

JEFFERSON COUNTY EXTENSION

November News

2016

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A Season of Giving!

Donating safe canned food items

It is a season of giving and traditionally the season of donating canned food items to the local food bank. The area food banks are being replenished, beginning with the Boy Scouts of America food drive on to the many collections by schools, businesses, churches and community groups. Often I just grab a few items off of the shelf with no thought of checking the expiration dates. Or, items get shuffled on the shelf and cans go unused without notice until they are past the “use by” date.

If the items are past their expiration date the food banks cannot distribute the items and they are discarded. Let us all give generously, but mindfully check expiration or packing dates. Below is a chart to help you if you have questions on the “use by date, packing date or expiration date”.

Office Hours:
Monday - Friday
9:00 - 5:00
Lunch 1:00 - 2:00
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Food Storage and Shelf Life Guidelines

Food Dates are Not for Safety

The FDA allows manufacturers to stamp their product with a date in order to help the seller determine how long to keep the product on display and to help the consumer use the product when it is of best quality. **The date is in no way intended to be a food safety date.** The only regulation is that if a manufacturer **chooses** to use a date on their product, then the FDA allows either code letters and numbers (“closing dating”) to be used on shelf-stable products or if a calendar date is chosen (“open dating”) then the FDA requires that it contain the month, day and year along with a phrase explaining the meaning of that date.

Definitions of Common Code Dates:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Examples</u>	<u>May be found on</u>	<u>What it Means</u>	<u>When to Dispose</u>
Expiration Date	“expires 12/15/2013” “do not use after 1/15/2013”	baby food baby formula nutritional supp. medicine vitamins	The manufacturer cannot guarantee the nutritional value of the product after this date.	Dispose of this product on this date.
Pack Date	Open “packed on 12/15/2013” Closed: “22:5214125”	canned foods crackers cookies spices	This is the date the food was packaged Purpose is to assist retailer with First in First Out.	Has a very long shelf life. Refer to individual product chart.
Use by Date (also called a Quality Date)	“best if used by 12/15/2013” (do not confuse with “expiration” dated that state “do not use after”	Crackers cookies cereal soda salad mixes beverages	This is the manufacturer’s recommendation for when the food will be at peak quality.	Let your senses of sight, taste and smell guide you.
Sell by Date (also called a Pull by Date)	“sell by 12/15/2013” “pull by 12/15/2013”	dairy	CT Law determines dating for dairy products. Stores cannot sell this product after the date.	If the food has been properly handled it is safe to eat for days/weeks beyond date, refer to product chart.

Canned Food

Shelf Life after Code Date

Beans	3 years
Fish: tuna, salmon, sardines	3 years
crab	6 months
Frosting	10 months
High acid Foods: Fruit, pickles, sauerkraut	1-2 years
Low Acid Foods: Gravy, soup, cream sauce, veggies	2-3 years
Meat: Poultry, beef	2-3 years
Pie filling	3 years



Condiments

Shelf Life after Code Date

BBQ Sauce (bottled)	1 Year
Honey (pasteurized)	Forever
Jam, jelly, preserves	18 months
Ketchup	18 months
Olives	18-24 months
Salad dressing (bottled)	1 year
Salad dressing (dry mix)	2 years
Gravy (dry mix)	2 years
Salsa	12-18 month
Spaghetti Sauce (canned or jarred)	18 months



Do you want to learn how to safely can, dry or freeze your garden's bounty? University of Idaho Extension invites you to enroll in **Preserve@Home**, an online food preservation class to teach individuals how to safely preserve a variety of food products. Participants learn how to produce high-quality, preserved foods and the science behind food preservation and food safety.

The registration deadline is Monday, **January 17, 2017**. The first lesson of the 6-week course opens online on **Thursday, January 19 at 1 pm MST**.

The cost is \$35 plus the cost of supplemental materials. Many of the supplemental materials are available free, online. ***Class size is limited.*** For more information, contact Laura Sant at 208-852-1097 or lsant@uidaho.edu.

Upcoming Agriculture Workshops and Classes

Name	Date / Time	Location	Cost / Includes
Beef School	Nov. 30 start at 9 am Registration at 8:30 am	Rexburg, ID at Frontier Pies	\$15.00 Beef lunch included
Idaho Ag Outlook Seminar	Dec. 7 from 8:30 am to 4 RSVP 208-847-0344	Idaho Falls Residence Inn	\$30.00 Lunch & Materials
Pesticide Applicator Seminar	Dec. 9 from 8 am to 12:15	Fremont Co. Extension Office	No Fee/ 4 Pesticide recertification credits available

Understanding your Soil



You have added fertilizer to your pastures, gardens and lawns. You followed the directions on the bag or you got some good quality manure or compost and applied it at the appropriate rate and are feeling pretty good about how your harvest will be this next year. Or maybe you are waiting until the spring to do your applications. Whatever your management style, have you ever stopped and asked why you are doing these things? Most of you are doing all the right things for your soil, but you just don't know it. It is important to know what the soil needs, so you can reduce costs if necessary.

People often hear key words that are good for soils, such as: nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), potassium (K), pH, texture and organic matter. But what does any of this mean? Hopefully this segment will help a little to understand your soil and why plants grow the way they do.

N, P, and K are the 3 most important elements that plants need for growth, but they aren't the only ones (there are 17 to be exact). They are the 3 always referred to because they are needed in such large quantities. Soil pH is important because some elements are more available at a different pH. The way to measure pH is on a scale from 1 to 14. I feel this number system can be confusing, because people want to know if 1 is bad or 14 is bad. The truth is they are both bad. A neutral pH is 7, and anything below that is considered acidic, whereas everything above that is alkaline. As far as soils are concerned, one isn't necessarily better than the other, assuming you don't have any extremes. What the pH tells you is what elements are more available. Most soils around here in Jefferson County and Clark County are anywhere from 7 to 9. Plants can take up some elements easier in acidic soils, such as iron. But in alkaline soils such as the ones around here you may see some plants that look a little yellow in the summertime because they can't take up the iron they need. Knowing your pH will give you some clues as to how your plant is taking up nutrients.

Texture is an indication of how big the particles are that make up the soil. Sand is the biggest size that they can be categorized in, and clay is the smallest. The area in between is called silt. A healthy mix of all 3 is called a loam. People often refer to clay as "heavy" and sand as "light", which can be misleading. This doesn't have to do with the weight of the soil, but how easy it is to cultivate. Clays tend to struggle to absorb water readily, and need to soak a little to get it into the ground. However, once it's there they hold onto it for a long time. Sand is the opposite. Sand will take water in quick, and drain it out the other end just as fast.

Organic matter, simply put, is dead stuff. Stubble, leaves, roots, manure, compost, and straw all can contribute to the amount of organic matter in the soil if incorporated properly. As the material breaks down it releases nutrients into the soil that the plants can access. Organic matter is never a bad thing. If your pH is too high or too low, add organic matter. It won't change the pH dramatically, but it will help the plant deal with it better. If your soil texture has too much clay, add organic matter, this will give the moisture somewhere to go, as well as prevent you from making bricks every time you drive across the field. If it's too sandy, add organic matter. It's not as strong as clay, but it will hold onto moisture better than sand will. Just remember, organic matter breaks down, so it needs to be replenished over time.

A soil sample is the best way to determine what your soils need. If you are buying new land, whether it be a new field or a new house, I would recommend getting an initial soil test so you know what you are dealing with. I would also recommend to any grower to get a soil sample every couple of years to make sure their soil is living up to its full potential. The samples must be sent to a lab. Stukenholtz Laboratory in Twin Falls has a charge of approximately \$40 for a basic soil sample. I know that sounds like a lot. Some of you have thousands of acres and are trying to keep unnecessary fees out of your operation. Some of you have a tiny little garden in your back yard and think that kind of science is only for large farms. Either way, the knowledge of knowing what is going on in the soil beneath your crop is critical for management decisions. For \$40 you can know if you are going to have phosphorus deficiencies in your alfalfa, blossom end rot in your tomatoes, if your pH is too high for iron uptake or if you have too much salt. The alternative is to guess on fertilizer requirements and hope you were right.



A proper soil sample isn't just a bucket full of dirt. The best tool to sample with is a soil probe. If that is not available to you, you can use a shovel. Take a thin, deep scoop with a spade shovel and put it in the bucket. Walk across the field in a zig zag motion taking sample as thin as you can get them on your spade. I usually walk in the shape of a W, taking 5-10 samples in the area I want tested. Then you mix it all together thoroughly and take about 2-4 cups out and put it in a zip lock bag.

Many nutrient deficiencies aren't always obvious. The best way to know what is happening is by taking a closer look underneath the canopy all the way down to the roots. I am more than happy to help anyone that has any questions about soil sampling or needs help taking and sending samples to the right place.

**Contact Joseph Sagers for more information about soil testing or the upcoming Workshops and Classes.
Phone numbers; Office: 745-6685, Cell 208-270-4031**



4-H News



Thought for the month- People won't remember what we do or say but how we made them feel.

It is time to register for 4-H!!!

To register for 4-H , log into 4honline.com click on Idaho and enter your email address and password. Your family page will come up, **click** the child's name, then **edit**, then **enroll** for this year, then **edit** any information that needs to be changed. Hit **submit** and come to the office to pay the fees.

Name	Fee
Clover Bud	\$6.00
4-H Age	\$12.00
Horse	\$16.00

To keep up to date on what's happening in 4-H go to the 4-H Facebook page at **Jefferson Co Extension** jeffersonnext4h

Idaho State 4-H is changing the age divisions:

Junior- 8-10

Intermediate- 11-13

Senior- 14-18

Animal Record Books

1. **Do not throw your book away from last year**
2. There are some pages that will need to be replaced with new ones each year, if you did not keep your instructions that came with the binder packet last year, wait to clean out anything until you know for sure what needs replaced. These books are supposed to make it easier to continue with projects.
3. Call in and let us know what projects you are doing and if it is market, pet, breeding. We will then prepare your packet to be picked up or emailed to you.
4. Horse youth- There is a general horse checklist that everyone should have. In addition to that checklist you will also need 1 or more of the following; western, hunter jumper, working ranch, driving.

Know Your Government- We are taking applications for Know Your Government until November 28th. It is held in Boise on February 11th-13th and it is for 8th and 9th graders only. If you are interested please call our office today.

CAL Ranch Stores 4H/FFA Show Program Discount for 2017 starts October 1, 2016 and goes until September 30, 2017. If you have any questions contact the Rexburg store at 208-356-3343 or visit their website at www.calranch.com for more details.

New Self-Directed Learning Projects

Every Wednesday from 3 pm to 4 pm at the Extension Office, Amanda Hickman will be there to help you with your self-directed projects, or you can do one with her. Every month or so there will be a new project started. This month it is Vet Science #1. Everyone is invited to attend. Any questions please call the office at 745-6685

Day Camps

There will be some day camps offered this Thanksgiving and Christmas breaks. Call the office to sign up.

November 22, 9am to 12	Clover Bud Only(5-8yrs.)	Cost \$5.00	Thanksgiving Crafts
December 20, 9am to 12	4-H age (8-18 yrs.)	Cost \$5.00	Christmas Ornaments
December 27, 9am to 12	4-H age (8-18 yrs.)	Cost \$5.00	DIY marble runs

Reasonable accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities and special needs who contact Lorie Dye, at 243 E Fremont Ave. Rigby, ID 83442, 208-745-6685, or jefferson@uidaho.edu at least two weeks prior to the event.

University of Idaho, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Idaho counties cooperating. To enrich education through diversity, the University of Idaho is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and educational institution.