

HUMPHREYS CO. FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES EXTENSION NEWSLETTER

Denise Salonga | (931) 296-2543 | dschaef5@utk.edu | 108 Thompson St. Waverly, TN 37185



Happy Back to School to all Humphreys County students!

August's newsletter provides information on best freezing practices, how to become a blood donor, our recent Kids in the Kitchen Camp, and improving on one's soft skills for job employment searching.

Recipe of the Month

Basic Quiche

Ingredients

- 1 pie crust (baked, 9-inch)
- 1 cup vegetables (chopped, broccoli, zucchini, or mushrooms)
- 1/2 cup cheese (shredded)
- 3 eggs (beaten)
- 1 cup milk (non-fat)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375 °F.
2. Shred the cheese with a grater. Put it in a small bowl for now.
3. Chop the vegetables until you have 1 cup of chopped vegetables.
4. Cook the vegetables until they are cooked, but still crisp.
5. Put the cooked vegetables and shredded cheese into a pie shell.
6. Mix the eggs, milk, salt, pepper, and garlic powder in a bowl.
7. Pour the egg mix over the cheese and vegetables
8. Bake for 30-40 minutes, or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean.
9. Let the quiche cool for 5 minutes before serving.

Servings: 6 | Serving Size: 1 slice | Total Calories: 133 |

Real. Life. Solutions.

The latest on this month's issue:

Recipe of the Month

Tax-Free Groceries in
Tennessee Means More
Freezing

Become a Blood Donor

Kids in the Kitchen Camp

Job Searching: Improve on
Soft Skills

Skill Up Tennessee

Dates To Remember

Tax-Free Groceries in Tennessee Means More Freezing

For 2023, Tennessee's General Assembly has approved a three-month grocery tax holiday on **food & food ingredients** which **begins at 12:01 a.m. on Tuesday, August 1, 2023, and ends at 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, October 31, 2023.** With this being in place for three months, it could be a good time to stock freezers with necessary food items.

A simple quick-cooking technique is to make extra food at one meal and freeze for future meals. Or, to prepare food ahead and freeze for enjoying at a later time. One easy method of freezing foods, including liquid foods such as soups and stews, is to freeze them in freezer bags. Following are some general freezing tips, followed by specific tips for freezing in freezer bags.

- If you're making extra food at one meal for future meals, separate and refrigerate the portion to be served later **BEFORE** you put the food on the table. This keeps food quality higher by preventing "planned-overs" from becoming "picked-overs." It also helps keep food safe.
- Keep an appliance thermometer in your refrigerator and in your freezer to assure they stay at 40° F or lower (refrigerator) and 0° F or lower (freezer). Buy a thermometer at a discount, hardware, grocery store or other store that sells kitchen cooking tools.
- Refrigerate perishable foods so the **TOTAL** time they're at room temperature is less than two hours (or one hour in temperatures above 90° F). As a general guideline, eat perishable foods within four days or freeze them. Perishable foods include: meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, dairy products, pasta, rice, cooked vegetables, fresh, peeled and/or cut fruits and vegetables
- Freeze foods in portion sizes you'll need for future meals. For example, if there are two in your family and you each eat a cup of rice for a meal, freeze in two-cup portions.

STEP 1. Cool foods "slightly" at room temperature before refrigeration

It is not necessary for a food to be completely cool before it is refrigerated. To help food cool slightly before refrigeration:

- Place a shallow container of food on a cooling rack to allow air to circulate all round the pan for about 20 to 30 minutes.
- Limit depth of food to 2 inches.

STEP 2. Complete cooling of foods in the refrigerator

- Cool foods to refrigerator temperature before bagging them for your freezer. It is OK to refrigerate foods while they're still warm.
- **LOOSELY** cover food upon refrigeration. This allows heat to escape and protects the food from accidental contamination from other foods during cooling.

STEP 3. Pack foods into freezer bags

- Use "freezer" bags, not "storage" bags for storing food in the freezer. Freezer bags are thicker than storage bags and will keep the food fresh longer.
- Speed freezing and hasten thawing by freezing foods in a thin, flattened shape in freezer bags. A rounded shape takes longer to thaw through to the middle. Flatter packages also will stack better in your freezer.

STEP 4. Label foods

To avoid mystery meats and other foods of unknown age and possibly origin, label foods using freezer tape, gummed freezer labels or permanent marking pens/crayons. Include:

- Name of food
- Packaging date
- Number of servings or amount
- Additional helpful information, such as form of food (sliced, chopped, etc.), any special ingredients

Freezing food on a flat tray until frozen solid. It is helpful to place filled freezer bags on a flat surface in your freezer, such as a metal pan. Do not stack freezer bags until frozen so they will freeze faster. After they are frozen solid, the bags may be removed from the pan and stored, stacked, directly on the freezer shelf. Or turn them on their edge and store them vertically. This is an especially good idea when freezing liquid foods, such as soups and stews.

Tax-Free Groceries Means More Freezing

STEP 5. Thaw and cook frozen foods

DO NOT thaw perishable foods at room temperature. If perishable foods are left at room temperature too long, bacteria may grow and produce heat-resistant toxins that can cause food-borne illness. Cooking may not be able to destroy these toxins.

- It's best to plan ahead for slow, safe thawing in the refrigerator.
- Small items may thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Up to 5 pounds of food should thaw in about 24 hours.
- If there is the possibility a thawing package might leak, you may want to thaw it on a plate or a pan.

If food is thawed in the microwave, finish reheating it right away. Unlike food thawed in a refrigerator, microwave-thawed foods reach temperatures that encourage bacterial growth. Cook immediately to kill any bacteria that may have developed and to prevent further bacterial growth:

- Food may be transferred from a freezer bag to a microwave safe container for thawing in the microwave.
- If the freezer bag manufacturer says it is OK to thaw foods directly in their freezer bag, follow manufacturer's directions for such things as venting, recommended heat settings, types of foods suitable for microwave-thawing, etc. for that specific bag. Also, follow manufacturer's directions for your microwave.
- While you may be able to satisfactorily defrost food in some freezer bags in the microwave (check manufacturer's directions), DO NOT cook the food in the freezer bag — unless recommended by the freezer bag manufacturer. At the higher temperatures used in the microwave cooking process, it is possible for the plastic to reach melting temperatures.



Become a Blood Donor

Blood is a precious gift that one person can give to another person. It is the gift of life. A decision to donate your blood can save more than one life. One donation can save up to three lives. There is a constant need for a regular supply of blood because it can only be stored for a limited time. Regular blood donation ensures that blood will always be available whenever and wherever it is needed.

There are many reasons why a person may need a blood transfusion. For example, women with complications during pregnancy and childbirth; children with severe anemia, often resulting from malaria or malnutrition; accident victims; and surgical and cancer patients, among others, may need blood. There is no substitute for human blood. Those who need blood rely on live human donors.

There is a constant need for a regular supply of blood because it can only be stored for a limited time.

Most adults who are healthy and do not have a transmissible infection are eligible to donate. Healthy adults can give blood regularly — at least twice a year. Your local blood service can tell you how frequently you can give blood.

Donating blood is very simple. Blood drive workers help donors feel as comfortable as possible, usually in a special chair or on a bed. A trained health worker cleans the area inside one of your elbows with an antiseptic solution before inserting a sterile needle, connected to a blood collection bag, into your vein. It usually takes about 10 minutes to donate blood. After resting for 10 or 15 minutes and taking some refreshment, you can return to your normal activities. However, you should avoid strenuous activity for the rest of the day. You should drink plenty of fluids over the next 24 hours.

The Red Cross and many local hospitals and nonprofit health organizations organize blood donation drives on an ongoing basis in many communities. If you are interested in becoming a blood donor and saving lives, reach out to a blood donation organization or your local hospital today!



Kids in the Kitchen Camp

Twenty-one Humphreys County youth joined Extension Agents Denise Salonga (Family & Consumer Sciences) and Audrey Fulton (4-H Youth Development) for a fun-packed three day cooking camp. The camp is designed to give youth opportunities to learn basic cooking skills, like how to use a knife correctly and safely, food safety, fire safety, identifying kitchen cooking utensils, and much more. The participants cooked their own meals, and took a virtual trip across the world as they explored the cultures of Germany, Japan, and Columbia.

The participants get a chance to learn a bit about the food culture and cuisine in these countries to get a feel about what international cuisine is like. They get to prepare a craft that signifies some part of that country's culture, like origami for Japan. We had a special mad scientist, Bethanie Bailey, come in to show the kids how to make their calming jar using food.

The kids prepared several dishes like chicken schnitzel, Kartoffelpuffer, Gyudon bowl, fruit sushi (frushi), arroz con pollo - Colombian style, and rice pudding. They all enjoyed the recipes, and were given a cookbook to take home and prepare.

We had several participants go home the next night and prepare the same meal that evening! We enjoy working with the youth to teach them these important skills as they make their way through adolescence into adulthood. Stay tuned for 2024!



Job Searching: Improve on Soft Skills



Employers are looking for dependable, reliable and professional people who can work well with others, have a positive attitude and communicate effectively. In fact, many employers say these types of skills, called soft skills, are as or more important than technical skills. Soft skills are key to success. These are skills we possess as individuals and bring to any job situation. They cut across any occupation to complement technical training we may have and tie it all together to help us be a dependable, effective employee. Below are a list of soft skills, followed by how they are important for employment.

Soft skills include: • Interpersonal skills • Integrity • Professionalism • Initiative • Dependability and reliability • Adaptability and flexibility • Lifelong learning • Communication skills • Teamwork

GETTING A JOB

- *Reputation:* Developing a professional persona doesn't just happen at work. We constantly communicate things about ourselves so be sure you're communicating the right message. This especially applies to social media.
- *Interpersonal Communication:* Interpersonal communication includes what is written and spoken, as well as nonverbal communication. Be sure to communicate what you intend to communicate.
- *Dress:* Dress like you want the job. This is your chance to make a first impression and convey a professional appearance.
- *Preparation:* Take the initiative to learn about the job you're applying for and the organization as a whole. Use this information in your cover letter, interview and interactions.

KEEPING A JOB

- *Think teamwork:* Whatever the job, you are likely to be part of a team. This could mean working directly with others or being part of a unit or division where someone else will fill your role on the next shift. Working well with others is vital.
- *Communicate, communicate, communicate:* The same written, verbal and nonverbal skills needed to get a job apply once you're on the job as well.
- *Be a solid employee:* Prove to be dependable and reliable by doing what you say you will do.

ADVANCING YOUR CAREER

- *Go above and beyond:* Don't just do the job, take the initiative to do more than what is asked or expected.
- *Keep learning:* To be the best employee you can be both now and in the future you need to develop a deep understanding of your work.



In Humphreys County, TN, the current unemployment rate is 7.4%. Based on the US Census Bureau, the state of Tennessee unemployment rate is 9.9%. About 315,000 Tennesseans are unemployed.

WHAT IS SKILL UP TENNESSEE?

Skill Up Tennessee provides SNAP Employment and Training. We help SNAP participants gain the training and skills needed to get a good job. Our goal is to help you prepare for employment.

If you're ready to move forward on your career path, we're here to help. To be eligible, participants must:

- Receive SNAP benefits
- Not receive TANF (Families First) cash assistance
- Be willing and able to work upon completion

HOW CAN WE HELP?

Things like training, testing, and uniforms cost money, and we can help. We focus on short-term training leading to credentials that are in demand. We will pair you with a Career Navigator who will work with you on your journey to help you meet your goals.

Supportive Services

Depending on need, participants may receive financial supports such as these for approved program activities:

- Gas Cards for Transportation
- Uniforms
- Testing Fees
- Textbooks

AVAILABLE AT NO COST TO PARTICIPANTS:

Take the NEXT step today.

- Help to find the training that's right for you and the support you need
- Access to adult education and vocational training
- Work Readiness Training to help you gain professional skills valuable for employment
- Support to help you get started in your new job

Sign Up Today!

Follow this link to see if you are eligible and preregister:



tiny.utk.edu/SkillUpTN

To learn more about Tennessee Association for Family and Community Education

TAFCE Webpage:
<https://www.tafce.org>

Central Region Webpage:
<https://tafcecrl.wixsite.com/2020crfce>

Eastern Region Webpage:
<https://eastern.tennessee.edu/eastern-region-fce/>

Western Region Webpage:
<https://western.tennessee.edu/family-and-community-education/>

Facebook Groups:

Tennessee Association for Family and Community Education (TAFCE)

TAFCE Masks of Love Volunteers

TAFCE, Central Region

Eastern Region FCE

Western Region Family & Community Education

Typically TAFCE designates an "issue or cause" to educate the members and to support at the local, county, region and/or state level. Most recently, members have become more knowledgeable about human trafficking awareness, the opioid epidemic, and suicide awareness and prevention.

If you are interested in becoming more involved in your community, learn new skills and make new friends.... check out FCE!

Tennessee Association for Family and Community Education is in partnership with the University of Tennessee Extension.



For information regarding local FCE Clubs, please contact:

Tennessee Association for Family and Community Education



What is TAFCE?

The Tennessee Association for Family and Community Education (TAFCE) is an organization of volunteers who work together to build strong families and communities. Local FCE clubs throughout the state of Tennessee are divided into three regions: western, central and eastern. Educational materials are created and utilized to strengthen knowledge and expertise. Resources are provided to develop leadership skills, enabling people to make a difference. Ultimately, FCE strives to make our homes and communities a better place in which to live!



Strengthening Families

TAFCE Mission: To strengthen the home and community by improving the quality of life of individuals and families through continuing education, leadership development, and community service.

To Learn

During hands-on workshops and monthly meetings, educational programs are presented. Topics are varied and relate to current issues, changes in technology, health, safety, nutrition, family economics, and more.

To Lead

Members have the opportunity to lead by serving as officers or on committees. Family and Community Leadership (FCL) training is offered to prepare members to contribute to public policy and decision making.



To Serve

Each year FCE offers projects designed to make a difference in the lives of families in the local or broader communities in which we live. FCE members have the opportunity to share and serve, working closely with other local organizations.

To Have Fun!

Fun, laughter, and friendship abound at every FCE gathering. Meetings, work sessions, camp or retreat, trips, conferences...all are occasions for fellowship and exploration of new places, activities, and new ideas!

State Projects

TAFCE encourages participation in state projects in the areas of education, community action and leadership. A long-time emphasis in education has been the support of literacy, libraries, and the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. There are countless opportunities for community service, often determined by specific, local community need. The leadership area has recently been added to encourage teaching, mentoring, and assisting with 4-H programs and the Family and Community Leadership (FCL) program.

A recent statewide community service project was Masks of Love. In response to covid-19, members from across the state of Tennessee made facemasks in their homes for Emergency Management Departments, hospitals, health and rehab centers, first responders, community workers, school students, family and friends.



TAFCE member, sewing facemasks.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2

Homemade
COOKIES MADE EASY

Dates to Remember

08//2023