The Common Cabbage May be Due Some Respect!

If it’s healthy foods you are looking for, North Carolina ranks among the nation’s leading producers of cabbage with more than 8,500 acres harvested each year. Right now cabbage farmers all over the state are harvesting their spring cabbage crop destined for local stores and farmers’ roadside stands.

Perhaps not as glamorous or glorious to see as many other colorful vegetables, cabbage made its way to America from Europe in the 16th century, and, from then on, was considered one of the daily food staples. Necessary, but far from a candidate for a tableside presentation. Cabbage flambé? Well, hardly!

But things are changing in the culinary world. What is one of the most versatile of vegetables…and one that might even prolong your life? Make way for cabbage!!

Based on Cornell University studies, a 100 gram serving (1 cup) of red cabbage several times a week may provide a significant amount of antioxidants that reduce the risks of cancer and Alzheimer’s disease.

Dr. C. Y. Lee, author of the study, relates that some phytochemicals in cabbage have high antioxidant capacity and flavonoids that may protect cells against the oxidative damage caused by free radicals. He found that phenolic content in red cabbage was four times higher than green cabbage.

In other studies, Dr. Wendy Demark of Duke University’s Comprehensive Cancer Center notes that cabbage contains at least 11 of the 15 families of vegetable-related compounds found to prevent cancer. Studies suggest that these compounds may hinder several steps in the cancer process.

Continued on the next page…
According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, about 70 percent of cabbage is consumed at home. Fresh uses include slaw, salads, garnishes, and, more recently, shredded cabbage that can replace lettuce in tacos. The foodservice market continues to grow, hence coleslaw is very popular. More than half the production of coleslaw is consumed away from home. Fast food marketing accounts for about 25 percent of coleslaw production.

In addition, to fresh uses, cabbage can be prepared by boiling, steaming, baking, braising or stir-frying. For more information visit… www.leafy-greens.org

Vinaigrette BBQ Slaw

¼ cup cider vinegar
¼ cup red wine vinegar
2/3 cup sugar
½ cup vegetable oil
1 teaspoon salt
5 to 6 cups shredded or chopped cabbage

Over medium heat, stir together the vinegar and the sugar until sugar dissolves. Whisk in the oil and salt. Place the cabbage in a large bowl and pour the hot dressing over. Stir and let sit for at least an hour.

Source: NC Dept. of Agriculture/Consumer Services

Eliminating Mealtime Battles

Getting children to eat properly has been a problem for many generations of parents. Children usually start life enthusiastic about food until, somewhere along the line, they see parents making an issue out of it. It’s one of the few areas in a child’s life where they have total control, and they will play it for all it’s worth. It may sound unorthodox, but the less parental attention paid to food, the more children will ultimately develop wholesome eating habits. Here are some basic rules:

- Don’t notice. Act unconcerned about what is eaten and who is doing the eating. Nothing foils a child’s intent on a power struggle more than an “opponent” that won’t take part.
- Don’t act eager. Don’t prepare an alternate selection if the child “doesn’t like” what’s being served. Tell her you hope she’ll like the next meal better.
- Limit between-meal snacks. If a child is regularly refusing meals yet whining later for food, say, “Sorry the kitchen is closed now, but we’ll be eating again at dinner.”
- Obviously these suggestions don’t apply to a child who is sick or who requires a special diet.

Source: Growing Together Newsletter, March 2006
How Safe Is Your Home From Electrical Dangers?

We treasure our homes as a safe and cozy place where we can relax with family and friends. But there may be invisible hazards hidden behind your walls or lurking unseen outdoors that threaten your safety and that of your loved ones.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, there’s plenty of reason for concern: nearly 32,000 fires in the home were caused by faulty house wiring or wiring devices each year between 1999 and 2002. These fires resulted in 220 deaths, 950 injuries, and $674 million in property damage annually.

Now for the good news—there is something you can do to safeguard your home from dangerous electrical hazards. The Leviton Institute recommends you hire a qualified electrician to make a thorough inspection of your house and grounds every ten years. You should also make your own yearly inspection a part of your regular spring chores. It’s easy—just follow this list:

1. **Outdoor GFCIs:** Make sure all outdoor receptacles are protected by Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs) and a weatherproof cover. With warm weather just around the corner, pools, hot tubs and barbecues are going to start getting a lot of use. Make sure pool pumps, hot tubs and appliances you use outdoors are plugged into GFCI-protected outlets. These will safeguard your friends and family from dangerous electrical shock. GFCIs detect when current is leaking from an electrical circuit to ground and automatically shut off the power at the receptacle. They have saved hundreds of lives since they were first introduced in 1972 according to the National Electrical Safety Foundation. When choosing a GFCI, it’s important to note that Underwriters Laboratories (UL) is updating its requirements for these devices this summer. New models will be introduced that offer greater protection by automatically blocking the reset button (ensuring that no power is available) if they are improperly wired. All GFCIs produced after July 8, 2006 will include these new features, although GFCIs made before then may still be offered for sale after that date. With both newer and older models, it is important to periodically test (according to manufacturer’s instructions) your installed GFCIs to make sure they are still working properly.

2. **Indoor GFCIs:** Kitchens, bathrooms, laundry rooms, or any other place around the house that has a water source within six feet of the receptacle needs GFCI protection. Remember: water and electricity are a potentially deadly combination. Keep appliances like radios or hair dryers away from sinks, tubs, and pools.

3. **Defective Wiring Devices:** Check outlets and switches for cracks, broken parts, or loose-fitting plugs. Replace defective devices immediately, as well as those that feel hot to the touch.

4. **Overloaded Outlets:** Make sure outlets are not overloaded. Most household outlets are typically rated around 15-20 amps. Plugging too many appliances into one outlet can exceed that rating and create a fire or shock hazard.

5. **Visual Inspections:** Inspect all power cords and extension cords: those showing signs of cracking, fraying, or obvious wear should be replaced immediately.

6. **Extension Cords:** Never run extensions under rugs, carpets, or furniture where damage might occur unseen and start a fire. When using an extension cord, always plug the appliance into the extension cord first before plugging the extension cord into the outlet.

7. **Light Bulbs:** Be sure to replace a burned-out light bulb with one that doesn’t exceed the recommended wattage for the lamp socket.

Source: Home Electricity from the Leviton Institute
Can your favorite food, for example, a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, be someone else’s ultimate discomfort food? Yes, if that person happens to be one of the three million Americans who are allergic to peanuts and tree nuts.

Every year, approximately 30,000 emergency room visits and 150 deaths result from allergic reactions to proteins coming from one or more of eight major foods containing allergens: milk, eggs, fish, crustaceans, e.g., shrimp, crabs, tree nuts, wheat, peanuts, and soybeans. Although other foods may also trigger allergic reactions, it is estimated that these eight account for 90 percent of all cases.

To make it easier for food-allergic consumers and their caregivers to identify and avoid foods that contain major food allergens, the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA) was passed by Congress in 2004, and became effective on January 1, 2006. This law requires all food labels to declare in plain English the presence of any of these eight allergens (milk, egg, soy, wheat, etc.). This can be accomplished in one of two ways:

1) By placing the word “Contains” followed by the name of the food source from which the major food allergen is derived, immediately after or adjacent to the list of ingredients, in the same type size as the latter (e.g. “Contains milk and wheat”); or

2) By placing next to the name of the affected ingredients, in parentheses, the name of the food source from which the allergen is derived [e.g. “natural flavoring (eggs, soy)”].

Some foods are exempted from FALCPA labeling requirements. These include meat, poultry, fruits, vegetables, and alcoholic beverages. Highly refined oils derived from the major allergens are also exempted: clinical studies have demonstrated that these oils can be safely consumed by food-allergic individuals because of the refining process, which removes allergenic proteins.

Source: International Food Information Council Foundation

North Carolina Cooperative Extension
North Carolina State University
Bladen County Center
450 Smith Circle Drive
PO Box 249
Elizabethtown, NC  28337