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## Individual Highlights:

Check Out Moving Companies	1
Stains on the Job	2
Take the High Road to Your Community Farmers' Market	3
Diseases Caused by Smoking	5
Dealing with Disaster	7
Mayo or Mustard, Check Your Choices	9
Fruits: Citrus, Melon, Berries and Other Fruits	10
Refrigerator/Freezer	11
NEWS FLASH	11
Florida Food Fare	12

*Family and Consumer  
Sciences Department  
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## Check Out Moving Companies

The prime season for moving has begun, and a little care can go a long way in making a move go smoothly, according to Florida Agriculture and Consumer Services Commissioner Charles H. Bronson.

"Putting your treasured family belongings in the care of a moving company can be a difficult and expensive task," Bronson said. "But by getting a few estimates, checking out the companies and understanding your rights in the transaction, the odds that you'll have a trouble-free move increase significantly."

Under Florida state law, all intrastate moving companies must be registered with Bronson's Division of Consumer Services. Consumers are encouraged to call the toll-free hotline at 1-800-HELPLFLA (1-800-435-7352) to check the registration and complaint histories of the company or companies being considered.

Interstate moves—those involving moves from Florida to another state or from another state to Florida—are exempt from state law and are overseen by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, which can be reached at 1-888-368-7238.

**Source: Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services**

## Stains on the Job

### terminating those workplace stains

Whether your office is down the hall or down the highway, stains are an unavoidable part of the office landscape. They appear unannounced – no appointment necessary! Nancy Bock, Vice President, Consumer Education at The Soap and Detergent Association offers a plan of action that yields big dividends. Before you begin, check the fabric care labels to be sure an item is washable. If it is dry clean only, take it to a professional cleaner and let them know the source of the stain.

**Correction fluid:** There are two types of correction fluid – water-based and petroleum-based. Before attempting to remove the stain, check the product label to see which type you are dealing with. If you aren't sure, contact the manufacturer or visit their website before tackling the stain. If you can't find the information, take the item to a professional drycleaner.

- **Water-based:** Scrape off any excess fluid. Working from the back of the fabric, flush the stain under warm running water. Mix a solution of one part liquid dishwashing detergent to one part warm water. Sponge the stain with the detergent solution, tamping it vigorously. Rinse. Repeat until you have removed as much of the stain as possible. Pretreat with a prewash stain remover. Launder, using the warmest water that's safe for the fabric.
- **Petroleum-based:** Let the stain dry thoroughly. Gently brush off excess fluid with a clothes brush. Send the item to professional drycleaner and mention the type of stain.

**Toner:** Don't attempt to brush off the toner powder. That will only grind it further into the fabric. Instead, vacuum, blow off or shake off any loose toner. Sponge with liquid laundry detergent. Dab the stain. Launder in cold or warm water. Never use hot water – it will set the stain.

**Ink:** Place the stain face down on clean paper towels. Sponge the area around the stain with denatured alcohol. Then sponge the stain itself, transferring the ink to the paper towel. Replace the paper towels frequently and continue sponging until no more ink is transferred. Rinse thoroughly. Launder. Note: Some inks are permanent, which means they are impossible to remove.

**Pencil:** Using a soft eraser, gently rub off as much of the pencil mark as possible. Pretreat with a prewash stain remover. Launder.

**Coffee, tea and soft drinks:** Sponge the stain with cool water or soak the item for about 30 minutes in cool water. Pretreat with a prewash stain remover. Launder, using chlorine bleach, if safe for the fabric, or oxygen bleach.

**Source:** Soap and Detergent Association

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# Take The High Road To Your Community Farmers' Market

— Eating locally-produced food conserves natural resources and strengthens Florida's communities

Shopping at farmers' markets is a growing trend in Florida. In fact, the number of farmers' markets in the state has doubled in the last 10 years.

"The increasing popularity of farmers' markets is due to a couple of factors," said Florida Agriculture Commissioner Charles H. Bronson. "First of all, people have become more health-conscious, so there's more demand for fresh, high-quality produce—and that means local produce. Plus, our small farmers have become very aware of the benefits of direct-marketing. They can substantially increase the profits they make on the food they work so hard to grow."

People who shop at farmers' markets enjoy fresh, wholesome produce throughout the growing season, while helping to keep small farms viable. And there are other, less obvious benefits, too. Buying locally grown food conserves energy and other natural resources, reduces air and water pollution, preserves green space, and helps build a stronger, more close-knit community.

Yet if you ask people why they like visiting farmers' markets, the reasons they list might not be quite so high-minded.

"Taste," said Sharon Yeago, manager of the High Springs Farmers' Market in Alachua County. "That's what really gets people first. A carrot fresh from the ground tastes totally different from one that's had to travel a long distance over many days. It's tender. It's delicious. There's so much flavor. It's so dramatic. People get hooked."

Farmers usually harvest in the early morning, just before heading to the markets, so it's only a matter of hours between harvest and purchase. That means sugars don't have the chance to turn to starch; there's little water loss. Produce remains vital, intensely flavored, juicy, and crisp. Nutrient loss is minimal, so your food not only tastes better, it's better for you.

Yet despite the benefits of local sourcing, most of the food we eat comes from far away. Today, the average trek from farm to fork is a whopping 1,500 miles. The journey is rough and often takes a long time, with produce sitting on trucks and in warehouses for up to two weeks. Along the way, quality suffers, and nutrients become depleted.

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But there's more at stake than vitamins.

"Transporting products across the state or across the globe uses fuel — most always petroleum-based fuels," said Jonathan Austin, managing director of the Florida Organic Growers' Association, a non-profit based in Gainesville. "So when our food travels a long way, we're consuming irreplaceable natural resources and increasing greenhouse gas emissions."

Buying locally at farmers' markets cuts down on the miles food travels, the fossil fuels it consumes, and the pollution it creates. It also cuts down on the amount of food packaging that ends up in landfills.

"Most packaging is designed to help food endure the rigors of long-distance shipping," Bronson said. "When we buy local, we keep that heavy packaging out of the waste stream."

When food travels less, fewer resources are spent on transportation and packaging — and less money is spent on those things, too. That means the farmer is able to keep more of your food dollar. Farming becomes more profitable, and small farmers are under less pressure to sell out to developers.

Eating locally makes for stronger farms — and better towns and cities, better communities.

"When you buy local, you are investing in the local economy," Austin said. "Your money stays in the community, where it fuels economic growth and is used to hire local workers."

"Farmers' markets can be excellent tools for local economic development," Bronson said. "Starting a farmers' market can help revitalize a city's downtown. Folks come into the area to shop at the farmers' market and they end up patronizing other nearby businesses. A successful farmers' market can help lift up everybody."

Farmers' markets serve as community gathering places, spaces where people can linger and chat and get to know each other. Tallahassee's Downtown Marketplace has evolved into a weekly festival, with live music, arts and crafts, educational exhibits, and community outreach. The health department conducts free glaucoma screenings; the Humane Society offers pet adoptions. The market hums with activity. People come to buy produce — and just to be a part of things.

"There tends to be a social aspect to the markets," Bronson said. "The old ties between farmer and consumer are restored."

**Source: Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services**

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## New Surgeon General's Report Expands List of Diseases Caused by Smoking

U.S. Surgeon General Richard H. Carmona released a new comprehensive report on smoking and health in May, revealing for the first time that smoking causes diseases in nearly every organ of the body. Published 40 years after the surgeon general's first report on smoking — which concluded that smoking was a definite cause of three serious diseases — this newest report finds that cigarette smoking is conclusively linked to diseases such as leukemia, cataracts, pneumonia and cancers of the cervix, kidney, pancreas and stomach.

"We've known for decades that smoking is bad for your health, but this report shows that it's even worse than we knew," Dr. Carmona said. "The toxins from cigarette smoke go everywhere the blood flows. I'm hoping this new information will help motivate people to quit smoking and convince young people not to start in the first place."

According to the report, smoking kills an estimated 440,000 Americans each year. On average, men who smoke cut their lives short by 13.2 years, and female smokers lose 14.5 years. The economic toll exceeds \$157 billion each year in the United States — \$75 billion in direct medical costs and \$82 billion in lost productivity.

"We need to cut smoking in this country and around the world," HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson said. "Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death and disease, costing us too many lives, too many dollars and too many tears. If we are going to be serious about improving health and preventing disease we must continue to drive down tobacco use. And we must prevent our youth from taking up this dangerous habit."

In 1964, the Surgeon General's report announced medical research showing that smoking was a definite cause of cancers of the lung and larynx (voice box) in men and chronic bronchitis in both men and women. Later reports concluded that smoking causes a number of other diseases such as cancers of the bladder, esophagus, mouth and throat; cardiovascular diseases; and reproductive effects. Today's new report, *The Health Consequences of Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General*, expands the list of illness and conditions linked to smoking. The new illnesses and diseases are cataracts, pneumonia, acute myeloid leukemia, abdominal aortic aneurysm, stomach cancer, pancreatic cancer, cervical cancer, kidney cancer and periodontitis.

Statistics indicate that more than 12 million Americans have died from smoking since the 1964 report of the surgeon general, and another 25 million Americans alive today will most likely die of a smoking-related illness.

The report's release came in advance of *World No Tobacco Day*, an annual event on May 31 that focuses global attention on the health hazards of tobacco use. The goals of *World No Tobacco Day* are to raise awareness about the dangers of tobacco use, encourage people not to use tobacco, motivate users to quit and encourage countries to implement comprehensive tobacco control programs. The report concludes that smoking reduces the overall health of smokers, contributing to such conditions as hip fractures, complications from diabetes, increased wound infections following surgery, and a wide range of reproductive complications. For every

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premature death caused each year by smoking, there are at least 20 smokers living with a serious smoking-related illness.

Another major conclusion, consistent with recent findings of other scientific studies, is that smoking so-called low-tar or low-nicotine cigarettes does not offer a health benefit over smoking regular or "full-flavor" cigarettes.

"There is no safe cigarette, whether it is called 'light,' ultra-light,' or any other name," Dr. Carmona said. "The science is clear: the only way to avoid the health hazards of smoking is to quit completely or to never start smoking."

The report concludes that quitting smoking has immediate and long-term benefits, reducing risks for diseases caused by smoking and improving health in general. "Within minutes and hours after smokers inhale that last cigarette, their bodies begin a series of changes that continue for years," Dr. Carmona said. "Among these health improvements are a drop in heart rate, improved circulation, and reduced risk of heart attack, lung cancer and stroke. By quitting smoking today a smoker can assure a healthier tomorrow."

Dr. Carmona said it is never too late to stop smoking. Quitting smoking at age 65 or older reduces by nearly 50 percent a person's risk of dying of a smoking-related disease.

In addition to the 960-page printed report, *The Health Consequences of Smoking*, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released a new interactive scientific database of more than 1,600 key articles cited in the report, available through the Internet ([www.surgeongeneral.gov](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov)). The database can be used to find detailed information on the specific health effects of smoking as well as to develop customized analyses, tables and figures.

The database will be continually updated as new critical studies are published, allowing the surgeon general to determine on a regular basis whether the evidence supports a new definitive conclusion about smoking-caused disease. "Using this technology, once a threshold of danger is met, we can quickly alert the American people of new information related to smoking," Dr. Carmona said.

The report found that for a number of diseases and conditions associated with smoking, the evidence is not yet conclusive to establish a causal link. For these illnesses, which include colorectal cancer, liver cancer, prostate cancer, and erectile dysfunction in men, additional studies are needed to reach the threshold of evidence required by the Surgeon General's strict causal criteria to declare that they are causally related to smoking. These criteria were introduced in the 1964 report and have been updated in the 2004 report using new uniform standards.

For breast cancer, the evidence suggests that there is no causal relationship overall to smoking. However, the report notes that on a genetic basis, some women may be at increased risk if they smoke. More research is required to clarify the role of smoking in the cause and progression of breast cancer.

To help communicate the report findings as widely as possible, Surgeon General Carmona also unveiled a new animated Web site for the public showing the hazards of smoking and the benefits of quitting ([www.surgeongeneral.gov](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov)). In addition, a full-color, easy-to-read summary of the report has been developed for the public.

**Source:** <http://www.hhs.gov/news>.

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## Tips For Dealing With Disaster

Disaster is a part of life. Hurricanes, tornadoes, floods or accidents can take you by surprise. When disaster occurs, the following 13 tips can help you keep your balance and protect your future.

**Tip 1:** Don't Panic! Stay in control.

Remember you have survived other disasters and you probably will also survive this one. Assess the situation and take appropriate action.

**Tip 2:** Practice prudent consumer behavior.

Use good judgment in making decisions. Many people lose money by turning their investments into cash in a panic.

**Tip 3:** Avoid con artists and gougers.

Recently it was reported that gasoline tripled in price in one day. During hurricanes or tornadoes the price of ice or generators may triple. There will always be people trying to profit from disasters.

**Tip 4:** Be a good citizen.

Report con artists, gougers and anyone who behaves in a suspect manner to the appropriate authority, local police, attorney general's office, or Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

**Tip 5:** Manage credit.

Keep credit card and debt balances below the maximum. Credit is one way many Floridians manage emergencies. By keeping the limit below the maximum, you will have a temporary emergency fund available in the short term.

**Tip 6:** Know where your Important Papers are.

A well-ordered home filing system is important in responding to disasters. An updated household inventory is important to a speedy adjustment to property loss. The whereabouts of insurance policies will save time and stress in dealing with any type of covered loss resulting from a disaster. It is also important to locate contracts, bank information and investment information. Knowing who family members are and how to locate them is important as well as knowing who family advisors are and how to locate them. If you need more information, contact your local county Extension agent for information on developing a home filing system.

**Tip 7:** Keep gasoline in your car.

This is standard procedure for families in remote areas of the state. A good rule is to keep a quarter of a tank of gasoline in your car at all times.

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**Tip 8:** Keep some cash on hand, enough cash and available credit to take care of one week's living expenses.

**Tip 9:** Have a disaster or evacuation kit that you take with you if you must leave your home.

Include: your important papers (ones that would be difficult or impossible to replace) change of clothes, food and water, medicines, etc.

**Tip 10:** Review and update insurance policies.

It is a good practice to review your insurance policies on a regular basis. If your family situation has changed, review your coverage for life, health, and disability insurance. Do you need more or less insurance? Do you need to change beneficiaries? Check property insurance to ensure that your property is adequately covered. If you have an old car you may want to reduce coverage. Yet your "old" house may have increased in value and need more insurance.

**Tip 11:** Review and update your will and other property transfer documents.

Data shows that only one out of four people have a personal will. Remember if you don't make your wishes known about the disposition of your property, through properly executed transfer documents, the state has specified what will happen to your property. Many people will not have a problem with the first line to inherit but the problem comes with the second and third line to inherit.

**Tip 12:** Review your living will.

If you do not have one, you may want to consider writing one. A living will is a written statement indicating that the signer does or does not wish extraordinary medical measures to be taken if he or she has no reasonable expectation of recovery. Living wills must conform precisely to laws in the state of the signer's residence. Hospitals routinely ask patients if they have a living will or if they want to write one.

**Tip 13:** Implement a standing plan.

Develop and use a "standing plan" for your actions. A standing plan is one that you and your family have developed in the event of disasters. The plan should include:

- What you would do immediately to get to safety.
- What you would take with you if you have time to evacuate (what papers, clothes, food, etc.)
- Remember you always need identification on your person even when you walk or jog.
- What follow-up actions you would implement.
- Where you and your family would meet if you were separated (school, church, police department, etc.)

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**Source: Dr. Jo Turner, Professor, Family and Consumer Economics, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL**

## Ketchup, Mayo or Mustard? Check Your Choices

From pickle relish to soy sauce, condiments add flavor and complement food. Do you know which ones will tickle your taste buds without loading on the calories? Here's a comparison.

### High-calorie choices (45-100 calories per tablespoon):

- Regular salad dressing
- Regular mayonnaise
- Gravy (2 tablespoons)\*
- Butter, margarine and oil

### Moderate-calorie choices (21-44 calories per tablespoon):

- Reduced-fat or light salad dressing
- Reduced-fat mayonnaise
- Chutney
- Light margarine
- Sour cream
- Tartar sauce
- Olives (5)\*
- Hummus

### Low-calorie choices (less than 20 calories per tablespoon):

- Fat-free salad dressing
- Fat-free mayonnaise
- Fresh or dried herbs and spices
- Fat-free gravy (2 T)\*
- Ketchup
- Herbs and spices
- Soy or teriyaki sauce (1 teaspoon)
- Butter flavorings
- Chili sauce\*
- Light or fat-free sour cream
- Horseradish
- Mustard
- Lemon juice
- Sliced tomato, onion and lettuce

\*high in sodium

**Source: Mayo Clinic HealthQuest newsletter, March 2006**

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# Fruits: Citrus, Melon, Berries and Other Fruit

The amount of fruit you need to eat each day depends on age, sex and level of physical activity. The U.S. government has a web site which helps determine the amount of fruit you need each day at [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov). For a woman or man between the ages of 19-30 who gets less than 30 minutes per day of moderate physical activity, 2 cups of fruit is the recommended amount.

What counts as one cup of fruit?

- 1 small apple (2.5" diameter)
- 1 cup of chopped, cooked or canned fruit
- 1 cup of fruit juice
- 1 medium grapefruit (4" diameter)
- 2 halves canned peaches
- 1/4 cup dried fruit
- 32 seedless grapes

Why eat fruit?

- Fruit and fruit juices provide important amounts of vitamins A and C and potassium. They are low in fat and sodium.
- Fruits also contain fiber. Fiber helps keep your digestive tract healthy. Foods that contain fiber are usually low in calories. Only foods that come from plants contain fiber. Besides fruits, some other plant foods that provide fiber are vegetables, whole-grain breads, whole-grain cereals, dry beans, dry peas, nuts and seeds.

Make fruit easy and convenient for you and your family to eat:

- Use fresh or canned fruit slices as a colorful garnish for main dishes, salads, and cereals.
- Add dried fruit to muffins and quick breads.
- Eat fresh fruits topped with yogurt and sprinkled with cinnamon
- Bake or broil apples, pears, or bananas with cinnamon and nutmeg and serve warm. This is a great wintertime treat to be served with a meal or as a dessert or snack.
- Make a fruit salad using several kinds of fruits in season and serve as a snack, side dish or dessert. If you add bananas, apples or pears to the mixture, be sure to add a little orange juice to keep these fruits from turning dark.
- Freeze 100% juice in an ice cube tray or small plastic or paper cups. This is a great treat when the weather is hot or humid. Children and adults enjoy frozen fruit cubes or fruitsicles.

**Source: Glenda L. Warren, Associate Professor, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL**

## Refrigerator/Freezer

After air conditioning and water heating, your refrigerator is the third-largest user of energy in your home. Here are some quick tips to help you use your refrigerator and freezer more efficiently:

- Avoid using multiple refrigerators. If you have an extra refrigerator that is not kept full or is hardly used, turn it off or get rid of it. It can save you up to \$100 a year.
- Keep your freezer full. This will help keep warm air out when the door is opened.
- Cover your food before storing it.
- Get everything you need out at one time to prevent cool air from escaping.

These tips can help you trim energy costs, but the best time to save is when buying a new, energy-efficient refrigerator. Follow these simple steps to make sure you're getting the model that's right for your home:

- Select the right size.
  - Larger refrigerators may cost more to run.
- Compare features and energy use.
  - Side-by-side models use more energy than top-and-bottom models.
  - Automatic ice and water dispensers increase energy use.
- Compare prices and check the Energy Guide label for operating costs of the models you're considering.

Source: [www.fpl.com](http://www.fpl.com), Energy saving Tips

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### **NEWS FLASH — Remember to check your prescriptions if a hurricane is coming!**

*When you hear that a hurricane may be approaching, quickly check on your medications to be sure you have enough to last for several days. In the State of Florida, when the Governor issues a "Declaration of Emergency" you can go to the pharmacy and have your prescriptions refilled — even if it is early.*

# Florida Food Fare

By Mary King

Program Assistant for Family & Consumer Sciences  
Extension Service for Sarasota County

## Eggplant

**Description:** A member of the nightshade family, eggplant is related to the tomato and potato. Though commonly thought of as a vegetable, it is actually a fruit, specifically a berry. There are many varieties of this delicious food, ranging in color from deep purple to white, in length from 2 to 12 inches and in shape from oblong to round.

**Availability:** Florida is the nation's leading producer of eggplant, with about 2200 acres. Almost all of those marketed are during the fall, winter and spring months. Florida's harvest begins in late October and continues until June. Heaviest production is from December until May.

**Nutritional Value:** Eggplant contains small amounts of several important minerals and vitamins needed daily. Approximately 1 cup of raw eggplant is 82 g, contains 21 calories, a trace of fat and no cholesterol. It also yields 2 g dietary fiber, 5.7 mg calcium, 177.9 mg potassium, 15.5 mcg folate and 68.8 IU vitamin A.

**Selection and care:** When buying eggplant, look for firm, smooth deep purple skin. Avoid those with brown or blue streaks. Shriveled, dented and flabby eggplant is often bitter and has poor flavor. Choose product that is heavy for its size. When you press the surface, it should feel firm and the flesh should bounce back (although the Oriental varieties are a bit more tender than others.) The fuzzy green caps should be tightly intact and mold-free. Store eggplant as quickly as possible in the vegetable compartment of the refrigerator or wrapped loosely in plastic wrap. It requires high humidity. Try not to purchase more than a day or two in advance of using for best quality.

**Preparation and Use:** Eggplant can be prepared with the skin off or intact. It is a popular main or side dish that can be baked, broiled, grilled, fried, stuffed, sautéed or boiled. It does, however have the sponge-like capacity to soak up oil so it should be well coated with a batter or crumb mixture if frying. Whichever method you choose to prepare an eggplant, cook it thoroughly.

### Recipes:

#### Stuffed Eggplant

1 cup uncooked brown rice	1 small onion, chopped
1 medium eggplant	1 garlic clove, minced
1 tablespoon oil	Salt and pepper to taste
1 tomato, diced	1/4 teaspoon basil
1 green pepper, diced	1 tablespoon butter

Cook rice according to package directions. Cut eggplant in half lengthwise and scoop out the center from each half, leaving a 1/2-inch shell. Dice the eggplant meat. Place shells outside down in a large skillet with about 1/2-inch boiling salted water. Cover and steam 3 minutes. Drain and set aside. Heat oil and cook diced eggplant, tomatoes, green pepper, onion and garlic until tender. Add cooked rice and seasonings and stir to combine. Stuff eggplant shells with mixture. Dot with butter. Bake in preheated 350°F oven about 35 minutes or until shells are tender. Makes 2 main dish servings.