What do people, sheep and pine trees have in common? They all need WATER! In the hot days of summer, we’re more apt to get the water we need. Perhaps it just tastes better in the summer, but we need hydration just as much in the winter!

According to experts at the Mayo Clinic, the main chemical component that makes up 60 percent of our body weight is water and it only takes a 1 to 2 percent loss of fluid to cause dehydration. Every system in the body depends on water. The functions of this bodily fluid include digestion, absorption, circulation, lubrication and maintenance of body temperature.

It is estimated that we lose 8 cups (64 ounces) of water a day depending on age, activity level, the weather, and general health. We can replace lost liquid with some of the foods we eat in addition to the liquids we drink. Experts suggest several reasons for drinking plenty of water:

1. It can control calories – water is not a magic bullet for weight loss, but choosing water over a high caloric beverage and eating water-rich foods that are healthy and more filling can help you trim your caloric intake. (Barbara Rolls, Ph.D., author of The Volumetrics Weight Control Plan.)

2. It builds muscle tone – water prevents cramping and
lubricates the joints.

3. It lowers stress – 70 to 80 percent of the brain tissue is water. If you are dehydrated, your body and your mind are stressed.

4. It boosts energy – water helps transport oxygen and other nutrients to the heart and other cells and amps up metabolism. If the water is cold, your body burns more calories to warm the water.

5. It reduces kidney stones – water dilutes salts and minerals in your urine that can cause kidney stones.

6. It nourishes your skin – water helps remove impurities and plumps up the skin cells, giving you a younger look. It also improves blood flow, which gives a healthy glow.

7. It aids in digestion – water helps you stay regular by dissolving waste products and moving them smoothly through your digestive track.

The following tips from The U.S. National Library of Medicine and National Institutes of Health can help you get the water you need:

1. Carry a water bottle with you when you are at work or running errands.

2. Freeze water in freezer-safe water bottles to take with you all day.

3. Choose water instead of other beverages when eating out.

4. Give your water a little pizzazz by adding a wedge of lemon or lime.

If you are tired, stressed, have joint or headache pain or feel wrinkly and heavy – grab a glass of water. It may be just what the doctor ordered!
There is an abundance of citrus fruits in grocery stores this time of year. The prime harvest time for most of these fruits is in the late fall and early winter months, which makes right now a peak time to enjoy these healthful foods.

Citrus fruits are full of vitamin C, which helps maintain a
strong immune system and helps protect against scurvy. Citrus fruits promote heart health and reduce the risk of some chronic diseases. They can also aid in cancer prevention and are useful in diabetes sugar level control. Citrus fruit skin is high in essential oils used in flavorings or as fragrant essences in aromatherapy oils, cosmetics and soaps. Other important nutrients found in citrus fruits are fiber, folate, lycopene, potassium and vitamin B6.

Each fruit color provides different nutrients that our bodies need. It is important to include a variety of colors every day for these important nutrients. Consider this information.

- Red fruit contains antioxidants that help fight heart disease, lower cholesterol and prevent some cancers.
- Green fruit provides phytochemicals to help protect eyes and prevent cancerous tumors. Greens have essential vitamins including folate, minerals and fiber.
- Orange and yellow fruit contain beta-carotene that is essential for a good immune system and is rich in vitamin C, folate and vitamin A.
- Blue and purple fruit provide phytochemicals which are antioxidants that protect against cancer and disease. The blue and purple also provide vitamin C, folic acid and fiber.
- White fruit provides allicin, sulfaforaphanes, polyphenols and phytochemicals that help in fighting cancers and lowering blood pressure and cholesterol.

Citrus fruits are also objects of beauty and decor. A bowl of fresh fruit makes a great centerpiece. It can also remind you that selecting a piece of fruit rather than candy or cookies is a wise choice. It is smart to keep fresh fruit within reach to encourage daily consumption. USDA’s MyPlate recommends eating 2 cups of fruit every day. This may be in the form of juice, fresh, canned or dried fruits.

There are many ways to increase fruits in your daily diet. Add
oranges and lemons to water to allow infusing overnight. Add fresh lemons and limes to drinks. Eat half a grapefruit every morning for breakfast. Have a citrus snack every day. Prepare salads using citrus fruit with lettuce and spinach. Top entrees with a fruit sauce.

As the peak fruit season begins to level off, you may want to try home canning grapefruits and oranges. This simple and fast process provides you with home-canned fruit that makes a wonderful breakfast fruit mix and prevents the waste of fruits. Begin by selecting firm, sweet grapefruits and oranges. Peel and remove the white tissue. Break the fruit into sections and fill jars with the fruit. Next, fill jars with water or hot syrup. Water works well, but a light syrup of 1 cup sugar to 4 cups of water provides an enriched flavor. Pour the liquid over the fruit in the jars, leaving one-half inch headspace. Apply the lids and rings and process pints or quarts in a water bath for 15 minutes at an elevation of 2,000 to 4,000 feet. Adjustments will need to be made for other elevations. Further information can be found in the Ball Blue Book, available at: http://freshpreservingstore.com/search/ball-blue-book/ or from your county Extension office.

Ask a Specialist: Do You Have Tips for Healthier Holiday Baking?

Answer by: Kathy Riggs, Utah State University Extension family and consumer sciences professor, Iron County
Tasty aromas coming from the oven are very much a part of holiday traditions. Maybe it’s a special pie or quick bread, or perhaps cookies or muffins. Whatever it is, most folks plan on gaining a pound or two over the holidays because of these special foods. Though it’s difficult not to indulge, it’s possible to cut back on calories when baking holiday favorites. Consider these tips that will have little, if any, effect on flavor or texture.

* Use ingredient exchanges to lower fat content. Fruit puree, such as unsweetened applesauce or plain yogurt, can replace up to half the fat (shortening or butter) in a baked item. Instead of using frosting for cookies, brownies or
cakes, substitute a sprinkling (using a sifter) of powdered/confectioner’s sugar over the top instead. This significantly cuts fat and extra calories.

* Increase whole grains in recipes. Admittedly, getting used to whole wheat flour in recipes can take time, not only because of the difference in flavor but also because the weight of the final product can be heavier and harder to digest. It is worth making the change to whole wheat and other grains that add fiber to recipes because of the health benefits. Start by replacing half the flour in a recipe. Another option is to use hard white wheat flour so color isn’t the first clue that something is different in the product.

* Reduce salt. Some baked goods can be very high in sodium. If a recipe calls for a teaspoon of salt, try using a scant teaspoon instead. Then, next time, reduce it even more to one-half teaspoon per recipe. We can condition our taste buds to be more sensitive to the taste of salt so that we can eventually use much less not only in baking but at the dinner table as well.

* Watch portion sizes. When preparing holiday foods to share with family and friends, consider offering smaller portions. Make cookies a bit smaller or offer only a few pieces of an item instead of an entire plate. Also consider using smaller dinner plates so that portion sizes are automatically reduced as people try to squeeze a little of everything onto the plate.

* Reduce sugar. While candy making depends on correct amounts of sugar and other ingredients to turn out properly, there is some freedom in exchanging and reducing amounts of sugar in baking. By using one-fourth cup less sugar per each cup in a recipe, the carbohydrates and calories are reduced. If you are tempted to substitute white granulated sugar with a more “healthy” sweetener such as honey, agave nectar or maple syrup, note that these sweeteners still add carbohydrates to
the recipe although they are easier to digest and are more natural.

* Indulging in foods that are high in fat, sugar, sodium and refined flour for a few days is not an act of diet treason. Those with dietary diseases such as diabetes do, however, need to be mindful of their limitations. Otherwise, enjoy the holidays and try to remain active to burn off extra calories. Make it a goal to implement one or more of the above tips this month, and try to avoid overeating meal after meal the entire month. Overall, be smart, be in control and be sensible when it comes to baking and eating this holiday season.

Kathleen Riggs is the Utah State University Extension family and consumer sciences professor for Iron County. She loves yard/garden work, where her favorite tasks are weeding and mowing the lawn. Her favorite appliance is the microwave oven, and her specialty is microwave caramels. She loves family time and occasions that bring everyone together from near or far.

The Right Way to Carve a Turkey
Are you ready for Thanksgiving Dinner tomorrow? Be sure to check out this free online pamphlet to show you the right way to carve your turkey. Click here to find “Cutting and Preserving Whole
Want to preserve your harvest without busting your budget? Don’t want to fork out a ton of your hard-earned dollars? Whether you haven’t invested in the equipment for home canning or you just don’t have the time, don’t let your harvest go to
waste. Freezing fruit is a great option. Here are five simple steps to follow to freeze fruit. I will use nectarines in this example but these steps can be followed for any fruit.

STEP 1: Wash your fruit well. Cut in half and remove pits. If desired, peel skins from fruit. (I prefer the skins on since we use these nectarines for smoothies during the winter and the skins are full of nutrients).

STEP 2: Spread fruit out in a single layer on a baking sheet. (Optional: treat fruit with citric acid, lemon juice or Fruit-Fresh to help prevent browning over time). Freezing fruit flat on a baking sheet helps fruit freeze without it sticking together in big clumps.
STEP 3: Freeze 2-3 hours. Fruit might not be completely frozen but won’t stick together once you place it in freezer bags.

STEP 4: While fruit is freezing, label gallon-sized freezer bags with the name and date of the fruit you are freezing.
STEP 5: Fill freezer bags \( \frac{3}{4} \) full with frozen fruit. Store fruit flat in a freezer. It is best if it is used within 6 months but will last up to 1 year.
Amanda is an Extension assistant professor for Utah State University. She has a master’s degree in consumer sciences from USU and is proud to call herself an Aggie! Amanda loves teaching and enabling individuals and families to make smart money decisions.

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Top 10 Ways to Help Your Child Eat More Vegetables

Author – Carrie M. Durward PhD, RD
As a registered dietitian, one of the most common questions I get from parents is how to get their child to eat vegetables. Luckily for me, nutrition research has given us a lot of great information about how to do this.

First and most important: if you want your child to like and eat vegetables, offer them early and often! Feed your child a variety of fruit and vegetable purees as soon as you introduce solid food (5 to 7 months). This is a time period when children are more open to trying new foods, so it is a great time to have them learn the flavors of many different vegetables.

However, if you missed this window, it isn’t too late! We like
and eat the foods we are familiar with. The best way to get your children to like vegetables is to keep offering them. In one study, children had to taste a new vegetable up to 15 times before it was accepted.

It is normal for young children to be wary of new foods. If your child rejects a new vegetable or refuses to try it, don’t give up! Just try again another day.

Try to avoid showing a negative reaction like frustration if you child refuses vegetables. Never pressure your children to finish food or force them to clean their plate. Encourage them to try a bite, but don’t force it!

Instead, try one of these 10 positive ways to help your child try new vegetables.

**Top 10 Ways to Help your Child Eat More Vegetables**

1. **Be a good example.** Keep vegetables in the house, serve them at every meal and let your child see you eating and enjoying them.
2. **Offer vegetables first, when children are hungry.** Try vegetables as an after school snack or have a salad or soup at the beginning of dinner.
3. **Take your child shopping** and let him or her pick out the vegetables, or let your child choose between two different vegetables to have with dinner.
4. **Get your children involved in the cooking.** If children help prepare a vegetable, they will be more likely to try it.
5. **Grow a vegetable garden or visit a farmers market or local farm.** These can be fun ways to help your child explore new foods.
6. **Make eating vegetables fun by playing with your food.** Try ants on a log, rainbow salad or pizza faces.
7. **Try preparing vegetables in different ways:** raw, steamed, roasted, etc. The flavor and texture can be
very different, depending on how you cook them. If your child doesn’t like vegetables one way, he or she might like them another way!

8. **Try a small reward**, like a sticker or praise to help convince your child to taste vegetables. Don’t use food as a reward or punishment.

9. **Use marketing in your favor**. Put stickers of your child’s favorite book or TV characters on containers of vegetables to encourage intake.

10. **Offer vegetables with a low-calorie dip**, or use a small amount of sugar when cooking to help your child be more willing to taste and eat vegetables. This will help your children become more familiar with the taste of vegetables, and they will learn to like the flavor more, even without the dip or sugar!

Carrie Durward PhD, RD is an Assistant Professor of Nutrition and Extension Nutrition Specialist at Utah State University. Carrie is a Registered Dietitian and holds her doctorate in Nutritional Sciences from the Pennsylvania State University and her Bachelor of Science in Human Nutrition from Arizona State University. Carrie has expertise in obesity and health, weight loss, and nutrition behavior change. Her research interests include promotion of vegetable intake and weight bias prevention. When she isn’t working, Carrie loves to garden, spend time outdoors, and cook and eat delicious food.
Savor the Flavors of Fresh Herbs and Spices

Author – Carolyn Washburn
Among the most tantalizing smells and flavors that come from your garden or kitchen emerge from fresh herbs and spices.
These fragrant flavors add much to foods while helping cut back on fats, sugars and salts in recipes. Why not add some of the most used herbs and spices in your kitchen to your garden this year? You could plant fresh basil, oregano, mint and rosemary. These plants will add beauty to your garden and flavor to your foods.

An easy way to get started with herbs is container gardening. Maggie Wolf and Teresa Cerny wrote an article on herb container gardens. They list six ways to help your herbs be successful.

Choose herbs that grow in a compact habit. Herbs that are too tall can be out of scale with their container. While herbs that grow in a trailing matter can be a beautiful addition to your outside landscape, you’ll want to consider where to place your containers, how to care for them and harvesting the herbs too.

The handy Herb Container Gardens article has answers plus a useful chart listing many types of herbs, their maintenance and how to harvest.

Speaking of harvesting herbs, did you know it’s the oils from the leaves that give them their great aroma and flavor? You want these oils to be released during cooking, not during harvesting and storage. Exposure to light, overheating, bruising or cutting will release these oils before they are needed. Dennis Hinkamp references easy ways to harvest, dry, cook with and store your herbs in the article, Getting the Most out of your Herbs. The article says, “Of course the optimal way to use herbs is to pick them from the garden immediately before cooking. Since most recipes are written using proportions of dry herbs, when you substitute fresh herbs, you’ll need to add about three times as much as the original dry measure.”

Are you adding herbs to your garden this year? What are you
some of your favorites to harvest and use?

Find additional articles on herbs and spices here.

Carolyn Washburn is a family consumer sciences agent for Utah State University Extension. Her responsibilities include financial management education, food safety and nutrition, healthy family relations, emergency preparedness and working with youth. Her goal is to help individuals and families become self-sustaining and resilient by being financially prepared and healthy for any emergency. She serves on the National Disaster Education Network and has just completed the new food storage manual for USDA. Her most cherished award is America’s Promise, awarded by Colin Powell.

Don’t Get Sick! Learn these Barbecue Food Safety Tips and Tricks!

Author – Darlene Christensen
Have you or someone in your family ever had food poisoning? I have, and I can tell you it is miserable! It’s important to remember that it is almost 100 percent preventable (if you are preparing the food yourself). Think about these tips and tricks next time you are out barbecuing or picnicking so that you have a great time and stay healthy.

Eating outdoors in warm weather can be a food safety challenge. Bacteria in food multiply faster at temperatures between 40°F and 140°F. Cooking in the summer heat makes knowing basic food safety principles especially important.

Wash hands.

“Hand washing is THE single most effective way to prevent the spread of disease,” according to the Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention. It’s really simple — make sure to wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. To help kids learn this, try singing the ABC song with them while they wash. Cleaning up is especially important after using the bathroom and before cooking or eating. Oftentimes you find yourself outdoors with no bathroom in the summer. You can use a water jug, some soap and paper towels. Moist disposable towelettes are also good for cleaning your hands.

**Keep raw food separate from cooked food.**
You take the raw meat on a plate to the grill, right? But remember that you do not want to use that same plate to put the cooked meat on. This is known as cross contamination and can cause food-borne illness. Keep utensils and surfaces clean.

**Marinate food in the refrigerator, not out on the counter.**
Marinating can make meat tender and tasty. But if you want to use some of the marinade as a sauce on the cooked food, reserve a separate portion. Don’t reuse marinade that contained raw meat.

**Cook food thoroughly.**
A meat thermometer can really help in making sure meat is cooked to a safe temperature. Steaks should reach 145 degrees and then be allowed to rest for 3 minutes. Chicken should be cooked to at least 165°F. Hamburgers should be cooked to 160°F. If a thermometer is not available, make sure hamburgers are brown all the way through, not pink.

**Refrigerate and freeze food right away.**
It can be hard to remember while a party is going on, but food should not be left out of the cooler or off the grill for more than 2 hours. It’s especially important to remember NOT to leave food out for more than one hour when the temperature is above 90°F.

**Keep hot food hot.**
Hot food should be kept at or above 140°F. Hot food should be wrapped well and placed in an insulated container — this will keep the heat in. If you have purchased something like fried chicken at a deli, try to eat it within two hours. Bacteria
multiply rapidly after that and can make you sick. Don’t forget to pack your meat thermometer. When re-heating food, be sure it reaches 165°F.

**Keep cold food cold.**
Cold food should be held at or below 40°F. Think about potato salad and similar foods. Keep them on ice in a cooler and don’t set them out for long periods of time in the heat. Those are the basic tips to remember. If you have ever suffered from food-borne illness, you know how miserable it is. Follow these simple steps to keep your food safe and enjoy your summer barbecues and camping trips.

Author Bio: Darlene Christensen is an Associate Extension Professor at Utah State University and serves as the family and consumer sciences/4H agent in Tooele County. She loves working with 4Hers and enjoys teaching adults.


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**Full Pantry and Nothing to Eat**

*Author: USU Food $ense Team*
Have you ever gone grocery shopping and filled your pantry or fridge, yet you still feel like you have nothing to eat? It’s easy to run out for fast food, but that can be costly on the monthly budget. Use the groceries you just bought and save a little money too with these quick tips!

Did you know salsa made the list of staples to have on hand too? Get the entire printable list of staples and meal ideas here.

Now enjoy using up what’s in your pantry. Your wallet will thank you!
Beans, Beans the Magical Fruit

Author: Carolyn Washburn
Beans, beans the magical fruit, the more you eat, the more you may reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer and birth defects. Yes, those beans are a magical food. They are found in both protein and vegetable food sections on the MyPlate food guide, and the health benefits certainly make them a “magical” food. Remember how Jack traded a cow for them? Beans are full of fiber and nutrition and are a very economical food. The three healthiest beans are the black bean, the kidney bean and the lima bean.

Just how good are those beans?

- Fight diseases – A report by nutrition experts at Michigan State University reviewed 25 years of bean
research and concluded that beans are an often-overlooked food source that could be helping Americans fight a host of chronic diseases, including cancer, heart disease, diabetes and obesity.

- Lower risks – People who ate legumes such as dry beans at least four times a week had a 22 percent lower risk of heart disease than people who ate them less than once a week.

- Lower death rate – Out of 41 countries, those with the highest bean consumption had the lowest death rates from breast, prostate and colon cancers.

- Sustain Energy – Beans promote satiety and provide sustained energy, which helped individuals eat fewer calories and maintain a healthy weight.

- Maintain Healthy Blood Glucose Levels – The high fiber content in beans helped people with diabetes maintain healthy blood glucose levels. Beans are also rich in antioxidant phytochemicals, which reduce the damage caused by free radicals and may also reduce the risk of cancer.

So, live to be an old fart, and eat those beans! For bean recipes, visit the USU Extension/ Washington County Home Matters site.

Author bio: Carolyn Washburn is a family consumer sciences agent for Utah State University Extension. Her responsibilities include financial management education, food safety and nutrition, healthy family relations, emergency preparedness and working with youth. Her goal is to help individuals and families become self-sustaining and resilient.
by being financially prepared and healthy for any emergency. She serves on the National Disaster Education Network and has just completed the new food storage manual for USDA. Her most cherished award is America’s Promise, awarded by Colin Powell.