

Cooking with fresh herbs

Whether you plant them or pick them up at the grocery store, adding fresh herbs is a quick way to transform ordinary meals into extraordinary meals.

Besides helping flavor foods when cutting back on salt, fat and sugar, herbs may offer additional benefits of their own. Researchers are finding many culinary herbs (both fresh and dried) have antioxidants that may help protect against such diseases as cancer and heart disease.

Here are some tips to help you enjoy the flavor and health benefits of fresh herbs in your cooking.

When Substituting Fresh Herbs for Dried Herbs

A general guideline when using fresh herbs in a recipe is to use three times as much as you would use of a dried herb. When substituting, you'll often be more successful substituting fresh herbs for dried herbs, rather than the other way around.

When to Pick or Purchase Herbs

Purchase herbs close to the time you plan to use them. When growing herbs in your own garden the ideal time for picking is in the morning after the dew has dried but before the sun gets hot. This helps ensure the best flavor and storage quality.

How to Prepare Herbs for Cooking

For most recipes, unless otherwise directed, mince herbs into tiny pieces. Chop with a chef's knife on a cutting board or snip with a kitchen scissors. To speed cutting with a scissors, cut herbs coarsely into a small bowl or cup and snip back and forth with your scissors.



Home Time

By Tranda Watts
Multi-county Extension Agent

Some recipes may direct you to cut large leaves, such as basil, into thin strips. An easy way to do this is to stack several leaves (about 3 to 5), roll into a tight roll, then cut into thin (1/16 to 1/8 inch) strips with a sharp knife.

While some recipes call for a sprig or sprigs of herbs, normally the part of the herb you harvest will be the leaves. For herbs with sturdier stems, such as marjoram, oregano, rosemary, sage and thyme, you can strip off the leaves by running your fingers down the stem from top to bottom. With small-leaved plants such as thyme, you can use both leaves and stems for cooking early in the season. Later in the season, as the stems become tougher, use just the leaves. For herbs with tender stems, such as parsley and cilantro, it's OK if you snip some of the stem in with the leaves when you're cutting these herbs.

Be careful if using a food processor to cut herbs - it's easy to turn them into a paste rather than tiny pieces.

When to Add Herbs During Food Preparation

Unlike dried herbs, fresh herbs are usually added toward the end in cooked dishes to preserve their flavor. Add the more delicate herbs

- basil, chives, cilantro, dill leaves, parsley, marjoram and mint - a minute or two before the end of cooking or sprinkle them on the food before the end of cooking or sprinkle them on the food before it's served. The less delicate herbs, such as dill seeds, oregano, rosemary, tarragon and thyme, can be added about the last 20 minutes of cooking. Obviously, for some foods, such as breads, batters, etc., you'll need to add herbs at the beginning of the cooking process.

Fresh herbs can be added to refrigerated cold foods several hours before serving. Allowing time (at least a couple of hours, if possible) for cold foods with herbs to chill helps the flavors to blend.

For further information about cooking with herbs, contact your local K-State Research and Extension Office or e-mail twwatts@oznet.ksu.edu

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May is

Beef



Month

Did you know?

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Decatur Health Systems

By Othelia Vacura

A new doctor will be coming to Oberlin to practice at our Specialty Clinic beginning in June. Dr. Stefan Lorincz, a podiatrist, or foot doctor, comes to us from the Kearney Orthopedic and Fracture Clinic. He will be here the afternoon of the first Wednesday of the month beginning June 4 and is a welcome addition to our specialty clinic medical staff. We encourage people with foot problems to use his services.

Most appointments with our Specialty Clinic doctors are made through the Oberlin Medical Arts

clinic. However, two of our specialists, Dr. Jeffery Curtis, the cardiologist from Hays, and Dr. Lorincz, prefer to have appointments scheduled through their own offices. Appointments in the morning of the third Wednesday of the month may be made with Dr. Curtis by calling his office in Hays at (800) 248-0073. Podiatry appointments with Dr. Lorincz may be scheduled by calling his office at (800) 458-4504 or (308) 865-1448.

Community members braved high winds and chilly temperatures

to attend the Health Fair at the Gateway on May 2. Winners of the door prizes at the Decatur Health Systems booth were John Tate and Jo Mason, cookbooks; Eula Juenemann and Carla Depperschmidt, insulated lunch boxes; and Sue May and Deona Cook, stadium seats. Winners may pick up their prizes at the hospital front desk.

The hospital's Community Walk at Sappa Park will take place from 4 to 7 p.m. Thursday. Refreshments will be served. Come walk for fitness and fun!

Mount Pleasant News

By Dianne Bremer

Tyler Shields was confirmed by Pastor Don White during Sunday morning worship services at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Atwood. Also attending were Paul and Kelly Shields, Cassidy and Caitlin, Gaylord and Shirley Shields, Martin and Evelyn May, and Kaylee May.

Tyler Shields was honored on his Confirmation Day by family and friends at an open house Sunday afternoon at the home of his grandparents, Gaylord and Shirley Shields. Among those attending were Paul and Kelly Shields, Cassidy and Caitlin, Mike and Nancy Shields, Omaha, and Stuart Euhus.

Saturday evening dinner guests of Gaylord and Shirley Shields were Mike and Nancy Shields, Omaha, and Paul and Kelly Shields, Tyler, Cassidy, and Caitlin.

Andrew and Stephanie Frankforter and Ethan, Lincoln, Neb., were weekend visitors of her parents, Elwood and Jeanie May, for Mother's Day and also visited other relatives and friends.

Karen Larson joined her parents, Zane and Gladys Geis, for a special Mother's Day dinner held Sunday noon at the Oberlin Covenant Church.

Wilma May, Evelyn Olson, Jerry and Connie Olson, and Stean Olson, Hays, enjoyed Mother's Day dinner together at a local restaurant Sunday noon.

Sunday guests of Rhonda May and Dan Nedland, Hunter and Elizabeth, for a Mother's Day brunch were Walter and Betty May, Robert and Sally May and Cole, Roland and Pam May, Zach and Hannah, and

Roger May and Ryan.

Arthur and Alice May, Louise Pollnow, and Herschel and Jody Betts were Saturday afternoon guests of John and Dianne Bremer and Jessica to celebrate Art and Alice's 62nd wedding anniversary, as well as an early Mother's Day.

The Decatur Community Junior High seventh grade boys and the seventh grade girls both took second place in the Northwest Kansas Junior High League track meet held Thursday in Oberlin. Ryan May tied for fourth in the high jump, placed fifth in the hurdles and fifth in the high jump. Zach May placed first in the hurdles, second in the long jump, and set a league record in the triple jump. Also, Ryan, Zach, Brady Fortin, and Kade Brown took second in the 4x4 100 relay.

Rexford News

By Vicki Allison

By the time this article is printed, Mother's Day will have passed, but I want to say, Happy Mother's Day, to all my readers who are moms. Those three letters, m-o-m, can make the difference in all our lives and so thank you for being a woman's most inspirational work, a mom.

On Monday, May 5, a Baccalaureate Service for Golden Plains graduates was presented by the Rexford Community Church. Pastor Lane Purcell shared the message and special music was provided by the high school choir. Janell Antholz, Golden Plains music instructor sang, "Go Light Your World." Then on Mother's Day, May 11, Golden Plains Class 2008 commencement took place at 2 p.m. There were 16 graduates earning their high school diploma. Brittany Ritter, daughter of Greg and Stephanie Ritter, Dresden, was salutatorian and co-valedictorians were Caitlyn Moss, daughter of Tom and Cecilia Moss, Menlo, and Andrew Broeckelman, son of Joe and Cathy Broeckelman, Selden.

Golden Plains Community Outreach elected officers at its May 7 meeting. The officers for 2008-2009

include, Evelyn Johnson, president, Vicki Allison, vice-president, Nancy Dahl, secretary, and Sondra Barnett, treasurer. The next meeting will be at the home of Evelyn Johnson at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, May 21. Individuals interested in working and improving the community are invited to attend and discuss ideas.

Saturday afternoon, Jami Wark, Hays, Brandy Stupka, Colby, and Ivonn Vargas, Selden, held a bridal shower for April Anderson Vargas.

April and Homero Vargas, Selden, will have a formal wedding ceremony on June 7.

Red Barn on-going activities: Monday, Barnswallows, 2 p.m.; Wednesday, 10 a.m., Ladies Bible Study and 8 p.m., Men's Bible Study, led by Pastor Lane Purcell; Come on Down, Thursdays, 2 p.m.; and Friday's Koffee Klatch at 9:30 a.m.

Until next time, make your week-memorable.

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