

Fenceline

by Jody G. Holthaus

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Livestock-Natural Resources

Every Life Lesson At the County Fair

This is county fair season in Kansas. There's nothing quite like it. Nancy Nelson and I just witnessed our 28th Jackson County Fair. We've seen a lot of changes in those years, the rules come and go., as things change as to importance. The fair days have changed, from a Tuesday to Thursday to more of a Monday-Wednesday and now more events on Sunday. We used to have to avoid anything required on Sunday. Sometimes it's not fun to be the rule enforcer, but treating everyone the same, was always my mantra.

County fairs, can teach kids that all that hard work they do on their projects will pay off. Or maybe not! That is a real life lesson, even though you worked and worked on your project to make it the best you could, the judge liked something else better. I always thought my own children learned more from the white or red ribbon than the purple ribbon.

You also learn that we are all humans, and everyone can make a mistake. If you were left off of a judging roster, it's not the end of the world, how you handle it-will be your life lesson. There are some, and we'll say parents here, that will go after the show officials with guns a blazing, to right the wrong. There are others that, calmly explain the situation, and are reasonable in their response. We always try to rule on the side of the kid, but how it is handled makes a world of difference, some people show their true colors at the county fair.

In this era of entitled children and everyone with very thin skin, some of the judges we hire are skittish about giving a kid a red ribbon, when it really should be a white ribbon. So we have to think about the message that sends to the 4-Her, "you can be mediocre and still win?". I don't want that generation of "mediocre" caring for me in the nursing home!

Once, we had a horse judge give the seniors a lot of white ribbons, but the way he presented the information had all of them laughing and they all felt like winners, winners with white ribbons! At the time I wished that judge could be cloned, such a great influence and mentor.

Then there is the money spent on projects, you can throw money at a project, thinking that will make you a winner. The true winner, in my mind are those that try to learn from the project and especially with the livestock projects, make it profitable or at least break even. That is the life lesson.

After all, when these kids go off to college or begin their grown up jobs, there will be hiccups. Wouldn't you rather they face some of these challenges while they are still in living under the same roof, so that you can mentor them through it?

To quote the book I'm reading, 1927, *Under the 4-H Flag* by John F Case, "We impress upon your daughter and son that they must "win without boasting and lose without squealing". To be a member,. Is a challenge to the very best. It is a great honor, it has great reward."

There are a lot of life lessons at a county fair!

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MEADOWLARK EXTENSION DISTRICT AGENT NEWS

David G. Hallauer
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Food & Nutrition, FNP

Taking It To The Store

There is so much information out there, how do you separate the good from the bad? Here are a few simple strategies for making judgements about the nutritional quality of what you buy at the grocery store. Knowing how to read a food label is essential to seeing past flashy marketing campaigns and determining what is truly a healthy product.

*Is choosing the fat-free always best? Manufacturer often replace the fat they removed with added sugar. Be sure to compare its sugar content with a similar product that contains fat. You may be surprised to find out which one has less sugar in it.

*What's the deal with added sugar and sodium? Many processed and pre-packaged foods need to add salt and/or sugar to maintain their freshness and increase their shelf life. Stick to products in their most natural form, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grain products, lean meats and low-fat dairy.

*How do I read the ingredient list? It is important to note that the ingredient listed first is going to be present in the highest amount. The ingredients are listed in decreasing order. Is sugar the first ingredient? If so, pass on the product. It likely offers few nutrients but lots of calories.

*What make a product organic? It must contain 70% organically produced ingredients in order to be labeled USDA Organic. Organic products are not necessarily healthier than non-organic foods. They are just produced without the use of irradiation, sewage, and genetic engineering. They are not necessarily pesticide-free.

*What food label information matters most? First check out the number of servings listed on the label, paying special attention to the serving size. Next, look at the amount of calories per serving. Then look at the fat (specifically saturated and trans fats), cholesterol, sugars and sodium. You want these values to be low. Finally, high fiber is a good thing. Fiber will keep you satisfied longer.

Nancy C. Nelson
Meadowlark District Agent
Family Life

Champion Cake Recipes Shared from Jackson County Fair

The second year of the Jackson County Fair at the new fairground location south of Holton is now history. There were lots of nice food entries, and the food auction cleared \$2,000.00 for 4-H Council trips and awards and other initiatives.

Faith Bloom who belongs to the Straight Arrows 4-H club exhibited the champion cake. She is in the 6th grade at Wetmore. Faith has greatly enjoyed her first year in 4-H. Her favorite part has been all the time with old and new friends.

Chocolate Chiffon Cake

7 large eggs, separated
1/2 cup baking cocoa
3/4 cup boiling water
1-3/4 cups cake flour
1-3/4 cups sugar
1-1/2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup canola oil
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar

Icing

1/3 cup butter
2 cups confectioners' sugar
2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled
1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
3 to 4 tablespoons hot water
Chopped nuts, optional

Let eggs stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. In a bowl, combine cocoa and water until smooth; cool for 20 minutes.

In large bowl combine flour, sugar, baking soda, and salt. In a bowl, whisk the egg yolks, oil and vanilla; add to dry ingredients along with the cocoa mixture. Beat until well blended. In another large bowl and with clean beaters, beat egg whites and cream of tartar on high speed until stiff peaks form. Gradually fold into egg yolk mixture.

Gently spoon batter into an ungreased 10 inch tube pan. Cut through the batter with a knife to remove air pockets. Bake on lowest oven rack at 325 degrees for 60-65 minutes or until top springs back when lightly touched. Immediately invert cake onto a serving plate.

For icing, melt butter in a saucepan. Remove from heat, stir in the confectioners' sugar, chocolate, vanilla and water. Drizzle over cake. Sprinkle with nuts if desired.

Yield: 16-20 servings

Reserve Champion Cake recognition was awarded to Mary Broxterman of the Hoyt Livewires 4-H Club. She also had the Senior Woodworking Champion exhibit. Mary will be a sophomore at Royal Valley High School. She was on her school's FCCLA team that received a gold at STAR national competition in San Diego in early July.

Chocolate Peanut Butter Swirl Bundt Cake

Ingredients for the chocolate batter:

1 cup sugar
1 egg
1/2 cup milk
1/2 cup + 2 T cocoa powder
1/2 tsp baking soda
1/2 cup boiling water
1/4 cup oil
1 tsp vanilla
3/4 cup + 2 T all-purpose flour
3/4 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp salt

For the peanut butter batter:

1/4 cup butter, room temperature
1 cup sugar
1-1/3 cups self-rising flour
3/4 cup peanut butter
1 egg
1 cup buttermilk

For the peanut butter ganache:

8 oz peanut butter chips
1/2 cup heavy cream

For the chocolate drizzle

3 oz semi-sweet chocolate chips
2 T heavy cream

Pre-heat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour a 9 inch bundt pan. Set aside.

To make the chocolate batter:

1. Cream sugar and oil together in a large bowl until light and fluffy.
2. Beat in egg, vanilla, and milk.
3. In a medium bowl mix together flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.
4. Slowly add flour mixture to oil mixture until well combined.
5. Carefully stir in boiling water.

To make the peanut butter batter:

1. In a large bowl cream together butter, peanut butter and sugar until light and fluffy.
2. Beat in egg.

3. Carefully add in 1/3 of the flour, followed by 1/3 of the buttermilk. Continue alternating flour and buttermilk mixing well between each addition.

To make the cake:

1. Pour a small amount of chocolate batter into the prepared bundt pan. Dot large spoonfuls of peanut butter batter, and top with more chocolate batter. Continue alternating until all batter is in the pan.
2. Remove from pan and cool completely.

To make the peanut butter ganache and chocolate drizzle:

1. Pour peanut butter chips into a medium bowl. Set aside. Pour chocolate chips into another bowl.
2. Heat heavy cream in a small saucepan just until the bubbles form along the edges.
3. Pour 1/2 cup cream over the peanut butter chips and whisk until smooth. Pour ganache over cooled cake.
4. Pour the remaining 2 T cream over chocolate chips and whisk until smooth. Pour chocolate into a small zip top plastic bag. Cut off one corner and drizzle chocolate over the cake.