



## School Lunches: Pack or Pay

By: Trisha Gedon, OSU Sr. Communications Specialist



The kids are still playing in the pool and there still may be time for a vacation, but no doubt about it, the start of a new school year is just around the corner.

New school supplies, new teachers and new friends are exciting, and so is having lunch at school. Will you pack a lunch from home or pay for lunch at school?

One of the benefits of purchasing and eating a school lunch is that it includes a balanced meal with foods from all the food groups at a reasonable cost, said Candy Gabel state coordinator for Oklahoma State University Extension’s Community Nutrition Education Program.

“School lunches must follow USDA guidelines, which means these meals provide nutritional standards to improve children’s health,” Gabel said. “Children learn best when their bodies are fueled with nutritious foods. The standards the USDA sets are updated regularly to reflect the latest research and guidance on what kids need to do their best in school.”

Recent changes include reducing sugars and sodium and promoting a variety of whole grains, fruits, vegetables and protein-rich foods. The USDA encourages schools to create new recipes and menus that meet cultural preferences, vegetarian choices and personal tastes.

Gabel said school meal costs vary within districts. Depending on household income, students may qualify for free or reduced lunches.

Some students may prefer to bring a home lunch due to allergies and food preferences. A well-balanced home lunch should include a portion of bread, rice, potatoes or pasta; fruit and vegetables; a serving of dairy or calcium-rich alternative; protein such as beans, fish, eggs or meat; and a healthy, non-sugary beverage.

“Try to avoid processed and pre-packaged options. Also, limit foods with added sugar,” she said.

Keeping foods safe until lunchtime is as important as the food itself. When packing a lunch, think about the type of food, a safe temperature for the food

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TULSA COUNTY  
EXTENSION



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If you receive the monthly newsletter by mail and would like to receive it by email, please call 918-746-3706. Receiving it by email would greatly reduce our printing and postage expenses.

Thank you!

## School Lunches: Pack or Pay... Continued

### Strengthening Oklahoma Families/Tulsa County

and how long the food must be stored until it is consumed. Remember, some foods can become unsafe in just two hours at room temperature. Here is additional information on the types of food that need to be kept cold, hot or at room temperature.

As parents consider the lunch options for their child, it may be beneficial to talk to the school's nutrition director to see if the school offers breakfast or participates in programs such as Farm-to-School, where the school partners with local farmers and producers to source fresh produce. Inquire about food waste reduction initiatives or meal programs for special dietary needs. In addition, setting up an online ordering and payment system makes it easier for parents to manage their child's lunch account.

"Research shows that children learn best when they are eating healthy meals," Gabel said. "Whether parents purchase meals at school or pack a home lunch, providing students with healthy foods will get the school year started on the right track."

### State of Oklahoma Food Tax Law



On Aug. 29, the state is set to drop its 4.5% grocery tax for food and food ingredients. But what exactly is on the list of items excluded from the tax?

The main difference is unprepared versus prepared food, which is usually what is indicated if something will be taxed at the state level.

"This was the tax relief that would benefit the most Oklahomans. It's a common experience, whether you're single or raising a family, whether you're young or you're old, you're going to the grocery store to buy your food," state Sen. Adam Pugh, a Republican from Edmond, said.

New guidance released by the state this week dives deeper into what is tax-exempt after state lawmakers passed the tax cut and Gov. Kevin Stitt approved House Bill 1955 last session. Traditional food and ingredients won't be taxed, but things can get complicated at the deli.

Lunch meats and deli salad sold are both exempt. But if that deli salad is on a plate, it is taxed by the state.

Any heated meat, like rotisserie chicken, will also be taxed at 4.5%. However, items like party trays are exempt.

Other exempt items include uncooked meats, baby food, produce and candy.

Items frequently bought at the grocery store that aren't food are also going to be taxed, like aluminum foil, toiletries, vitamins and flowers.

"The data is pretty clear that it will generate more for economic activity, which, in the end, not only are you putting more money back in the pockets of everyday Oklahomans, but you're also helping those businesses as well," Pugh said.

The change on Aug. 29 is only for state taxes. Counties and municipalities that have a sales tax or grocery tax will still be in place.

Source: Story by Andy Weber, 40/29 TV Ft. Smith-Fayetteville

[What items are included in Oklahoma's grocery tax cut? What to know \(msn.com\)](https://www.msn.com/oklahoma/food-tax-law)



## 19 CLEVER WAYS TO EAT HEALTHY ON A TIGHT BUDGET

Nutritious food can be expensive, and it can be difficult to eat a balanced diet that includes fruits and vegetables when you're on a tight budget.

The good news is, there are many ways you can save money and still eat whole foods. In fact, here are 19 tips that can help you eat healthier when you're on a budget:

- |                                               |                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Plan your meals                            | 10. Buy cheaper cuts of meat          |
| 2. Stick to your grocery list                 | 11. Replace meat with other proteins  |
| 3. Cook at home                               | 12. Shop for produce that's in season |
| 4. Cook large portions and use your leftovers | 13. Buy frozen fruits and vegetables  |
| 5. Don't shop when you're hungry              | 14. Buy in bulk                       |
| 6. Buy whole foods                            | 15. Grow your own produce             |
| 7. Buy generic brands                         | 16. Pack your lunch                   |
| 8. Avoid buying highly processed food         | 17. Use coupons wisely                |
| 9. Stock up on sales                          | 18. Appreciate less expensive foods   |
|                                               | 19. Buy from cheap, online retailers  |

Read the full article here: [19 Clever Ways to Eat Healthy on a Tight Budget \(healthline.com\)](https://www.healthline.com/health/19-clever-ways-to-eat-healthy-on-a-tight-budget)

**Source:** Medically reviewed by [Kim Chin, RD, Nutrition](#) — Written by [Adda Bjarnadottir, MS, RDN \(Ice\)](#)



### OHCE BUSINESS MEETING

SEPTEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup>, @ 10 a.m.



**WHO:** All OHCE Members and Open to the Public

**WHAT:** Business Meeting and Fun Day! Election of County Officers and Fall Luncheon!

**WHEN:** Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 10 am – 3 pm

**WHERE:** Tulsa County Extension Center Auditorium  
(Hosted by: Jenks and Jenks Night Owls)

Fall is in the air! Come to the Business Meeting and stay for the Luncheon! Bring your favorite fall food... casseroles, soups, or stews, and pies or cookies, etc.! We will enjoy a wonderful time of fellowship with members from all our groups!



### OHCE HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

DECEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup>, @ 11 a.m.

We are so excited! Our planning has begun for this year's Holiday Luncheon! The theme will be "The Twelve Days of Christmas." We will be using the BS Roberts room at the OSU Tulsa Campus, again this year. Each group will be asked to decorate two of the luncheon tables in the above theme. A Christmas Tree Ornament Exchange is also planned. Everyone will want to bring an ornament for this beautiful and fun exchange! We are finalizing details now... so look for more info coming soon!



-Coe Ann Patton, Holiday Luncheon Chair

## SALSA WORKSHOP IN REVIEW



A wonderful time was had by all at the Salsa Canning Workshop presented by Tulsa County OSU Extension Educator, Stacey Jones.



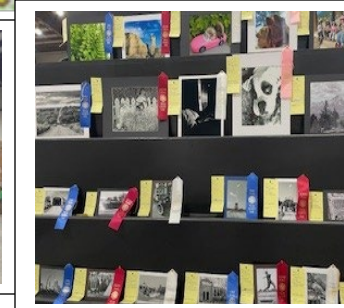
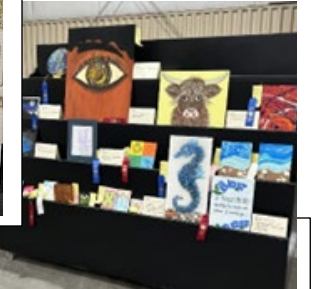
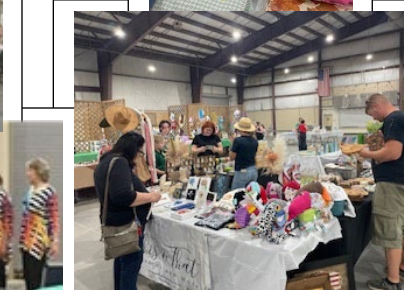
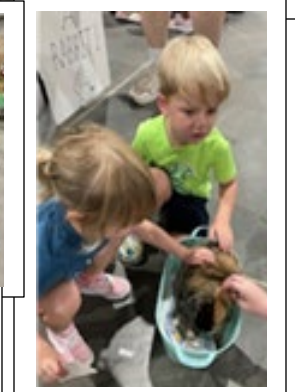
## Family and Consumer Sciences

Most of our 2024 Programming Year has been completed. The remainder of our workshops are filled to capacity. Thank you to everyone that participated in our workshops throughout the year and special thanks to our **Master Gardeners** for providing a variety of produce that we used in many of our programs. We appreciate you all!

**Scheduling for new FCS Workshops will begin in March of 2025!**



# TULSA COUNTY FREE FAIR IN REVIEW





## FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES CALENDAR

\*\*\*All events will be held at the OSU Extension Office unless noted\*\*\*

\*\*Please observe that some event dates may have been changed\*\*

**\*WORKSHOPS & ALL CLASSES - PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED - Call: 918-746-3706\***

**September:**

- 2 Labor Day – Extension Office Closed
- 3 Co-Parenting for Resilience, 9 am @ OSU Tulsa (pre-register by 8-29-24)
- 9 OHCE Treasurer’s Budget Meeting 1 pm
- 9 OHCE President’s Quarterly ZOOM @ 7 pm
- 16 OHCE Executive Board Meeting ZOOM @ 7 pm
- 17 OHCE Business Meeting & Fun Day-Officer Election-Luncheon  
10am-all day-open to all! (Group Treasurer’s turn in Gate Sign money.)



**October:**

- 1 Co-Parenting for Resilience, 9 am @ OSU Tulsa (pre-register by 9-27-24)
- 11 OHCE Membership Dues/Registration Due to Group Treasurer. Group Member Lists with Officer & Committee Chairs-Due to Extension Office.
- 12 OHCE DEMO DAY @ OSU Tulsa Campus (registration due by 10-1-24)
- 14 Workshop: Apple Butter @6 pm (Class is Full)
- 21 Workshop: Sour Dough @ 6 pm (Class is Full)
- 25 OHCE Membership Dues/Registration Due to County Treasurer.
- 25 OHCE Cultural Enrichment Trip: Shepherds Cross Fall Festival in Claremore

**CHANNEL 6**  
**COOKING CORNER**  
 September 25  
 @ Noon  
 Presented By: Stacey Jones  
 Tulsa County FCS Educator

**November:**

- 1 OHCE Membership Dues/Registration Due to State.
- 7 OHCE Yearbook Meeting @ 10 am
- 12 Co-Parenting for Resilience, 9 am @ OSU Tulsa (pre-register by 11-7-24)
- 11 Veterans Day – Extension Office Closed
- 16 Workshop: Holiday Jelly @ 9 am – 1 pm (Class is Full)
- 21 OHCE BUNCO for Scholarships, 10 am – Noon
- 22 OHCE RSVP & Payment Due for Holiday Luncheon
- 28-29 Thanksgiving Holiday – Extension Office Closed



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# OHCE UPDATES

**MEMBERSHIP TEA  
IN REVIEW!**

Scholarships were awarded to: Morgan Mayberry, granddaughter of Shirley Cox, member of Knit ‘n Stitch, and Ella Tolbert, granddaughter of Carole Wear, Owasso Jewels. Many county members were recognized for their Years of Service & for State Report Awards! Congrats to **Kathy Erwin**, Jenks, for “40” years of service! Congrats all!





# OHCE UPDATES



## SHOUT OUT FROM ELAINE

Tulsa County OHCE President



**Congratulations on another successful county fair!** From the opening day of set up and accepting entries to the last day of checkouts and tear down you did a wonderful job. Our fair committee has met and is considering ways to make next year better. Thank you for all your entries and I have to say that this year's group posters were spectacular. You all showed a lot of creativity in sharing our story. Now we look forward to **Demo Day on Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup>**. Please consider making this your personal membership drive. Invite a non-OHCE friend to this event. You know they want to come!

Share OHCE with a friend! *Elaine*



### SEPTEMBER FAMILY ISSUES

We are continuing our monthly collection of personal care items for the Tulsa County Transitional Living Center. Please bring collected items to the 2024 Holiday Luncheon.

This month's item(s):

**DEODORANT**

\*\*\*\*\*

### FAMILY ISSUES - SEPTEMBER TOPIC

#### SHARE THAT RESEARCH!

A few updates can make your home safe for you or the elderly in your home.

Remove area rugs and fix all carpets firmly to the floor.

Install grab bars near toilets and in the tub or shower. Install non-slip strips on floors or surfaces that may get wet.

Ensure good lighting, particularly at the top and bottom of the stairs.

~From National Institute on Aging

### SCHOLARSHIP RAFFLE

We will be selling Raffle Tickets for **THIS BEAUTIFUL, CROCHETED JACKET!** We would like to thank Jo Potter for donating this beautiful jacket!

The Raffle Tickets will again sell for \$1 each or 6 tickets for \$5. We are selling tickets now and continuing through our Demo Day, October 12<sup>th</sup>. The drawing will be at Demo Day, and you do not need to be present to win!

Each group may pick up books of tickets to sell at the Extension Center, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



Contact Shari Munroe for more information.

### TREASURER'S BUDGET MEETING



Tulsa County OHCE would like to invite all their **Officers and Committee Chairs** to their upcoming budget meeting:

**Treasurer's Budget Meeting  
September 9, 2024 @ 1 p.m.  
Extension Center Classroom**

They will be creating their proposed 2025 budget that will be voted on at the September 17<sup>th</sup> Business Meeting.



# OHCE UPDATES



## KNIT 'N STITCH

On August 16, 2024, Knit 'n Stitch group members delivered 27 handmade book bags and 77 learn-to-read books to Lanier Elementary, in Tulsa. Promoting Family Literacy is our OHCE Family Issues State Goal.

Over the last 3 years Knit 'n Stitch has donated over 120 book bags and 180 books to help encourage, support, and improve Lanier students' reading skills.



Pictured above are some of our group members as well as the Lanier Elementary Principal and Library Media Specialist accepting our donation.

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Family and Consumer Sciences  
Tulsa County OSU Extension Service

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**8th Annual  
FALL  
Holiday**

**Demo Day**



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**SATURDAY** **OCT**  
**12th** **9:45 AM - 1PM**

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**Registration is FREE!**  
**\*BRING A FRIEND\***

**SILENT AUCTION ITEMS, DOOR  
PRIZES, BROWN BAG  
DRAWINGS AND 50/50  
DRAWING!**



**OSU Tulsa Conference Center  
B.S. Roberts Room  
700 N Greenwood Avenue - Tulsa**

**EVENT SCHEDULE**

9:45 AM - Check In & Refreshments  
10 AM to Noon - Demos & Door Prizes  
12PM - Silent Auction Closes, Brown Bag  
& 50/50 Drawings  
12:15 - 1PM - Fellowship Box Lunch\*  
\*Box Lunch is \$15 Choice of Ham & Cheese  
or Chicken Salad Sandwich with Chips &  
Cookie OR you may bring your own Lunch!

**RSVP Reservation & Box Lunch Payment Due by: October 1st to Tulsa County Treasurer**