

July 2008

Dear Homemakers,

**Wibaux County
Extension Office**

I hope everyone's summer is going well. We have some exciting news from the Wibaux County Extension Office. Our new county website is up and running. The address is: www.wibauxextension.com or www.msuextension.org/wibaux/. We will be posting our newsletters on our website along with a local calendar of events. If you wish to receive your newsletters by e-mail or if you just want to read it online, please contact me at 796-2486.

REMINDERS: **National Kids Day** will be held on Sunday, **August 3rd**. If anyone is interested in helping plan or assist with this fun-filled day for kids, contact me at the Extension Office. The **Wibaux County Fair & Rodeo** is **August 22-24** and this year's theme is "*Little Fair - Big Fun!*". The night show will feature Comedy Hypnotist, Alan Sands. There will be another exciting rodeo on Saturday night and the Demo Derby & Bump-N-Run on Sunday will be bigger and better. I would encourage every resident of Wibaux County to exhibit at least one item in the fair. Everyone's participation adds so much to small county fairs such as ours. If anyone has questions about these events, please feel free to contact us at the Extension Office.

Sincerely,

Montana State University,
U.S. Department of
Agriculture and Montana
Counties Cooperating.
MSU Extension is an equal
opportunity/affirmative
action provider of
educational outreach.

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FREE MONTGUIDES AVAILABLE

Food & Nutrition:

- < Canning Pickles & Sauerkraut (MT199607HR)
- < Drying Fruits & Vegetables (MT198344HR)
- < Eating Right: Good Sources of Nutrients: Potassium (4427)
- < Family Mealtime (MT200403HR)
- < Freezing Fruits (MT198330HR)
- < Freezing Vegetables (MT198331HR)
- < Fruit Leather (MT198327HR)
- < Home Canning Meat, Poultry & Fish (MT199610HR)
- < Home Canning Pressures & Processing Times (MT198329HR)
- < Making Jams & Jellies at Home (MT199609HR)
- < Processing Fruit, Tomatoes & Mixtures in a Pressure Canner (MT198803HR)

Personal & Social Well-Being:

- < Be Your Own Best Friend (EB0020)
- < Choosing A College (MT200302HR)
- < Dealing With Anger in Relationships (MT200004HR)
- < Depression: What You Should Know (MT200507HR)
- < 50 Stress-Busting Ideas for Your Well-Being (MT200016HR)
- < Understanding Grief (MT200402HR)
- < It's Your Choice: Decision Making & Goal Setting (MT199011HR)
- < The Case Against Suicide (MT199004HR)

If you are interested in any of these MontGuides, call or stop by the Extension Office and I can give you a free copy.



5 Simple Steps to Better Health

- <Start with a healthy breakfast.
- <Move more.
- <Add more fruits, veggies and whole grains.
- <Remember to hydrate.
- <Try lower calories or fat.

Improving our health is a goal for most of us. We feel better, have more energy, enjoy life more, and spend less money on chronic illness. Above are some simple steps that researchers say will help us. You can be SMART!

Prairie Fare: Snooze Your Way to a Slimmer Waistline

By Julie Garden-Robinson, NDSU Extension Food & Nutrition Specialist

Recent research has shown that getting enough sleep is one of the keys to managing appetite in the short term and weight in the long term.

In a study of more than 9,000 people, researchers from Columbia University reported that people who slept fewer than seven hours nightly were more likely to be obese. In fact, people who snoozed six or fewer hours were 27% more likely to be obese.

In a study of 990 adults in a rural Iowa community, researchers reported similar results. Overall, the people who slept the least weighed the most.

The scientific reason for the link between sleep shortages and weight gain is linked chemically to levels of two natural hormones. The levels rise and fall based on the amount of sleep you get.

Researchers have linked the hormones leptin and gherlin with weight management. Leptin is produced by fat cells, while gherlin is produced in the stomach.

Leptin tells your brain that you're full, but it's level falls when people are overly tired. Gherlin tells your brain you're hungry, but it's level increases with fatigue.

Keep your appetite-managing hormones at the proper level by getting the rest you need. Try these tips based on information from the National Institute of Health.

- Stay on a schedule with your sleep patterns. Got to bed the same time on weeknights and weekends.
- Don't nap after 3:00 p.m.
- Unwind before bedtime. Listen to music or read. Take a warm bath.
- If you can't sleep after 20 minutes, get up and do some relaxing activity.
- Avoid alcoholic drinks at bedtime. Drinking alcohol may make you sleepy. However, you may wake up when the effects wear off.
- Avoid large meals or large amounts of beverages before bed.
- If you have persistent issues with sleeping, see a health-care professional.



Prairie Fare: Freezer Meltdown May Prompt Cooking Spree

By Julie Garden-Robinson, NDSU Extension Food & Nutrition Specialist

I was trying to salvage food after someone left our freezer door partly open. In June, an open freezer door is not a good plan, especially when your freezer is in a warm garage. I wasn't exactly cheery after throwing away a trash can full of dripping food.

In the case of a power outage, refrigerated food will remain chilled for several hours as long as you keep the refrigerator door closed. Food in half-full freezers will remain frozen up to a day, while food in full freezers usually remains frozen up to two days.

Food that contains more water, such as meat and vegetables, stays frozen longer than food with little water, such as bread. You can use dry ice or bags of ice to keep the temperature cold longer.

I was kind of wishing we had a chest freezer instead of an upright because chest freezers keep food frozen longer. Maybe the door would fall shut, too.

Since we had an accidental situation involving a partially open door, I needed to assess the situation a little differently, but still follow the rules.

- < Measure the temperature of the food with a food thermometer. Food that is at "refrigerator temperature" (40 degrees) is considered safe. Since the food in the door of my freezer was fully thawed and nearly 50 degrees, I threw it out.
- < Check the remaining frozen food for ice crystals. Food with ice crystals can be refrozen safely. Although most of the meat in the interior part of our freezer had ice crystals, I decided to cook it right away. Refreezing food can result in quality loss.
- < Check if raw meat juices have dripped on "ready-to-eat" food, such as packages of bread or fruit. In this situation, cross-contamination could occur easily, especially if the wrapper is damaged.
- < When in doubt, throw it out. I debated about a couple of packages, but decided the cost of foodborne illness outweighed the cost of a package of chicken.

By the end of my cooking spree, all of our meals for the week were ready to reheat. Maybe weekend cooking was a good plan.



Trail Mix Recipes

Texas Trail Mix

- 4 c. bite-size pretzels
- 12 oz. crisp cereal squares
- 1 lb. mixed nuts
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. chili powder
- 1 oz. package ranch dressing mix
- ½ tsp. cayenne pepper, if desired
- ½ c. vegetable or peanut oil

*Mix dry ingredients in a large brown paper bag. Add oil and shake well. Bake in brown bag at 200 degree oven for about 1 hour.

Inspired Trail Mix

- 1 c. raw cashews
- 1 Tbsp. maple syrup
- 2 pinches ground cinnamon
- 1 pinch cayenne pepper
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1/3 c. halved dried apricots
- 1/3 c. raisins

*Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Toss together the cashews, maple syrup, cinnamon, cayenne, and salt until well mixed. Spread the mixture onto the baking sheet. Bake until golden brown, stirring half way through, about 10 minutes. Remove from the oven and scrape the nuts onto a plate to cool. When the nuts are cool, put them in a bowl and toss them together with the apricots and raisins.

River's Trail Mix

- ½ c. butter
- 1¼ tsp. seasoned salt
- 4½ tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 8 c. Wheat Chex
- 3 c. pretzel sticks
- 2 c. peanuts

*Melt butter on a jelly roll pan. Stir in seasoned salt and Worcestershire sauce. Gradually add cereal, nuts and pretzels, stirring until pieces are evenly coated. Bake 1 hour at 250 degrees, stir every 15 minutes.



Ultimate Trail Mix

- 1 c. dried cranberries
- 1 c. dried blueberries
- 1 c. dried pineapple
- 1 c. dried apple pieces
- 1 c. peanuts
- 1 c. cashews
- 1 c. almonds
- 1 c. marshmallows (any kind)
- 1½ c. *puppy chow* (see recipe below)
- 1 c. chocolate chips
- 1 c. peanut butter chips
- 1 c. butterscotch chips
- 1 c. white chocolate chips

*Mix all ingredients together in a large bowl.

Puppy Chow

- 1 12 oz. box Crispix cereal
- 2 c. semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 c. peanut butter
- 5 Tbsp. butter
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 16 oz. package powdered sugar

*Pour cereal into large bowl and set aside. In a 1-quart saucepan, heat chocolate chips, peanut butter and butter over low heat, stirring frequently until melted. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla. Pour mixture slowly over cereal while stirring with a spatula to evenly coat. Pour into a 2-gallon resealable plastic storage bag or grocery bag. Add powdered sugar slowly. Shake until well coated. Spread onto wax paper to cool. Store in airtight container in refrigerator.

Apricot Leather

- 10 c. fresh apricots, sliced
- 1 c. sugar

*Slice apricots and place into large saucepan. Add sugar and bring mixture to a boil, stirring, until sugar is dissolved. Pour mixture into blender container and puree. Cool to lukewarm. Meanwhile, prepare a smooth, level drying surface in full sunlight. Cover cookie sheets, jelly roll pans or other flat surface with clear plastic wrap. Pour apricot puree onto prepared surface, spread to ¼-inch thickness and let dry in sunlight. Cover with cheesecloth to protect. Drying may take 20-24 hours. Bring puree inside at end of day and finish drying second day. Or finish drying in 150 degree oven with door propped ajar. Fruit is dry when puree can be peeled off plastic easily. For storing, roll up leather with plastic wrap. Wrap in more plastic wrap and seal tightly. Leather will keep at room temperature about one month, in refrigerator for about 4 months, or in freezer about 1 year.