks traced to consuming raw dough or batter, Blakeslee warned.
She reminds bakers that all flour is raw, just like eggs, so it is important to cook or bake dough or batter first before eating.

“Always wash your hands, utensils and surfaces after mixing and handling raw batter and dough,” she adds.

Blakeslee suggests adding fun to the kitchen by wearing a fun apron or matching aprons; having a cookie decorating competition; testing kids' math skills by reading a recipe and determine what tool should be used to measure ingredients; or having a theme or special event to bake tasty treats.

More information, recipes and resources can be found on the Home Baking Association website.

Blakeslee, who also is coordinator of K-State’s Rapid Response Center for Food Science, publishes a monthly newsletter called You Asked It! that provides numerous tips on food safety. More information is also available from local extension offices in Kansas.

FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS: Links used in this story

Rapid Response Center, https://www.rrc.k-state.edu

You Asked It! newsletter, https://www.rrc.k-state.edu/newsletter

K-State Research and Extension local offices, https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/about/statewide-locations.html

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