



Family and Consumer News

McDowell County Center

January-March 2013

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Contact Us

McDowell County Extension
60 E Court Street
Marion NC 28752

(828) 652-7874 Phone
(828) 652-8104 Fax

<http://mcdowell.ces.ncsu.edu>

Kristin_mart@ncsu.edu

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Start your New Year right with the Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less Program

In January, many residents of McDowell County make resolutions to eat better, get more physical activity and achieve a healthy weight. However, many of those resolutions may be abandoned before Spring. If you are looking for a fun and innovative way to successfully manage your weight, there is a program just for you.

The *Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less* program is being offered by McDowell County Cooperative Extension starting **January 8, 2013**. The purpose of *Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less* is to help people learn about strategies that have been proven to work for weight loss. Over the 15-week program participants learn to pay attention to what they are eating and listen to their bodies. They also learn to be mindful of how much activity they get each day.

Participants receive a journal to record their progress and a full-color magazine with tips and recipes to help them along the way. Weekly weigh-ins with a program "buddy" also helps keep people on track. Other incentives and prizes are offered for attendance and meeting weight loss goals.

A new addition to the *Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less* program is ZUMBA. Are you ready to party yourself into shape? That's exactly what ZUMBA is all about and certified instructors from the Corpening Memorial YMCA will be helping participants jump start their physical activity. Additional group fitness classes from the Y will be offered throughout the course of the program, as well. McDowell County Cooperative Extension is offering this program starting **January 8th** at the **McDowell Senior Center**. The program is 15 weeks long with the group meeting Tuesday evenings from 5:30 to 7:00 PM. The enrollment fee is **\$45** per person and includes all program materials, incentives and group fitness classes. To register for *Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less*, you must submit payment by **January 2nd**.

Newsletter compiled and edited by

Kristin Mart
Extension Agent
Family and Consumer Science

Secretarial support by Cheryl Mitchell

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EXTENSION**

Empowering People • Providing Solutions

It's that time of year again..... Take Action Against Radon!

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that is invisible, odorless, and tasteless. Radon is released harmlessly from the ground into outdoor air, but it can accumulate and reach harmful levels when trapped in homes and buildings.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that radon is responsible for more than 21,000 lung cancer deaths per year in the United States. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. after smoking and the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. Since radon does not have an odor and is invisible, people tend to downplay the health effects and ignore the possibility that there might be a silent killer within the walls of their home.



McDowell County has been designated as a Zone 1 County by the US Environmental Protection Agency, which means the average home will test over 4 picocuries per liter (pCi/L), the level at which it is recommended that you fix your home. Houses in the same neighborhood can have very different levels, so every home should be tested. Testing homes for radon is simple and inexpensive.

Radon test kits can be purchased at local hardware and home improvement stores, directly from radon testing companies, or are available for free during January from the NC Radon Program. Should your home be found to have elevated levels of radon, the problem can be fixed by qualified contractors for a cost similar to that of many other home repairs. In our area, the cost can be from \$1,000 to \$2,500 depending on the home.

The NC Radon Program urges residents to take action during this year's National Radon Action Month by testing their homes for radon. Radon poses a serious threat to our community's health, but there is a straightforward solution. For more information on radon and to receive your FREE radon test kit, please contact the Extension office at 652-7874.... Or visit the NC Radon Program's website at www.ncradon.org.

Would you or someone you know like to learn more about the aspects of gardening and landscaping and then use that knowledge to help others? If the answer is yes, **the Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program** is for you. Applicants for the program should have some experience with gardening, a willingness to learn, and a desire to share their knowledge with others. The Master Gardener Training will include thirteen 3-hour sessions that will begin on **Thursday, February 7, 2013**. The class will be from 5:30pm until 8:30pm. The cost for the Master Gardener Program will be \$100.00 plus 40 hours of volunteer time.

For more information or an application, call Molly or Jane at 652-8104.



Superfoods to the Rescue

The term “superfood” is used quite a bit these days. Foods with multiple disease-fighting nutrients make the list. The good news is that most “super” fruits and vegetables are plentiful at N.C. farmers markets. Keep this list handy and incorporate the superfoods into your daily diet!

What makes a fruit or vegetable a superfood? Some fruits and vegetables contain higher amounts of phy-tochemicals, like antioxidants and anthocyanins (the natural compounds that give a fruit its red, blue or purplish color). These nutrients can help reduce your risk of cancer, diabetes and heart disease. The combination of these compounds and the basic vitamins and minerals found in most fresh produce makes for a “superfood” that goes above and beyond in providing health benefits.



Which fruits and vegetables are considered superfoods?

- Beans
- Blueberries
- Broccoli
- Leafy Greens
- Oats
- Oranges
- Pumpkins
- Tomatoes
- Sweet Potatoes
- Walnuts

Interested in starting a home-based food business?

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Food and Drug Protection Division helps home-based food businesses comply with food safety laws and produce safe products for sale. Comprehensive information about home processing and the required application materials are available through the NC Home Processing website at **www.nchomeprocessing.com**.

Questions about home processing can be e-mailed to homeprocessing@ncagr.gov.

Key Contacts for more specific inquiries:

Kaye Snipes
Food Regulatory Specialist
(Piedmont & Western NC)
(919) 608-9205
kaye.snipes@ncagr.gov

Compliance Staff
NCDA&CS
Food and Drug Protection Division
(919) 733-7366
joan.sims@ncagr.gov

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Checklist: Starting a Home-based Food Business

Step 1: Verify that your product can be manufactured at home

Low-risk packaged foods are the only products allowed to be manufactured in home kitchens. These can include:

- Certain categories of baked goods
- Jams and jellies
- Candies
- Dried mixes
- Spices
- Certain sauces and liquids
- Pickles and acidified foods

High-risk products (such as refrigerated or frozen products, low-acid canned foods, dairy products, seafood products, and bottled water) must be made in a non-home based commercial facility.

If you are uncertain whether your product can be made at home, contact a Food Compliance Officer at 919-733-7366.

Step 2: Verify that your home kitchen can be used to manufacture your product

Home processing areas must meet state and federal safety requirements, including the Good Manufacturing Practices in the Code of Federal Regulations (21 CFR 110).

Key requirements include:

- **No pets in the home at any time**, even if only at night
- Smooth and easily cleanable food contact surfaces
- Easily accessible restroom and hand-washing facilities with hot and cold running water
- Thermometer in refrigerator to monitor temperature
- Acceptable sewer or septic system for waste
- All kitchen light bulbs must be shatter-proof or shielded

Step 3: Learn how to make your product safely and/or have your product analyzed for risk

If you are manufacturing pickles or other acidified foods, plan to attend Better Process Control training offered by NC State University.

If you are unsure whether your product is low-risk, contact the NCSU Food Science Department to have your product analyzed.

Step 4: Check with local authorities for licensing and zoning information

If you have determined that you qualify as a home-based business, check with your local government for information about local zoning and licensing requirements to ensure that a home-based business is allowed in your neighborhood.

Step 5: Provide municipal water bill or have well water analyzed for coliform bacteria

If your home has municipal or city water, include a copy of your latest water bill with your application. Well water must be tested for coliform bacteria before inspection. Test results within one year of your application are required. Testing is offered by private labs and some local health departments.

Step 6: Develop your business plan

Provide a brief description of your business with your application. The following items should be included:

- Detailed list of specific products produced in the home kitchen
- Ingredients and suppliers
- A plan for storing supplies, equipment, and finished product
- A general production flow including procedures and equipment
- A plan for transporting products
- Potential locations for sale of product

Step 7: Label your product appropriately

All products sold to consumers must be packaged to prevent contamination. Labels must be affixed to the package and include:

- Product name
- Manufacturer name and address
- Net weight of the product in ounces/pounds and the gram weight equivalent
- Complete list of ingredients in order of predominance by weight

Step 8: Complete application for home processing inspection

Within two weeks of receipt of your application, a Food Regulatory Specialist will contact you to arrange for a home processing facility inspection. You will receive a copy of relevant state and federal law. Inspections are scheduled by e-mail.

Check your e-mail periodically for correspondence from our Regulatory Specialist. Applicants without e-mail will be contacted by phone.

Step 9: Start your business and promote your product!

After your product has been evaluated for risk and your kitchen has met inspection standards, you can begin producing and selling your product. You may want to file for a tax number, register your business name, or apply for one or more UPC codes. For more information about growing your business and marketing your product, visit www.nhomeprocessing.com.

Recipe Page

Caesar-Chicken Pasta Salad

Cooking Light

- 3 cups (about 12 ounces) skinned, shredded roasted chicken breast (such as Tyson's)
- 3 cups hot cooked penne (about 6 ounces uncooked tubular-shaped pasta)
- 2 cups thinly sliced romaine lettuce
- 1 1/2 cups halved cherry tomatoes
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced fresh basil
- 1/2 cup chopped green onions
- 1/3 cup fat-free Caesar dressing
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1 (4-ounce) package crumbled feta cheese
- 1 garlic clove, minced

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl; toss well to coat.

Note: To lower the sodium in this dish, use plain cooked chicken in place of the commercial roasted variety, which is fairly high in sodium.



Easy Crockpot Stuffed Bell Peppers

- 6 green peppers (washed, topped and seeded)
- 1 Tbs. shortening (i.e. Crisco)
- 1 1/2 lb. ground beef (Or 2 lbs)
- 1 C. cooked rice
- 1 sm. onion, chopped
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/8 tsp. black pepper
- 1/8 tsp. basil
- 1/2 C. ketchup
- 1 8-oz. can tomato sauce (w/ or w/o seasoning)



Heat shortening in skillet and brown beef. Combine meat and next 6 ingredients. Stuff bell peppers. Arrange bell peppers in large crock pot. Can be stacked. Pour tomato sauce over peppers. Cook on low for 6-7 hours or on high for 3-4 hours.



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2013 NC Extension & Community Association Scholarships Available

Each year, the North Carolina Extension & Community Association (NCECA) provides scholarship opportunities to high school seniors, college students, and adults. Each of the ECA districts will receive money for two \$600 scholarships, one youth and one adult. Scholarships will be awarded based on financial need, scholarship potential, activities and honors, and ECA connection. All applicants must be NC residents and planning to attend a NC accredited college, community college, or technical institute the following fall term. **Applications are available at the Extension office and are due by February 1, 2013. Call Kristin at 652-7874 for more information.**

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