

## Food Safety in a Power Outage

If there's one thing Oklahomans know about it is dicey weather that can cause power outages. There's something else Oklahomans know about ... the importance of being prepared.

As we come into the season of freezing weather and possible ice storms that can render entire towns without electricity, Christi Evans, Oklahoma State University Extension assistant food safety specialist, has some tips for both before and during an outage.

"As in most circumstances, being prepared ahead of time is important. Consumers who don't have an appliance thermometer in both the refrigerator and the freezer should purchase them now," Evans said. "Refrigerators should run at 40 degrees Fahrenheit or below, while the freezer should be set at 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below.

Knowing and monitoring the temperature in the refrigerator and freezer will help determine if food is safe after the power goes out."

No matter what news channel Oklahomans watch, the weather professionals on the local news will keep residents informed with up-to-date severe weather forecasts. In the event of severe weather, Evans suggests checking the refrigerator to see if any items such as meat, poultry or leftovers can be moved to the freezer. Frozen foods will keep longer when the power goes out. It's a good idea to have ice and ice packs on hand which may be useful later on to help keep foods cold.

"Consumers can make their own ice containers by repurposing empty water or milk jugs by filling them with water and freezing," she said. "These containers can be stored in the freezer to fill space. This will help keep foods safe



longer during a power outage. They can also be used in coolers to keep foods cold."

When the power goes out, try to keep the refrigerator and freezer doors shut to maintain the cold temperature inside. If a refrigerator remains closed, it will keep foods at the proper temperature for about four hours. Evans said if the outage is prolonged, refrigerated foods such as meat, eggs, milk, poultry, fish, soft cheeses, salads made with mayonnaise, cooked pasta and other leftovers should be discarded.

Foods in a full freezer should stay safe for up to 48 hours. The time limit is 24 hours for a half-full freezer.

"Be sure to check the appliance thermometer in the freezer. If the food is at 40 degrees Fahrenheit or below or has ice crystals, the food can be refrozen or thawed and cooked," she said. "Check each package of food individually. Any foods that have an unusual odor, color or texture should be discarded. Never taste food to determine if it's safe."

A good rule of thumb to follow is if perishable foods have been kept at 40 degrees Fahrenheit or above for two or more hours, they should be discarded. Evans said this timeframe is cut to an hour when the temperatures are above 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

"Whether it's during a power outage or not, it is important to always wash your hands before handling foods," Evans said. "Foods such as meat, poultry, fish and eggs must be cooked to a safe minimum temperature to help ensure food safety."

### Major County OSU Extension Center

500 E. Broadway  
Courthouse Suite 3  
Fairview, OK 73737

Phone- 580-227-3786

Email- [dana.baldwin@okstate.edu](mailto:dana.baldwin@okstate.edu)

Website-

[extension.okstate.edu/county/major](http://extension.okstate.edu/county/major)

Facebook-

Major County OSU Extension

### Blaine County OSU Extension Center

212 N. Weigle Ave.  
Courthouse Suite 101  
Watonga, OK 73772

Phone- 580-623-5195

Email- [dana.baldwin@okstate.edu](mailto:dana.baldwin@okstate.edu)

Website-

[extension.okstate.edu/county/blaine](http://extension.okstate.edu/county/blaine)

Facebook-

Blaine County OSU Extension

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## Safe Minimum Internal Temperature Chart

Safe steps in food handling, cooking, and storage are essential in preventing foodborne illness. You can't see, smell, or taste harmful bacteria that may cause illness. In every step of food preparation, follow the four guidelines to keep food safe:

- **Clean**—Wash hands and surfaces often.
- **Separate**—Separate raw meat from other foods.
- **Cook**—Cook to the right temperature.
- **Chill**—Refrigerate food promptly.

Cook all food to these minimum internal temperatures as measured with a food thermometer before removing food from the heat source. For reasons of personal preference, consumers may choose to cook food to higher temperatures.

Product	Minimum Internal Temperature & Rest Time
Beef, Pork, Veal & Lamb Steaks, chops, roasts	145 °F (62.8 °C) and allow to rest for at least 3 minutes
Ground Meats	160 °F (71.1 °C)
Ground Poultry	165 °F
Ham, fresh or smoked (uncooked)	145 °F (62.8 °C) and allow to rest for at least 3 minutes
Fully Cooked Ham (to reheat)	Reheat cooked hams packaged in USDA-inspected plants to 140 °F (60 °C) and all others to 165 °F (73.9 °C).
All Poultry (breasts, whole bird, legs, thighs, wings, ground poultry, giblets, and stuffing)	165 °F (73.9 °C)
Eggs	160 °F (71.1 °C)
Fish & Shellfish	145 °F (62.8 °C)
Leftovers	165 °F (73.9 °C)
Casseroles	165 °F (73.9 °C)

### Food Handlers: **Food Safety Training**

**Choose from one of these 2024 dates:**

**-January 25 -March 28 -May 30 -July 25 -September 26 -November 21**

**(other dates can be scheduled as requested)**

**-3:00 P.M.**

**-Online Format Only- Zoom- (participants will need internet access)**

Everyone is welcome to participate in any of these **free online** Food Handlers Food Safety classes offered Major and Blaine Counties OSU Extension. This is a basic food safety class that will last approximately 1 hour. Anyone currently working in any capacity with food service and/or regularly cooking for large groups is welcome to attend. All participants will complete a quiz and receive a certificate.

Please register at least one week prior to the class you plan to participate in. We will need your name, phone number and email address.

Contact/Presenter is: Dana Baldwin, Extension Educator– FCS/4-H & County Extension Director  
dana.baldwin@okstate.edu (e-mail)

Major County OSU Extension  
500 E. Broadway, Suite 3 Courthouse  
Fairview, Oklahoma 73737  
580-227-3786 (phone)

Blaine County OSU Extension  
212 N. Weigle, Suite 101 Courthouse  
Watonga, Oklahoma 73772  
580-623-5195 (phone)





# Blaine County OHCE News and Notes



## Lesson Leader Trainings

The Lesson Leader Training in January, for February meetings, is Thursday, January 25 at 10 a.m. at the Watonga Library. The lesson is *Food Product Dating* and will be presented by Megan Ferrell from Alfalfa County.

The Lesson Leader Training in February, for March meetings, is Thursday, February 22 at 10 a.m. at the Watonga Library. The lesson is *Laundry Stain Removal* and will be presented by Susan Holliday from Woods County.

## State Officer/Committee Nominations

Nominations are due February 1 for state officers, committee chairs and committee members. Anyone interested should contact Dana by January 26 to complete forms.

## Volunteer Hours

Volunteer hours for 2023 have to be submitted to the OSU Campus by January 31. If you have any forms to turn in, please get them to Dana. And thank you for those that have been submitted so far as this is beneficial for county, district and state reporting.

## County Officers Meeting

County OHCE officers will be meeting quarterly again this year to discuss and help make plans for upcoming events. The first meeting of the year will be on Monday, January 22 at 12:00 noon at the Watonga Library.

## Check us out on Facebook !

For updates and announcements, check out and "Like" our page on Facebook: *Blaine County OSU Extension*

## Award Books and Life Story Essays

*Local and County Award Book Reports*- each county and each local group may enter one report book in each category: Cultural Enrichment, Family Issues, Healthy Living, Leadership Development, Membership, and Resource Management.

*Life Story Essays*- entries must be written by an OHCE members.

Instructions for these items are available as well as assistance in completing them from Dana. All items are due no later than Friday, January 19 so they can be submitted together by the state deadline. Let's get some recognition for all of your hard work!

## West District (North Region) Meeting

The West District (North Region) OHCE Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, March 23 at Laverne High School. See full details on page 5 of this newsletter. Registration is due to Terri Crawford, County OHCE Treasurer, by February 21. It looks to be a great meeting.

## We're on the Web too!

Check out and bookmark our website for information as well: <https://extension.okstate.edu/county/blaine/>

## Spring Association Meeting

The 2024 Spring Association Meeting will be held on Thursday, March 7 at the Noble House beginning at 6:00 p.m.. Years of service and perfect attendance recognition will be presented at this time as well. More details will be available after the January 22 County Officers Meeting.

## 2024 Class Sessions

**March 4, 11, 18 and 25; June 3, 10, 17 and 24; September 9, 16, 23 and 30**



March sessions will meet from 6-8:00 p.m. at the Major County Fairgrounds in Fairview

June sessions will meet from 2-4:00 p.m. at the Blaine County Fairgrounds in Watonga

September sessions will meet from 6-8:00 p.m. at the Major

County Fairgrounds in Fairview

For parents and other caregivers where the following topics will be addressed:

- Being an Active Parent
- Building Courage & Self Esteem
- Cooperation & Communication
- Understanding & Redirecting Misbehavior
- Responsibility & Discipline
- Active Parenting for School Success

**Fee for the class is \$30.00 per participant per entire session.**

Please pre-register no later than one week prior to the first class date of the session you plan to attend.  
(at least 3 people must be pre-registered for the classes to be held)

**To register, contact either the Major or Blaine County OSU Cooperative Extension Center.**

580.227.3786 (Major County) 580-623-5195 (Blaine County)



# 2024 BACK TO BASICS WORKSHOPS

*-brought to you by the OSU Extension Centers in Alfalfa, Blaine, Major and Woods Counties-*

**-Thursday, February 1** at the Woods County Fairgrounds in Alva (10am to 2pm)-  
***Mini Barn Quilts and Pull-Apart Cupcake Cakes*** (\$20 registration fee)

**-Tuesday, March 5** at the Major County Fairgrounds in Fairview (4pm to 8pm)-  
***Freezer Meals***

**-Thursday, July 11** at the Alfalfa County Fairgrounds in Cherokee (4pm to 8pm)-  
***Pickles***

**-Saturday, August 10** at the Alfalfa County Fairgrounds in Cherokee (begins at 1pm)-  
***Sourdough Breads***

***Fees will vary for each workshop; to be determined as each gets closer.***

**Holiday Happenings-** Thursday, November 7 at the Woods County Fairgrounds in Alva  
*-details and fee to be announced-*

**Please RSVP and pay the fee no later than one week prior to the workshop you plan to attend.**

**Contact your OSU Extension Center:**

Alfalfa County-580.596.3131

Blaine County-580.623.5195

Major County-580.227.3786

Woods County-580.327.2786

**L. E. A. D.**

**Live well**

**Eat well**

**be Active**

**with Diabetes**

***A Program for People with Diabetes and their Families***



**February 8, 15, 22 & 29, 2024** (Thursdays)

Time: 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Location: Blaine Co. Fairgrounds, Watonga

Register by February 1— Space is Limited

**580-623-5195** (Blaine Co.) • **580-227-3786** (Major Co.)

Open to anyone with type 2 diabetes, their families, or anyone wanting to learn more about eating healthy with diabetes. The class fee is \$24 per person.

The full program includes four sessions. Each session will include information on living well with diabetes, eating well with diabetes, and being physically active with diabetes. Sessions will also include demonstrations on how to prepare recipes that are healthy and use less fat, salt, and sugar without cutting taste. There will be an opportunity to taste a variety of main dish, side dish, snack, and dessert recipes.

Presenter: Dana Baldwin, *OSU Extension Educator Major & Blaine Counties*

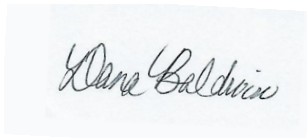


Blaine County OSU Extension Center  
 212 N. Weigle Ave., Courthouse Suite 101  
 Watonga, Oklahoma 73772

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**Dana Baldwin**  
 Extension Educator-  
 Family & Consumer Sciences/4-H Youth Development  
 & Major County Extension Director/  
 Interim Blaine County Extension Director



Newsletter Editor:

*Family & Consumer Sciences assists communities, families, youth and individuals address issues of health, wealth and well-being through research-based Extension education and programs that are proven to work.*



Oklahoma Home & Community Education, Inc. (OHCE) is a local and state wide partner with Cooperative Extension which brings the best knowledge from OSU to its members. Join a local OHCE group and enjoy programs that help make Oklahomans be their best.

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