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# Skagit County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION

## Ideas for Healthy Living

Providing interactive learning experiences in Skagit County

NEWSLETTER

November / December 2017

# Harvest of the Month

Every month at schools throughout the county, WSU Extension's Harvest of the Month program highlights produce grown in Skagit County. We send students home with information on the featured item, plus a fun and delicious recipe! This month, beans are our featured harvest.

Beans are a fantastic source of nutrition. They contain protein, fiber, vitamins, and minerals, including some which are difficult to obtain from other sources. Pregnant women, or those who are trying to become pregnant, will be glad to know that beans are an excellent source of folate. This vitamin is critical prior to and during pregnancy, to reduce the risk of birth defects to baby's developing spine.

Beans are a rich source of fiber, which nourishes our digestive system

in many ways. It keeps us regular, feeds the "good" bacteria which are a key part of our immune system, and can even reduce the risk of certain types of cancer.

For people with diabetes, beans lessen changes in blood sugar, which helps with weight control and keeps energy levels stable throughout the day.

Finally, we are often told to "eat the rainbow" when it comes to fruits and vegetables. Did you know the same is true for beans? Black beans, kidney beans, cranberry beans, garbanzo beans—the compounds that give each bean its unique color indicate unique nutritional properties as well. So add beans to your grocery list this month—for your taste buds **and** your health!





Pumpkin is considered by many to be the “first taste” of fall! To celebrate fall’s arrival, try any—or all—of the pumpkin recipes seen here.

Many varieties of fresh, locally grown pumpkins are produced at farms throughout Skagit County. Try several varieties to find your favorite, or ask a farmer which kind(s) would be best for your recipes.



Recipes that call for pumpkin can also be made using winter squash (such as butternut or delicata) or sweet potatoes. Perfect for autumn and early winter meals!

Recipes in English and Spanish here:  
<http://www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/>



**Pumpkin is a versatile addition to any meal, snack or healthy treat.** Here, Tiffany DeWitt, RD, a dietitian with Abbott, shares some easy, delicious ways to enjoy it.

### Roast It

Cut pumpkin into cubes and sprinkle with cinnamon and nutmeg. Mix pumpkin with butternut squash and sweet potatoes for a delicious way to round out a meal. Or roast pumpkin seeds with your favorite seasonal spices.



### Blend It

Make a healthy smoothie with unsweetened almond milk, pumpkin puree, banana, pumpkin pie spice, vanilla extract and ice.

### Puree It

Roast and puree pumpkin, add your favorite stock, milk or heavy cream, and seasonings for a healthy soup. Serve with a side salad.



### Bake It

Add pumpkin puree to breads, pancakes and waffles. Or use as a substitute for butter and oil in brownies.

### Add It

Throw roasted pumpkin seeds into your oatmeal, on salads and on sautéed green leafy vegetables. Or have a handful as a snack – but make sure they are low in added sugar and salt.







### Technology



### Spotlight

Looking for a handy way to keep track of daily calories and exercise, plan your meals for the week, and keep your grocery list all in one place?

Check out the Eating Smart, Being Active app, available for iPhone or Android. Customize the activity tracker to record your favorites. Find nutritious drink, soup, main dish, and side dish recipes—each recipe even includes its own shopping list! The app will also calculate your meal costs for you, so managing your budget during the holidays will be a breeze.

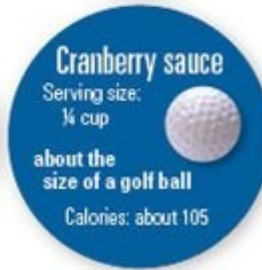
As we all try to maintain healthy habits during this time of year, it is a perfect time to give Eating Smart, Being Active a try!

The app is free to download and simple to use, and the developers will not use or sell your email for any other purpose.



**EATING SMART  
BEING ACTIVE**

# Let's Talk Holiday Portion Sizes





# Low Cost or Free Activities for the Winter Season

November and December can take a toll on finances. Good news—Skagit County has many free or low cost activities during the holiday season. Start a household tradition and meet new friends by attending a seasonal event in Skagit County!



- \* **November 3 Skagit Valley Gardens Open House** 5-8PM 18923 Peter Johnson Rd. Mount Vernon  
Beautifully decorated theme trees, unique ornaments, live music, cider & cookies, shopping, and fun!! A family tradition. Free and open to the public. 360-424-6760
- \* **November 11 Kids Gear Giant Garage Sale**  
9AM-12PM 900 E. Fairhaven Blvd. Burlington  
Held indoors, free admission, hot coffee, and KIDS' items for sale! Tables FULL of toys, puzzles, games, sports gear, movies, bikes, and more! 360-755-9649
- \* **November 16 Cascade Mall BabyPalooza**  
3-7PM 201 Cascade Mall Dr. Burlington  
For parents, caregivers, and parents-to-be. Infant CPR, car seat safety checks, and more!  
360-416-1529 or jennis@co.skagit.wa.us
- \* **November 24 Friendship House Thanksgiving Meals**  
10:30-11:30AM brunch; 2:30-3:30PM dinner  
Friendship House 108 Snoqualmie St. Mount Vernon  
360-873-8022
- \* **November 24 Old Town Café Thanksgiving Feast**  
10AM-3PM 316 W. Holly St. Bellingham  
47th annual feast, plus live music! 360-671-4431
- \* **November 26 Holiday Tea with Santa**  
10AM-3PM meet Santa; 12-5PM holiday tea  
Christianson's Nursery 15806 Best Rd. Mount Vernon  
Complimentary old-fashioned holiday tea with scones. Free (reservations required for tea). 360-466-3821
- \* **Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 27, 28 The Lights of Christmas (Pay What You Can Nights)**  
5-10PM 20800 Marine Dr. Stanwood  
The PNW's largest holiday lights display, spread over 15 acres at Warm Beach Camp. 360-652-7575

- \* **November 24-December 31 Skagit Museum**  
11AM-5PM Tue-Sun 501 S. 4th St. La Conner  
North and South wings will be decorated with classic holiday treasures from the museum's collection.  
360-466-3365 or [www.skagitcounty.net/museum](http://www.skagitcounty.net/museum)
- \* **December 1 Anacortes Tree Lighting Ceremony**  
6-7PM Chamber of Commerce, 819 Commercial Ave.  
Featuring Santa Claus, the Town Crier, and hot chocolate. Free pictures with Santa to follow!
- \* **December 3 & 4 Anacortes Celebrate the Season**  
12-4PM Port Warehouse Events Center Anacortes  
Photos with Santa, holiday gifts & crafts, cookies & cocoa, live entertainment, plus a gingerbread house contest on Sunday!  
[www.anacortesschoolsfoundation.org](http://www.anacortesschoolsfoundation.org)
- \* **December 3 La Conner Tree Lighting with Santa**  
4-5:30PM Gilkey Square, 103 Morris St.  
360-466-4778 or [www.lovelaconner.com](http://www.lovelaconner.com)
- \* **December 3 Holiday Kick-Off**  
5PM S. First St. Mount Vernon  
The Tree Lighting Ceremony in Pine Square will begin shortly after the parade ends (around 6 pm.)  
360-336-3801.
- \* **December 5 Sedro-"Whoolleyville"**  
3PM 810 Metcalf St. Sedro-Woolley  
FREE pony & train rides, face painting, and crafts.  
Tree lighting and parade at 5PM. See Santa after the parade at 1000 Metcalf St. 360-855-1841
- \* **December 7 Tree Lighting in Alpha Park**  
6PM 631 E. Fairhaven Ave. Burlington  
Hot cocoa & pictures with Santa at Visitor Information Center (across the street). 360-757-0994
- \* **December 9 La Conner Lighted Boat Parade**  
6-7PM on the boardwalk along the Swinomish Channel 360-466-4778 or [www.lovelaconner.com](http://www.lovelaconner.com)
- \* **December 9 Santa Breakfast in Sedro-Woolley**  
8:30-11:00AM Community Center 703 Pacific St.  
Kids enjoy a FREE breakfast (parents by donation). Live music and pictures with Santa. 360-855-1841
- \* **December 25 Friendship House Christmas Meals**  
10:30-11:30AM brunch; 2:30-3:30PM dinner  
Friendship House 108 Snoqualmie St. Mount Vernon  
360-873-8022

Volunteering is a GREAT way to connect with your community!

Contact Ideas for Healthy Living to help with our program [j.bryan-goforth@wsu.edu](mailto:j.bryan-goforth@wsu.edu)

or visit the Skagit Volunteer Website <http://www.skagitvolunteercenter.org/>





# Avoid Guessing About Holiday Food Safety



During the holidays, food safety may take a back seat as we take shortcuts, prepare foods ahead, cook late at night, and host holiday feasts.

Before you cook anything, test your smarts on this food safety quiz, based on information from the USDA and the FDA.

**A**pproximately how long should you plan to thaw a frozen turkey in the refrigerator?

- A. 24 hours per 1-2lb of turkey
- B. 24 hours per 4-5lb of turkey
- C. 24 hours per 6-7lb of turkey

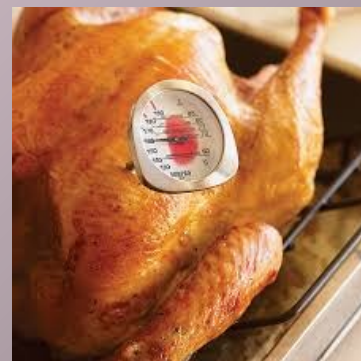
**B**-Place the frozen bird, in its original wrapper, in the refrigerator. Allow approximately 24 hours for every 4-5lb of turkey. A thawed turkey can remain in the refrigerator for 1-2 days.

THAWING TIME IN THE REFRIGERATOR	
Size of Turkey	Number of Days
4-12 pounds	1-3 days
12-16 pounds	3-4 days
16-20 pounds	4-5 days
20-24 pounds	5-6 days

**W**hat is the safe internal temperature for a whole turkey?

- A. 145°F
- B. 155°F
- C. 165°F

**C**-Use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of the turkey. A whole turkey is safe once cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 165°F throughout. Check the internal temperature in the thickest parts of the thigh, wing, and breast. If you have stuffed your turkey the center of the stuffing must also reach 165°F.



For reasons of personal preference, you may choose to cook turkey to a higher temperature. All turkey meat, including any that remains pink, is safe to eat as soon as all parts reach at least 165°F.

The stuffing should reach 165°F, whether cooked inside the bird or in a separate dish.

Let turkey stand 20 minutes after removing it from the oven. Remove stuffing and carve the turkey.

COOKING TIME-UNSTUFFED	
Size of Turkey	Estimated time to reach 165°F
8-12 pounds	2 ¾-3 hours
12-14 pounds	3-3 ¾ hours
14-18 pounds	3 ¾-4 ¼ hours
18-24 pounds	4 ½-5 hours

COOKING TIME-STUFFED	
Size of Turkey	Estimated time to reach 165°F
8-12 pounds	3-3 ½ hours
12-14 pounds	3 ½-4 hours
14-18 pounds	4-4 ¼ hours
18-20 pounds	4 ¼-4 ¾ hours
20-24 pounds	4 ¾-5 ¼ hours



### Easy Crafts for Gifting

Many people exchange gifts during this season, which can be a burden for those on a tight budget. We respond to this in various ways, which can include guilt or overspending. Instead, why not create gifts which are healthy and economical alternatives to debt or tins of fudge? Making handmade gifts with your children is also a wonderful way to spend family time and create new traditions.



#### Mason Jar Holiday Candle

- ◇ Mason jars (various sizes)
- ◇ Chalk paint (any color)
- ◇ Small votive candles
- ◇ Painters tape
- ◇ Holiday shape pattern (tree, snowflake, candy cane are all ideas to try)

Trace holiday shapes onto painter's tape (you may need to overlap several pieces of tape, depending on size of your pattern). Cut out shape and affix securely to side of Mason jar. Paint rest of jar with chalk paint. Once paint is dry, carefully remove painter's tape to reveal the holiday shape. Place a votive candle inside, light, and enjoy!



#### Flavored Vinegar

- ◆ Selection of herbs. Popular choices include thyme, dill, basil, or sage.
- ◆ Garlic
- ◆ Peppers
- ◆ Fruit (try blueberries or pears)

Sterilize glass containers by boiling for 10 minutes. Insert desired herbs and/or fruit into container and fill with vinegar of your choice. Distilled white is most affordable; apple cider vinegar costs slightly more. Wine vinegars are more expensive but have a smooth flavor. Cap jars and store in a cool, dark place for several weeks. You may filter the vinegar, or leave herbs in for appearance. Keeps 3 months at room temperature (or 6 months refrigerated). Use in salad dressings, pastas, and more. Complete instructions available at [http://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/uga/uga\\_flavored\\_vinegars.pdf](http://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/uga/uga_flavored_vinegars.pdf)



#### Gingerbread Body Scrub

- 1 cup dark brown sugar or raw sugar
- 1/3 cup coconut oil
- 1 T molasses
- 1 t cinnamon
- 1 t ground ginger

Mix all ingredients together. You may need to use clean hands to really mix well. Place contents in a mason jar with secure lid. Use in the bath or shower as a gentle and effective exfoliant. Perfect for repairing dry winter skin!



#### Calming Body Butter

- 1 cup shea butter
- 1/2 cup coconut oil
- 6 T jojoba oil
- 3-10 drops of essential oil (great choices include peppermint, lavender, lemon)

Place oils in small saucepan and melt over low heat. Stir until full melted and fully combined. Pour into a bowl and let cool at room temperature until solid. Using a hand mixer, beat the mixture until it has a light, whipped texture. While whipping, add essential oil(s) until desired scent is achieved. Spoon into clean gift-giving containers.