



Cooperative Extension Service • Department of Family and Consumer Sciences • April 2020

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505-685-4523

<https://rioarribaextension.nmsu.edu/homeec.html>

*If you are diabetic, care for someone who is diabetic or are pre-diabetic, please join us for a series of 4 free workshops. You will learn how to control diabetes through nutrition and a healthy lifestyle.*

Free diabetes classes!

## Kitchen Creations

Please call or email to sign up:  
505-662-2656  
[losalamos@nmsu.edu](mailto:losalamos@nmsu.edu)

505-685-4523  
[rioarriba@nmsu.edu](mailto:rioarriba@nmsu.edu)

Mon & Wed, May 4, 6, 11, 13  
5:30-8:00 PM

Participate in classes from an electronic device or by phone.



Please join us for this free series of 4 classes!

- Learn how to plan meals that help manage diabetes.
- Discuss healthier ways to cook foods.
- Get a free manual and cookbooks.
- Enjoy the support of others who are living with diabetes.

These classes will be led by:

- Desaree Jimenez & Joy Czmyrid, Extension Family & Consumer Sciences Agents
- Laura McCann, MS, RDN, LD

Kitchen Creations has been provided since 2001 by:



**BE BOLD.** Shape the Future.  
College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences




This virtual cooking school is also sponsored by:

Los Alamos County Cooperative Extension Service  
Rio Arriba County Cooperative Extension Service

## Homemade Face Mask Thanks

I cannot tell you how proud I was to send off a package this past week of handmade face masks to our frontline workers in several state departments including the Children, Youth and Services Department (CYFD), the Department of Health (DOH), and the Aging & Long Term Services Department (ALTS). These folks are providing much needed services like food and supply deliveries and



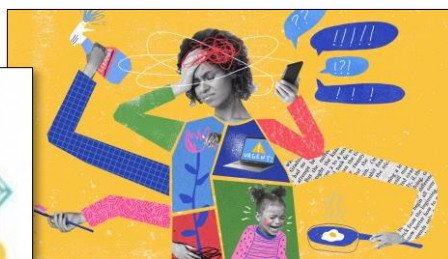
support for children and elders in various capacities, as they risk being exposed themselves to Covid-19 in the process. The masks you so lovingly created will provide desperately needed protection and let them know that the community of Rio Arriba County values their caring hard work. My heartfelt thanks to Sharron Berryman and Amy Livingston and her children for their stylish contributions!

With much appreciation,

*Joy*

## Helpful Extension Links

Here are some website links from the Specialists of the Cooperative Extension Service - Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences College of New Mexico State University. Since Agents aren't able to go out in the field or hold workshops to help the community with practical, research-based knowledge and programs, I've included some great information links below to provide help in the meantime.



### A few of the resources to explore:

General Up-to-Date Covid-19 information:

<https://aces.nmsu.edu/covid19/>

Financial Advice During Covid-19:

<https://aces.nmsu.edu/covid19/money.html>

Family Advice During Covid-19:

<https://aces.nmsu.edu/covid19/family.html>

Health and Nutrition:

<https://aces.nmsu.edu/covid19/health.html>

Farming & Farmer's Markets:

<https://aces.nmsu.edu/covid19/farming.html>

Food Safety & Hand Washing:

<https://aces.nmsu.edu/covid19/food-safety.html>



# Are Fresh **Fruits** and **Vegetables** Safe?

As our corona virus mandate from Governor Lujan-Grisham to shelter-in-place continues and grocery stores have more safety pre-cautions in place, here is some useful information on how to shop wisely and keep you and your family supplied with nutritious, tasty foods that will keep for longer.

According to the article published in U.S. News, 90% of Americans don't eat the daily recommended amount of vegetable and 85% for fruits. This is in spite of the overwhelming evidence that eating balanced diet rich in vegetables and fruits reduces the risk of chronic disease. The recent study found if just half of Americans increased eating a fruit or vegetable by one serving per day, 20,000 cases of cancer could be prevented each year.

So what do these statistics mean now during these Covid-19 days? "In addition to bolstering immunity in the face of a global pandemic, new well-being benefits of consuming fruits and vegetables, beyond physical health, continue to emerge." says Wendy Reinhardt Kapsak, MS, RD

## **Clean, Separate, Cook, Chill**

Many people are afraid to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables, fearing that the skin of the produce may carry Covid-19 germs which then can be ingested when eaten. Fear mongers have put information out there recommending people use bleach,



soap or detergent to remove germs from produce. These actions ARE NOT needed and can make you sick! As long as you follow Government guidelines these foods should be fine to consume.

Be sure to:

Clean surfaces and your hands before and after handling foods. Wash fresh produce, it's recommended to run it under water only. If the produce has a tough exterior, like melon or potatoes, you can also use a clean stiff-bristled brush.

Separate raw and ready-to-eat foods

Cook foods to proper minimum internal temperatures

Chill foods in the refrigerator or freezer.

## **Are some fruits and vegetable safer than others?**

There is no evidence that produce with a skin is safer than a berry, for example. Remember to wash it well

whether it has a skin or not. Do not use soap or any other cleaners – the residue these cleaners leave even after rinsing can cause stomach upset and make you nauseous. In addition, packaging of fruits and vegetables has not been found to carry the virus. Packaged produce that has been pre-washed does not need to be washed again before consuming.

## **In Short**

The health benefits in consuming a nutritious diet rich in vegetables and fruits, and bolstering your immune system against Covid-19, far outweighs the risk of produce possibly carrying the virus. Just remember to: clean, separate, cook and chill.

*Sources: Toby Amidor, MS, RD, CDN, a contributor to U.S. News since 2013, discussing nutrition and Wendy Reinhardt Kapsak, MS, RD Kapsak is president and CEO of Produce for Better Health Foundation.*

# How to Make the Most Out of Your Grocery Store Trip



*With the need to find foods that will last, so that we don't have to go out and shop as often, it's the canned, boxed, bagged, frozen packaged and processed foods that we seek the most. But please don't confuse these foods with highly processed foods that are void of value.*

If you must leave your home, here are a nutritionist's tips to help quickly fill your cart with foods that will last.

Although I love to go food shopping, even I don't want to spend too much time in the supermarket and out of the safety of my home, so here are a few tips to help you fill your cart fast with foods that will last:

## Do a Quick Label Scan

**Frozen veggies:** Look for those that contain just the vegetable without the excess sodium, sugars, unhealthy fats and sauces.

**Nut butters:** These should just contain the nuts they are made with, but if you like a little salt or sugar added, nut butters are still an excellent source of protein and healthy fat.

**Frozen fruit:** Pick ones that just contain the fruit within. Fruit is naturally sweet and shouldn't need any additional sugar. Since sugar is the master of disguise, it can wear more than 20 different aliases on food labels. Names like corn syrup, rice syrup, organic cane juice and molasses are all sugars, as well as other words ending in "-ose" (like dextrose).

**Canned foods:** Most are generally packed in a sodium solution to help preserve them. Rinse them well to help ditch some salt. If you need to watch your salt intake more carefully, choose unsalted or low sodium versions. In general, try to limit your intake of sodium to less than 2,300 mg daily, the amount suggested by USDA Dietary Guidelines.

## Choose Foods That Multitask

These foods offer carbs, protein, healthy fat, fiber and an array of vitamins and minerals and essential nutrients. And they can be prepared in a wide variety of ways. Here are a few foods that offer a multitude of benefits all at once:

- Canned beans.
  - Nuts.
  - Plant-forward pastas, like chickpea & lentil pasta.
- Non-perishable foods like whole grains come in handy when you're looking for a nutrient-rich carb along with the fiber most of us don't get enough of. Try:
- |             |                    |
|-------------|--------------------|
| Brown rice. | Whole-grain pasta. |
| Buckwheat.  | Farro.             |
| Barley.     | Freekeh.           |
| Sorghum.    |                    |

Cold cereal is another category of food that can supply a variety of vitamins and minerals along with whole grains and fiber. Try to choose a cereal that has whole grains as a first ingredient and top with your favorite dairy or nondairy milk for added value.

**Milks:** Both dairy and plant-based milks come in refrigerated and shelf-stable versions. If unopened, the almond milk found in the middle aisles, for example, has a shelf life of one year and 10 days after opening, at which time it needs to be refrigerated. This beverage with benefits is an excellent source of calcium and vitamin E and a good source of vitamin A. Any of these milks can be used in sauces, stews, muffins, quick breads and smoothies.

## Other examples of middle aisle food replacements:

Canned tuna or salmon or frozen fish instead of fresh fish.

Instead of oranges, try canned mandarin oranges or other canned fruit in its own juices – and not sugary syrups.

Try dried plums and apricots instead of fresh, or try some raisins that are naturally sweet without added sugar.

Applesauce is great to use in baking or to swirl in your yogurt, but just be sure to go for the unsweetened or natural types.

Frozen berries, like strawberries, can seamlessly be woven into a smoothie or added to baked goods or oatmeal.

Though socializing has turned into social distancing, this is a perfect opportunity for people to eat together (in person or virtually) to cook up and share a meal, and much more.

*This article courtesy of U.S. News by Bonnie Taub-Dix, MA, RDN, CDN*

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