

Extension Connections

IDAHO KICKS OFF 2004 FARMERS' MARKET SEASON

For Idaho's Farmers' Markets, the 2004 season is under way, and with it comes the abundance of fresh, locally grown fruits, vegetables, herbs, honey, farm fresh eggs and fresh cut flowers. Farmers' markets are playing an increasingly important role in the agricultural economy of the state. In 2003, Idaho farmers' market generated over \$1 million in revenue. And farmers' markets are rapidly gaining popularity across Idaho as consumer interest in organically grown and locally grown produce continues to rise.



This year Idaho boasts 24 markets across the state, from Bonners Ferry to Idaho Falls.

Depending on the growing season in each area, the markets open in May or June and will run through September and October. Consumers will be able to find products in Idaho farmers' markets ranging from certified organic fruits and vegetables to locally grown produce, fresh herbs and fresh cut flowers. Several markets also feature Idaho gourmet specialty foods.

Every year the Idaho State Department of Agriculture's Division of International Trade and Domestic Market Development produces a guide to the farmers' market across the state. The guide provides the dates and times of the markets, as well as the location and a contact point for the market. For a free copy of the guide, contact the Division of Agricultural Marketing and Development at (208)332-8530 or send an e-mail to Lyoutz@agri.state.id.us. The guide is also available on the internet at www.idahoag.us

Low-carb foods: less than meets the eye

A few years ago the cry was “low-fat” or “nonfat,” as new food products came on the market positioned to appeal to the weight-conscious and health-conscious. You could avoid most fat but still eat your ice cream and cookies. In some ways the trend to low-fat and fat-free foods was beneficial; in other ways it was not. Nonfat milk is a good thing, but nonfat junk food is still junk food, of course. Many consumers failed to notice that a low-fat cookie often has as many calories as the regular kind, and many assumed it was okay to eat the whole box.

Now the craze is for low-carbohydrate foods. If you've been to the grocery store lately, or even to McDonald's or Blimpie, you've seen promotions for “low-carb” foods. Many breads, sandwiches, muffins, pasta, cereals, tortillas, pizza crusts, beer, cakes, cookies, and other foods now bear “low-carb” labels. While the health claims are seldom spelled out, the implications are clear.

If you're following a low-carb diet (such as Atkins) that forbids or severely limits bread, pasta, and other starchy foods, especially those made with white flour, you might think, well, here's a way to eat some bread and still stay on the diet.

Indeed, many low-carb products are sold under the Atkins brand name. Or perhaps you're not on any diet but are just calorie-conscious.

You may conclude, logically enough, that a food lower in carbs is also lower in calories. Or you may buy the new stuff because you're attracted to new products, and you think that there's a law against false claims on food label, so you conclude that low-carb claims must be (a) true and (b) meaningful.

In fact, “low-carb” is not what it seems. And any benefits these foods might offer for weight loss or nutrition are debatable, at best. If you replace carbohydrates with protein (that's the main change), you still have just as many calories. Furthermore, the labels are, essentially, meaningless. The FDA has no definition of “low-carbohydrate” and has never approved any low-carb labels. Any food can be so labeled.

Bringing down the carbs

Here's how manufacturers reduce the carbs in various foods:

- They replace refined wheat flour with soy flour higher in protein), soy protein, or wheat protein.
- They add extra fiber, such as wheat bran, oat bran, or other fiber (this is not a bad thing, but read on).
- They add high-fat ingredients such as nuts again, not so terrible: nuts are good food, containing healthy fats).
- They replace sugar with sugar alcohols (maltitol, lactitol, or sorbitol) or artificial sweeteners. This has been going on a long time—ever hear of
- sugarless or “dietetic” candy?
- For beers, they use certain chemicals in the brewing process to reduce carbohydrate in the brew. But the result is not very different from “lite” beers, long a market staple.

Is the difference real, though?

None of these changes are unhealthy. But these products end up having nearly as many calories as their regular counterparts, and cutting calories is still the key to weight control. Protein has as many calories as carbs do, and fat has more than twice as many calories.

The products often have nearly as many carbs, too, but the labels

disguise this fact with several tricks. Most often they subtract certain carbs, and provide a separate section listing a lower number, which designates the remaining ones “effective carbs” or “net impact carbs.” The idea is that since fiber, for instance, doesn't affect blood sugar the way other carbs do, it doesn't count. So if a food has 10 grams of carbs, but 6 grams are fiber, the manufacturer simply subtracts the 6 and claims only 4 “net impact” carbs. (Sometimes the results are clearly impossible. Some low-carb bread labels, for example, claim that nearly all the carbs are fiber, yet the first ingredient is always some sort of flour—a source of “regular” carbohydrates.) The calories in sugar alcohols, too, can be subtracted according to this logic, because they don't have the same effect on blood sugar as regular sugar. None of this is allowed by the FDA. This sleight-of-hand can distract you from an accurate comparison between low-carb foods and conventional ones.

Here are just three examples:

- A slice of “low-carb” Atkins breads, for instance, has 60 calories and 8 grams of total carbs, though it claims to have only 3 “net impact” carbs. A slice of conventional “diet” bread typically has 50 calories and 10 grams of carbs. That isn't a significant difference.
- A 1-ounce low-carb chocolate bar has 155 calories and 12 grams of fat, but no sugar; it claims to have only 1 “net impact” carb. A regular bar has 150 calories and 10 grams of fat. (Some choice!) Low-

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Low carb foods continued

carb candies are actually pretty much the same as the sugar-free candies that have been on the market for years.

- A 12-ounce can of Michelob Ultra ("low-carb") has 95 calories and 2.6 grams of carbs. Miller Lite has 96 calories and 3.2 grams of carbs. Coors Lite has 102 calories and 5 grams of carbs. The differences are tiny. In effect, what's new is the label, not the product.

No way to tell

Another problem: there is no legal definition of a low-carb food. The FDA has defined "low-fat," for instance, but any food, even Wonder Bread, can be labeled "low-carbohydrate". Moreover, fiber is supposed to be listed as part of the carbohydrates—not subtracted from it. The FDA does not define nutrients according to the effects they have on blood sugar, and for good reason. There simply isn't any accurate way to calculate it for a food label. In any case, there is little or no evidence for the claim that some types of carbs are more likely to cause weight gain than others just because they affect blood sugar faster.

One good idea buried in the low-carb craze: It is better to choose high-fiber products over those made of refined wheat (white) flour. But that's hardly a new idea. If you want more fiber in your bread, there are lots of good conventional choices, made of whole wheat or other whole grains, on the shelves.

In the meantime, our advice: *Don't be fooled by low-carb foods. There's no evidence that they'll help you lose weight. They are not significantly more nutritious or less caloric than many regular foods. And they eat up food dollars better spent on plain good healthy foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables.*



Source: Berkeley Wellness Letter

Making Quality Time *with Kids*



Working and raising children is the great balancing act that an increasing number of parents perform. Parents who work outside the home face many dilemmas, questions and concerns about raising healthy, well-adjusted kids.

The time young children spend with their parents is essential for their healthy development, according to researchers in a wide range of fields. As such, working parents should make the most of the time they spend with their children.

“Quality time,” defined by development experts as meaningful time parents spend nurturing and teaching their children, is not reserved only for stay-at-home moms or dads. Many of the daily routines that busy parents share with their kids—standing in line, waiting for the doctor, driving the kids to school, getting ready for bed—can be turned into special moments. All it takes is some imagination and creativity.

Below are a few suggestions for using the time devoted to everyday rituals to strengthen the parent—child relationship and teach skills and values that will benefit kids long into the future:

Bath time: Give your child a toy boat to float in the bath tub and ask her to guess how many pennies (or paper clips) she has to put in the boat to sink it. Then, ask her to test her guess.

Bedtime: Read a story to your child, and have him try to guess the ending before you finish the book to build creativity and imagination.

Car time: Play rhyming games, make up rap songs, and play the alphabet game, by spotting letters A through Z on passing signs.

Dinner-making time: As you prepare dinner in the evening, let your child help you cook or create a kitchen concoction while you cook. For example, fill a bowl with soapy water and let her beat with an eggbeater. Then add food coloring and have her continue to beat. See what happens!

Meal time: While the family is gathered, play word games, such as “I’m thinking of a word in the kitchen that begins with the letter “J,” or tell jokes and share funny stories to emphasize the importance of family togetherness.

Shopping time: Have your child play “find the food” to become more aware of what the family eats or “check the change” to become more aware of how much things cost.

All things considered, it takes a little imagination—and lots of love—for busy, working parents to create activities that will help them raise happy, confident responsible children. By making anytime quality time, children will learn fundamental skills that will serve them well for a lifetime.

Extension Library Corner

Publications

Jointed Goatgrass Introduction	EB1931
Measuring What Matters	WRDC CCR1
Plant back restrictions for herbicides used in the dry land wheat production areas of the Pacific Northwest.....	PNW 571

Web sites of interest

Idaho’s prescription assistance program.....	www.RxIdaho.org
farm and ranch living.....	www.farmandranchliving.com
Agricultural Research.....	www.ars.usda.gov/is/AR





Extension Nutrition Program

DON'T FORGET THE FIBER!

By Rose Preston, Extension Nutrition Program

Fiber, fiber, fiber... We hear about it all the time, but what exactly is it? What does it do?

Why is it important?

Fiber is the part of plants that the body cannot digest easily. It is found in fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts, seeds, beans and other legumes. Getting enough fiber in your diet can lower your risk for cancer, heart disease, obesity and can lower your cholesterol!

Fiber is necessary for the health and regularity of the digestive system. The typical American consumes only about 10 grams of fiber per day while we really need about 25 grams!!! A good way to ensure that you eat the recommended amount of fiber each day is to follow the Food Guide Pyramid –including 2-4 servings of fruit, 3-5 servings of vegetables and 6-11 servings of grain products (whole grains whenever possible). Be sure to increase your water consumption while you slowly increase your fiber intake.

Here is a great recipe to add some great tasting fiber to your diet!

Blueberry Bran Flake Muffins

1 ½ cups all-purpose flour	1 ½ cups bran flake cereal
¼ cup sugar	1 cup skim milk
1 tbsp. baking powder	1 egg
¼ tsp. salt	¼ cup vegetable oil
vegetable cooking spray	½ cup fresh or frozen blueberries

1. Stir together flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Set aside.
2. In large mixing bowl, combine cereal and milk. Let stand 3 minutes (until soft).
3. Add egg and oil, mix well. Add flour mixture, until combined. Stir in berries.
4. Pour batter evenly into twelve 2/12 inch muffin-pan cups coated with cooking spray.
5. Bake at 400 degrees about 20 minutes (until golden brown). Serve warm. Makes 12 muffins.

For more information on fiber or the Extension Nutrition Program, please contact me at the Boundary County Extension Office, 267-3235.

Alternative Careers For Idaho Farmers program

What Is New?

University of Idaho Alternative Careers For Idaho Farmers (ACIF) Program is extended through December 31,2005.

What does ACIF Do?

Provide support for Idaho farm and ranch families who are so severely affected by low commodity prices that they must adopt cost-saving agricultural practices or consider other careers.

How Does ACIF Help?

Assists Idaho farmers & ranchers to obtain education/training that:
Improves profitability of existing operations, or Leads to the creation

of a second farm based business, or Develops an off-farm career to supplement farm income.

Leads to a new career for those who are no longer able to who no longer choose to farm or ranch in Idaho.

Additional transitional support services are available to qualified individuals.

Who Is Eligible For ACIF Help?

Eligible farm and ranch families are those adults whose employment based income at some date after February 2001 has been derived from farming or ranching, and whose labor has contributed significantly to the production of goods and services generated by a farm or ranch operated by themselves or members of their families.



Where Are Interested

People Referred?

Alternative Careers for Idaho Farmers (ACIF) Program
PO Box 442338

University of Idaho Moscow, ID
83844-2338

Voice: 208/885-9707

Fax: 208/885-6654

Email: acif@uidaho.edu

Web Site: www.ag.uidaho.edu/acif/



PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS

NxLevel * Entrepreneur Course



Are you ready to plan for the success of your business? Do you wish you better understood your business financial statements? Are you ready to take your business to the next level? If you've answered "yes" to any of these questions, you should consider enrolling in the NxLevel for Entrepreneurs course offered by the University of Idaho Extension System in Boundary County.

Beginning September 9, 2004, this twelve-week series of classes will be held at the Extension office. Classes will be held Thursday evenings from 6-9 p.m. Cost is \$85 per participant, which includes comprehensive reference book, all class handouts and refreshments. (Business partners and spouses are able to attend at a discounted price.) All participants must preregister by August 27, 2004.

For more information or to register for the class series call the University of Idaho Boundary County Extension Office at 267-3235.

Crop Tour

July 8, 2004

Crop Tour Starts at
4:00 P.M.



With hosted BBQ
Sponsored by
Idaho Barley Commission
to follow
call the Extension
Office for more information
267-3235

Landscaping for Fire Prevention Workshop

June 29th

6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

At the Extension Office

Preregister by June 21st by calling the office at
267-3235

\$5.00 registration fee covers refreshments and handouts



Pesticide Applicator Exam



July 21st 9:00 am to 1:00 pm
at the Extension office

To register, please contact one of the following ISDA Coeur d' Alene field staff at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled exam time. IF NO CALLS ARE RECEIVED, EXAM SESSION MAY BE CANCELED.

To register of contact the Boise office at (208)332-8600. Fees for each exam, if required, must be submitted to the Idaho State Department of Agriculture office in Boise before exam results will be released.

NO money will be accepted at the testing facilities.

Pressure Canner Gauge Testing Dates

Three pressure canner gauge testing dates have been set for the summer season. Please bring you lids to the Extension Office on one of the dates listed below. Your gauge can be picked up the following afternoon. This is a free day of service offered by the Master Food Preservers so please take advantage of it to insure that you are preserving your food safely. Gauges can be checked at any other date for a fee of \$2.00.

Testing Dates are Mondays: July 12th, August 16th, & September 13th

Forest Insect & Disease Field Day

Friday June 30, 2004

8:00 am to 4:00 pm

This program will feature a full day giving participants first-hand contact with a variety of insects and diseases that can affect forest growth and health, integrated with discussions of related management strategies. A \$5.00 registration fee covers handouts and refreshment.

4 pro logger credits or 4 pesticide credits

July 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	Art 1-3	2
						3
						Cloverbuds 4-5
4	5	Office Closed	6	7	8	9
			Hort.Series Ponds-pt 2 Cloverbuds 4-5			10
						Cloverbuds 4-5
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
		Pressure gauge test 9- Noon Cloverbuds 4-5				Cloverbuds 4-5
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
		Cloverbuds 4-5	Pesticide Testing 9-1			Cloverbuds 4-5
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
		Cloverbuds 4-5			Cloverbuds 4-5	



August 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	MFP/ MG 8-5 Training					Cloverbuds 4-5
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
		Cloverbuds 4-5				
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
		Hort.Series Plant Tour				



September 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
			Boundary County Fair	Boundary County Fair	Boundary County Fair	Boundary County Fair
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Boundary County Fair	Office Closed			NxLevel 6-9		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
		Pressure gauge test 9-Noon		NxLevel 6-9		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
				NxLevel 6-9		
26	27	28	29	30		
				NxLevel 6-9		