

# Ask an Expert // 5 Steps to Financial Freedom

Financial freedom is something that most people want, but only a few learn how to master. While it does take some up-front planning, in the end the payoff is substantial. Here are five things that can be done to ensure more financial freedom.

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## Family Mealtime // Veggie Frittata 3 Ways

Family Mealtime doesn't have to be dinner. Try this fast and easy frittata for a protein-packed breakfast that is sure to bring your family to the table. Use your favorite vegetables, or try one of our suggested flavor combos.

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## Family Mealtime // Conversation Starters

Break the silence at the dinner table with these fun conversation starters!

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# **Ask an Expert // Fall Planting Brings Winter Color**

Take advantage of fall plant sales and add some winter color to your landscape with these suggested varieties.

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# **Ask an Expert // Give Beets a Chance**



ASK AN  
EXPERT:  
GIVE BEETS  
A CHANCE

LIVE WELL UTAH

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*Take home some beautiful red beets next time you're at the Farmers Market or grocery store. Read on to find out the many nutritional benefits of beets and get some tips on how to prepare them.*

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When it comes to eating beets, there are those who love them and those who... well, don't. If you are in the group of beet lovers then you probably already have a favorite way to prepare them and use them in side dishes or salads. Other readers may need some convincing before taking steps to include beets in their diet.

## **Good For You**

One of the best reasons to develop a taste for these bright red root vegetables is because they are a good source of folate which helps in the manufacturing of red blood cells and other genetic cells throughout the body. Beets are also a good source of the mineral manganese needed for normal body growth and health. Calcium and potassium are other beneficial nutrients found in beets. Of course, Calcium is known to strengthen bones and teeth. Older adults also rely on the help of calcium-rich foods and supplements to ward off osteoporosis. Potassium works to keep blood pressure low helping the heart to function efficiently.

## **Color and Texture**

Another reason to use beets is because they add beautiful color and texture to salads. Before slicing or beets for a salad, the outer skin or peel must be removed. It can be removed while the beet is raw but it will be to your advantage to slip on food handler gloves to avoid staining the skin on

your fingers. Most find it easier to roast or boil the beets before peeling.

## **Beet Greens**

Don't give in to the temptation to discard beet greens. Beet greens are actually grown for use in commercially-bagged salads. They can be exchanged for Swiss chard or spinach in your own creative salad. The reddish veins in the leaves break up all the shades of green normally found in salads. To preserve the crispness of home grown beet greens, they should be harvested, washed and refrigerated quickly in a breathable plastic bag and then used within the next two-three days. Beet greens are nearly ready for harvest in most parts of Utah. Start looking for them at local farmer's markets if you don't have any in your garden.

Beet greens are a great source of lutein, an antioxidant that helps protect the eyes from age-related macular degeneration and cataracts. The greens also contain a wide variety of phytochemicals that may help actually improve the health of your eyes and nerve tissues.

## **Preserve for Later**

Maybe fresh beets aren't appealing to your palate. If that is the case, perhaps consider the benefit of having preserved beets as part of your home food storage. Home canned beets are good to have on hand to cut or shred for soups, salads and other side dishes such as borscht and gazpacho.

For approved recipes to use for home preservation of beets, contact your local USU Extension Office or visit the National Center for Home Food Preservation. There you will find recipes for whole, cubed or sliced beets, as well as pickled beets.

## More About Beets

- The color of beet roots can range from dark purple to bright red, yellow, and white. When cut transversely, the roots show light and dark rings, sometimes alternating.
- The Chioggia beet is red and white-striped, and nicknamed the “candy cane” beet.
- Beet juice is widely used as a “natural” dye to give pink or red coloration to processed foods.
- Beets have the highest sugar content of any vegetable.
- Small beets (about a half-inch in diameter) are good for eating raw. Medium and large-sized beets are best for cooking. Very large beets (more than three inches in diameter) may be too woody for eating.

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*Kathleen Riggs is the Utah State University Extension family and consumer sciences professor for Iron County. Questions or comments may be sent to [kathleen.riggs@usu.edu](mailto:kathleen.riggs@usu.edu) or call 435-586-8132.*

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**Family Mealtime // Apple  
Cranberry Crisp**



APPLE  
CRANBERRY  
CRISP



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*Families who eat together have overall healthier diets, but that doesn't mean that you can't indulge in a sweet treat every now and then at end of your family meal. There are three healthy, delicious dessert recipes in the Live Well Utah Cookbook, Family Mealtime Edition. Today we're sharing one of them- Apple Cranberry Crisp. This is a perfect dessert for autumn, as local apples are in season and abundant at farmers markets.*

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# Apple Cranberry Crisp

## Filling

- 5 cups apples, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 cup dried cranberries (or other dried fruit)
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

## Topping

- 1/2 cup quick cooking rolled oats
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons whole wheat flour
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted

Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.

in a 2 quart baking dish, combine apples and cranberries. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon, and toss to coat.

In a small bowl, combine oats, brown sugar, flour, and cinnamon. Using a fork, cut butter into topping mixture until crumbly. Sprinkle topping evenly over apple filling. Bake for

30-35 minutes, or until apples are tender. Serve warm.

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## **Dutch Oven 101**



DUTCH  
OVEN  
BASICS

LIVE WELL UTAH

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*Cooking in a Dutch oven can be fun, but you can't just load your dirty Dutch oven into the dishwasher when the cooking is done. Follow these directions to properly clean and store your Dutch oven.*

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## **Dutch Oven 101: Cleaning**

Clean out food residue using cooking oil and paper towels. Add warm soapy water, and wash using a dish cloth or sponge with an abrasive back. Rinse and dry Dutch oven thoroughly, and wipe off all surfaces with a paper towel to remove any remaining dirt, ash or water (including the bottom and the lid). Coat all surfaces of the oven with cooking oil, starting with the inside. Wipe off any excess oil, replace lid on Dutch oven, and store for the next use. If oil inside oven becomes rancid, wash it with warm soapy water and repeat directions above before using.

## **Dutch Oven Hummingbird Cake**

*This Southern cake is traditionally topped with cream cheese frosting and chopped pecans. Try this dutch oven version alongside vanilla or butter pecan ice cream.*

3 cups flour  
2 cups sugar  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
3 eggs, beaten  
1 1/4 cups water  
1/2 cup vegetable oil  
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla

1 8-oz. can crushed pineapple  
1 cup pecans, chopped  
1 cup banana, mashed

Combine dry ingredients in large mixing bowl. Add eggs and oil, and mix until just moistened. Stir in remaining ingredients. Spread batter evenly in 12" dutch oven that has been greased and coated with flour. Bake at 350 degrees for 50-60 minutes (8-10 coals on bottom, 14-20 on top).

## **Farm to Table Dinner**

Is your mouth watering for Dutch oven flavors? Come to the Farm to Table Dinner at the USU Botanical Center on September 15. Renowned Dutch oven chef Blaine Scott will prepare a delicious dinner of roast beef, cheesy potatoes and Mexican-style street corn. A seasonal fruit cobbler will be served to complete the meal. Save your place at the table and buy tickets [here](#).



SPECIAL

*Enjoy the freshest*

FARM

to

TABLE

DINNER



EVENT!

*flavors of the season!*

USU BOTANICAL CENTER ARBORETUM, KAYSVILLE, UT

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15



5:30 - 6:30 PM | Cost: \$18 | Registration required: [goo.gl/XwC3F7](http://goo.gl/XwC3F7)

Using local produce, well-known Dutch oven caterer Blaine Scott will prepare a delicious dinner of roast beef, cheesy potatoes and Mexican-style street corn. A mouthwatering fruit cobbler will be served to complete the meal.



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*Read more on Dutch oven cooking and find recipes here.*

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## **Ask an Expert // Shelf-life of Home Preserved Foods**



**ASK AN EXPERT:**  
**SHELF-LIFE**  
**OF HOME**  
**PRESERVED**  
**FOODS**



**LIVE WELL UTAH**

*You've had those bottled peaches from Grandma for two years now – are they still good? Are they safe? Find out just how long you can keep home-preserved foods in your pantry.*

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A common question at USU Extension offices usually goes something like this, “There was a good buy on boneless, skinless chicken breasts this week so I bought 40 lbs. and now I want to can it. How long will it stay good in the jar on the shelf?” Before answering this question for readers, let’s consider the following basic information about home food preservation.

Canning is an important, safe method of food preservation if practiced properly. Home food preservation generally involves placing foods in jars and heating them to a temperature that destroys microorganisms that could be a health hazard or cause the food to spoil. Processing times and temperatures are scientifically determined and must be followed exactly to assure not only quality but safety of these home preserved foods.

So, back to the question about shelf-life... With the prevalence of emergency and disaster preparedness education, at least in Utah, families obviously want to build up their food storage for the proverbial “Rainy Day.” This is a good practice so long as it is also practical.

Many dry goods (wheat, sugar, dried beans, etc.) have an excellent shelf-life when stored in air-tight containers and are wonderful to have on hand as part of a basic food storage supply.

On the other hand, home preserved fruits, vegetables and meats should be treated differently. Instead of asking how long a home-preserved food will last, a better question is, “How much

chicken will my family use in 1 to 2 years?" When foods are preserved at home, it is true that families can control the quality of the food and to some degree how much additional sugar and salt are added. We cannot, however, duplicate the ultra-high temperatures or fast field-to-jar (or can) process commercial manufacturers use.

To ensure the home preserved food on pantry shelves are at ultimate quality, food should be rotated on a regular basis and not stock-piled for several years. After as few as two short years, foods will begin to darken or lose firmness. Does that mean they are no longer safe to eat? No. It does mean that the nutritional value is decreasing and will eventually be good to eat only for added calories. In other words, the food may fill you up but you won't reap much in the way of vitamins or minerals.

A few additional tips for optimizing quality of home-preserved foods come as follows from the National Center for Home Food Preservation ([nchfp.uga.edu](http://nchfp.uga.edu)):

- If lids are tightly vacuum sealed on cooled jars, remove screw bands, wash the lid and jar to remove food residue; then rinse and dry jars. Label and date the jars and store them in a clean, cool, dark, dry place. For best quality, store between 50 and 70 F. Can no more food than you will use within a year.
- Do not store jars above 95 F or near hot pipes, a range, a furnace, in an uninsulated attic or in direct sunlight. Under these conditions, food will lose quality in a few weeks or months and may spoil. Dampness may corrode metal lids, break seals and allow recontamination and spoilage.
- Accidental freezing of canned foods will not cause spoilage unless jars become unsealed and re-

contaminated. However, freezing and thawing may soften food. If jars must be stored where they may freeze, wrap them in newspapers, place them in heavy cartons, and cover with more newspapers and blankets.

The satisfaction of having shelves full of high-quality foods preserved at home is nearly always seen as worth the time, money and effort by those who participate in home canning. Take the time to determine how much food is actually necessary and preserve only that much using tested and approved recipes. This will help minimize waste, offer nutritious foods and provide an on-going sense of self-reliance.

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## **Family Mealtime // How to Get Kids Involved**



FAMILY MEALTIME  
GETTING KIDS  
INVOLVED



LIVE WELL UTAH

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## **Getting Kids Involved**

Involving children in meal planning and cooking at a young age is a great way to instill a love for delicious, homemade food! Here are some ideas on how to include kids of all ages in the kitchen. Remember to choose age appropriate jobs and keep safety in mind at all times.

### **Ages 2-5**

#### *Meal Planning:*

- Color coordinate fruits and vegetables
- Circle foods they would like in store advertisements
- Help cut coupons
- Choose one meal they would like

#### *Grocery Shopping:*

- Point out fruits and vegetables from the grocery list
- Choose a new fruit or vegetable to try

#### *Cooking:*

- Pour premeasured items into bowl to mix up
- Tear up lettuce for a salad
- Rinse off fruits and vegetables

## **Ages 6-10**

### *Meal Planning:*

- Help make a list of meals they like
- Look at USDA's MyPlate diagram and come up with one meal following the diagram
- Choose fruits and vegetables to put on the side of the main courses

### *Grocery Shopping:*

- Read the list to parent and cross items off as they are put in the cart
- Choose a new fruit or vegetable to try

### *Cooking:*

- Measure ingredients and put them together with parent's help
- Toss a salad
- Knead dough
- Put together sandwiches

## **Ages 11-18**

### *Meal Planning:*

- Look up three new recipes on social media
- Create a 3-day menu using USDA's MyPlate as a reference for a complete meal

### *Grocery Shopping:*

- Take a portion of the list and retrieve those items
- If old enough to drive, do a small grocery trip on own
- Keep track of the money saved each week

### *Cooking:*

- Run the show as head chef! Put together a full meal and recruit family members to help as needed
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## **“Mom, What Can I Eat?” // Nutritious After-school Snack Ideas**



"MOM, WHAT CAN I EAT?"

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**NUTRITIOUS  
AFTER-SCHOOL  
SNACK IDEAS**

**LIVE WELL UTAH**

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*All family members can benefit from planned healthy snacks. Planned snacks provide more nutrition and energy for work, growth, learning and play.*

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## **Prep Your Pantry**

Build a weekly snack menu and that “what is there to eat?” question won’t be heard as often.

Here are a few snack ideas that can add good nutrition to your family’s diet.

- Fruits and berries
- Low fat chips and salsa
- Grape tomatoes and vegetables
- Frozen banana chips
- Low fat yogurt smoothies
- Cereal mix
- Whole grain crackers and breads
- Applesauce and cottage cheese
- Graham crackers
- Mini pizza on English muffin or pita
- Low fat cheese
- Low fat pita and hummus
- Fruit juice pops
- Light popcorn
- Ants on a log (stuffed celery)

- Cheese sticks

# Fruit Peanut Butter Pizza

1 pizza crust

1 cup peanut butter

3 sliced bananas

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup raisins or dried cranberries

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped apples

Bake crust according to package directions. Spread peanut butter on crust and add the fruits. Bake at 350 until the peanut butter melts.

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