

# STRENGTHENING OKLAHOMA FAMILIES

## Family and Consumer Science News

### Freezing foods can help reduce food waste and cost

With the cost of groceries continuing to rise, many people are looking for ways keep their food budget in check. There's one kitchen appliance that can help consumers fight this battle – the freezer.

The freezer can be used to extend the life of many foods, said [Christi Evans, Oklahoma State University Extension](#) assistant food safety specialist.

"Because groceries are consuming a bigger portion of most people's budgets, cutting down on food waste and taking advantage of sales is important," Evans said. "You might be surprised at some of the foods you can freeze."

Small households may have trouble using a gallon of milk or a whole loaf of bread before they go bad. Milk can be frozen in freezer-safe plastic or glass containers but remember to leave space at the top of the container for expansion. Place bread in a freezer-safe bag and press out the excess air before freezing.

Eggs are still expensive, and no one wants them to go to waste. To freeze eggs, crack and mix the yolks and whites. Put 3 tablespoons into each compartment of a clean ice tray and freeze. Once frozen, store the cubes in a sealed freezer bag or container. Each cube is equal to one whole egg.

Fresh fruit can be frozen before it overripens. First, wash the fruit, then



remove seeds, cores and pits. Chop or slice the fruit and put it in a freezer-safe bag. Adding a little lemon juice can help prevent the fruit from darkening. Squeeze out excess air.

"You might come across a great deal on fresh vegetables at the grocery store or farmers market. Most vegetables can be frozen but should be blanched for a few minutes first," she said. "Some vegetables, such as lettuce, celery and cucumbers don't freeze well."

Check out the National Center for Home Food Preservation at the University of Georgia for [blanching times](#).

Evans said to check grocery store sale ads for deals on meat. Large packages of meat are usually cheaper per pound than smaller packs.

"Meat can be frozen raw or cooked. Divide the larger package into smaller portions before freezing," she said. "Also, label all frozen food packages with what is in the package. If possible, keep the original label because that information can be useful in the event of a recall."

When preparing foods for the freezer, ensure the freezer is set at 0 degrees

### Wagoner County OSU Cooperative Extension Service

#### Address

30058 E. 147<sup>th</sup> St. S.  
Coweta, OK 74429

#### Phone

918-486-4589

#### Email

Virginia Stanely  
[Virginia.stanley@okstate.edu](mailto:Virginia.stanley@okstate.edu)

#### Social Media

Facebook:  
[@wagonercountyextension](#)



#### Website

<https://extension.okstate.edu/county/wagoner/>



Virginia Stanley  
FCS Educator & CED, Wagoner County

### In this issue:

Reduce Food Waste & Cost	1
Reduce Food Waste & Cost, cont.	
Fruit Salsa w/Cinnamon Chips	2
Tips to Reduce the Risk of Cancer	3
National Dairy Month	
Wagoner County OHCE	4
Dates to Remember	5

(continued)

Fahrenheit or below to help maintain food quality and prevent bacterial growth. Also, use airtight, moisture- and vapor-resistant packaging to prevent air exposure, which can lead to freezer burn and off-flavors. Label the packages with the date of freezing. This will help ensure consumers use older foods first.

“We spend a lot of money on food. Proper storage helps food maintain its quality and reduce waste,” she said.

## Fruit Salsa with Cinnamon Crisps

### Ingredients:

- 4 strawberries
- ½ banana
- 1 apple
- 1 kiwi
- 2 Tablespoons orange juice
- 2 Tablespoons sugar, divided
- 1 pinch nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon, divided
- 2 (8-inch) whole wheat tortillas
- Cooking spray



### Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Cut each tortilla into 8 pieces. Arrange on a baking sheet. Lightly coat with cooking spray.
3. Combine ¾ teaspoon cinnamon and 1 tablespoon sugar. Sprinkle over tortillas slices.
4. Bake 6 to 8 minutes until slightly browned.
5. Gently rub produce under cold running water. Peel and core the kiwi. Core the apple. Dice the strawberry, apple, banana, and kiwi into ¼ inch pieces. Mix orange juice, 1 tablespoon sugar, nutmeg, and ¼ teaspoon cinnamon. Toss with fruit. Chill.
6. Serve cinnamon crisps with fruit salsa.
7. Store leftover salsa in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to four days.

### Nutrition Information:

Calories: 170, Total Fat: 1.5g, Saturated Fat: 1g,  
Cholesterol: 0mg, Sodium: 105mg, Total Carbohydrates: 38g, Fiber: 5g, includes 12g Added  
Sugars, Protein: 2g, Calcium: 2%, Iron: 0%, Potassium: 6%

Source: [Nebraska Extension](#) - UNL Food

Strengthening Oklahoma Families is a bi-monthly publication of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. The information given herein is supplied with the understanding no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by Cooperative Extension is implied.

## OSU Extension offers tips to reduce the risk of cancer

No disease is 100% preventable, and cancer is no exception. Nearly 2 million people in the United States are diagnosed with cancer each year. Research shows that four out of 10 types of cancer are attributed to preventable causes, including smoking, excess body weight, physical inactivity, alcohol intake and excessive exposure to the sun.



“There has been a 32% decline in overall cancer mortality in the U.S. between 1991 and 2019 that is attributed to the reduction of smoking and advances in early detection of some cancers,” said [Diana Romano, Oklahoma State University Extension](#) associate specialist with the [Community Nutrition Education Program](#). “Unfortunately, some of the major cancer risk factors continue to be high.”

**Nutrition and Physical Activity** Eating healthy and being physically active are two ways to lessen the risk of certain types of cancer. “Many people in Oklahoma don’t consume enough vegetables, which are high in fiber and micronutrients, and low in calories,” Romano said. “We need to eat a variety of vegetables – the more colors we add to our plates, the better.”

Experiment with salads and other vegetable recipes. Add sauteed peppers and onions to grilled chicken for an extra kick of flavor. Add carrots, cauliflower and shredded carrots to salads made with a variety of greens. When grilling chicken, make extra that can be used to enhance a healthy main-dish salad the next day. Also, consider meatless meals that include eggs, beans, legumes or tofu.

Romano also suggests limiting sugar and alcohol consumption, as well as processed meats such as hotdogs and some lunchmeats.

“Kids can be picky eaters but letting them pick out a new fruit or vegetable each week can help them expand their palate,” she said. “Also, incorporate whole wheat pasta when making spaghetti or pasta salad.”

With warmer weather on the horizon, make it a point to get more physically active. Children can play in the yard or at the park after school. Families can ride bikes together or go on a nature walk. Pre-school-age children should get at least three hours of physical activity per day to enhance growth and development. Older children need 60 minutes per day, along with muscle and bone-strengthening exercise three days per week. Adults benefit from at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week.

**Eliminate Tobacco Use** The most preventable cause of cancer is the use of all tobacco products. Research shows that smoking is associated with the development of 17 different types of cancer. Although cigarette smoking has been on a steady decline, it still exposes people to many harmful chemicals that can lead to cancer development.

**Skin Cancer** With the weather warming up, many people will be spending more time outdoors. It’s essential to protect the skin from dangerous ultraviolet rays to reduce the risk of skin cancer. Romano said the rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. and outdoor time should be limited during that time.

“If you must be outside, wear light-colored clothing that covers your arms and legs, and wear a wide-brimmed hat. Apply an SPF 15 or higher sunscreen regularly to all exposed skin,” she said.

(continued)

Skin cancer, which is the most common type of cancer, is primarily found on areas of exposed skin, including the scalp, face, lips, ears, neck, chest, arms, hands and legs.

“If you see any new spots on your skin, irregular borders on a mole or other skin irregularities, get them checked by your doctor,” Romano said.

**Cancer-Causing Infections** Persistent infection with bacteria, viruses, and parasites increases a person’s risk for several types of cancer. About 3% of all cancer cases are attributable to infection with pathogens. Talk to your doctor about available treatments and vaccines to decrease the risk of certain cancers.

### June is National Dairy Month

#### Nutritional Benefits of Dairy Products:

1. Protein – Supports muscle growth and repair
2. Calcium – Essential for strong bones and teeth
3. Vitamin B12 – Important for nerve function and red blood cell production.
4. Vitamin D – Helps the body absorb calcium and supports bone health
5. Vitamin A – Supports vision, immune function, and skin health
6. Zinc – Important for immune function and healing wounds.
7. Selenium – Acts as an antioxidant to protect cells from damage.

Source: [National Dairy Council](#)

*Family & Consumer Sciences helps 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. is a local and statewide 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.*

Oklahoma State University, as an equal opportunity employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding non-discrimination and affirmative action. Oklahoma State University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all individuals and does not discriminate based on race, religion, age, sex, color, national origin, marital status, disability or veteran status with regard to employment, educational programs and activities, and/or admissions. For more information, visit <https://eeo.okstate.edu>.



Wagoner County OHCE members attended the NE District Meeting in Guthrie on March 25.



## **Dates to Remember**

### **May**

4-10 – OHCE Week  
23 – OHCE Craft Day  
26 – Office Closed for Memorial Day

### **June**

11 – OHCE Executive Meeting  
20 – OHCE Craft Day

### **July**

4 – Office Closed for Independence Day  
13-15 – OHCE Annual State Meeting

### **August**

13 – OHCE Executive Meeting  
22 – OHCE Craft Day  
28-30 – Wagoner County Free Fair

## **Wagoner County OHCE Groups**

### **In-Towners**

2nd Tuesday of the Month, 10 a.m.  
Yorkshire Village, Wagoner

### **Shahan**

3rd Wednesday of the Month, 10 a.m.  
Wagoner County Fair Building

### **Starlight**

1st Thursday of the month, 7 p.m.  
Individual homes

Oklahoma State University, as an equal opportunity employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding non-discrimination and affirmative action. Oklahoma State University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all individuals and does not discriminate based on race, religion, age, sex, color, national origin, marital status, disability or veteran status with regard to employment, educational programs and activities, and/or admissions. For more information, visit <https://eeo.okstate.edu>.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director of Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. This publication is printed and issued by Oklahoma State University as authorized by the Vice President for Agricultural Programs and has been prepared and distributed at a cost of .30 cents per copy.



WAGONER COUNTY  
EXTENSION

30058 E. 147<sup>th</sup> St. S.  
Coweta, OK 74429