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CONSUMER CORNER

Storage and Searing tips

Storing food, tip from Sub Zero



Refrigerated apples last up to 10 times longer than those left at room temperature. Apples emit ethylene, a naturally occurring gas that speeds ripening. To prevent apples from speeding up the ripening process of other items in your produce drawer, store them in a plastic bag.

Searing steaks, cooking tip from Wolf



Resist the urge to turn your steaks over repeatedly, as this deprives them of the chance to properly sear. You should turn your steaks once in the cooking process.

BASEBALL TRIVIA

The Answer is:



430,000

Find out the question on Page 3!



Happy Summer!



Simple Steps to a 'Greener' Home Office

Step One

Keep a separate basket for recyclable paper. Don't forget that post-it notes, junk mail and office paper are all recyclable! This makes recycling paper so easy!

Step Two

Cut down on the amount of paper you use in your office by minimizing the amount of printing you do. If you absolutely need to print something, consider using the duplex printing option on your printer to use both sides of a sheet of paper. Today, even low-cost ink jet printers can print on both sides of a sheet of paper.

Step Three

Keep documents and paper mail you receive and use the back side as quick note pads or scratch paper. Even envelopes can be used to jot down a quick note to yourself.

Step Four

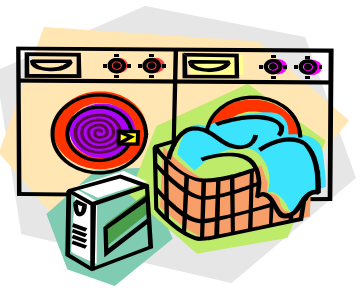
Buy eco-friendly supplies. Large office supply stores are quite eco-conscious and have all kinds of basic supplies made from recycled materials. Recycled printer paper, file folders, ink cartridges and even paper clips are all readily available.

Step Five

Pondering a new computer? Consider getting a laptop rather than a desktop. You'll benefit from the extra convenience of being able to move it from place to place, and some experts indicate a laptop uses only 1/4 of the energy needed for a desktop model. Save even more energy by turning off your computer, modem, printer, etc. at the end of the day.



USEFUL MAJOR APPLIANCE TIPS



Try these tips to get the most out of your major appliances.

FRONT LOAD WASHERS

Studies show that 93% of people with front-load high efficiency washers use too much detergent. How can you tell if you are using too much? That's a great question!

Do your children look like Lawrence Welk's bubble machine when playing outdoors?

Does your husband "suds up" when sweating while mowing the grass or other heavy outdoor chores?

If you answered YES to either of these two questions, you may be using too much detergent. The maximum amount of HE (high-efficiency) detergent - even on the largest loads—is four tablespoons. The 2x concentrate should only use two tablespoons, and on the 3x concentrate even less. When using front-load detergent - **LESS IS USUALLY BETTER!** The machine will work better, tumble better and clean clothes better with less suds. If you suspect you are still using too much detergent, try cutting back by one-half and you may be surprised that your clothes still come out looking great.

This tip should help in doing a better load of laundry, saving money spent on pricey HE detergents and preventing neighborhood folks from laughing at your bubbling kids and soaped-up spouse and may even save a service call due to repetitive use of too much detergent.

REFRIGERATOR ICE MAKERS

Slow icemaker cube production may be due to a dirty or old water filter. When replacing the water filter, it is always a good idea to write the date on the filter with a permanent marker. This way you can always check to see when it was installed. Try using the daylight savings time change to check your water filter as you are checking batteries in your household smoke alarms and CO detectors. Another good tip is to not always rely on the filter alarms or filter reminders because these are not always correct. Severe weather can sometimes cause them to reset.

KITCHEN RANGES

Everyone today is trying to become more efficient. The kitchen is no exception and there are several ways you can reduce the energy cost and increase the life of your kitchen appliances. A torn or poorly-sealing oven door gasket can allow heat to escape into your kitchen, increasing cooking times and making your air conditioner work harder.

Avoid opening your oven door while cooking. 'Oven-peeking' can decrease oven temperatures by 25 degrees or more each time you peek. Don't open the oven door until the minimum recipe time has elapsed. If you want to be sure your oven is calibrated correctly, just call us. When preparing smaller meals, try to avoid using the oven entirely and use an outdoor grill, microwave oven or your stovetop burners instead. A microwave generally uses 50% less energy than a conventional oven. Making small changes in your cooking habits and having your oven working properly are important efficiency boosters.

DISHWASHERS

Run your kitchen's hot water tap before starting the dishwasher to make sure that the first water fill in your machine is hot. Your dirty dishes will appreciate it! Place larger and dirtier items in the bottom rack and position dishes and utensils with the heavily-soiled side facing the water spray source. Avoid nesting silverware by placing some up-some down in the silverware basket. For coupon savings and more dishwasher tips, register at www.finishdishwashing.com/newdishwasher.

BASEBALL TRIVIA



Q. How many sausages will be sold this season at Milwaukee's Miller Park, the only baseball stadium where sausages out-sell hotdogs.

A. 430,000

SPEED CLEANING 101

By Laura Dellutri



Do you have the motivation to clean but never quite feel like it is done? Use these four basic principles and see if you can achieve your cleaning goals without it taking an entire day and umpteen trips up and down the stairs!

- Be organized and have all your supplies on or near you.
- Clean from top to bottom.
- Work the room in a circle and finish one room at a time.
- Don't clean what's already clean.

The best way to learn how not to clean what's already clean is simple: Analyze the cleaning job. Ask yourself: "How dirty is this, and where is it dirty? Does it need a deep cleaning or just a light touch-up?" If it isn't dirty, dust it, shine it and move on.

TOMATOES



SUMMER...time for BLTs and homegrown tomatoes on your burgers but....WHERE DID THE TASTE GO?

Good tasting tomatoes have gone the way of lazy afternoons on the porch swing. Some complain that they have not enjoyed a truly tangy, sweet and juicy tomato since the 1970s. Instead, consumers are calling those that are found at certain times in grocery stores bad names such as "cardboard" or "plastic tomatoes."

Where did the good taste go? Are different kinds of tomatoes being produced? Are they being grown differently or are they simply not allowed thorough ripening before harvest?

Life would be simpler for tomato lovers if rediscovering that wonderful flavor could be accomplished by simply bringing back the old varieties. It is apparently more complicated than that. It's true that breeding for better shipping of more disease resistant varieties has been responsible for harder, less flavorful tomatoes over the past two decades, but there have been other changes.

The New Jersey legislature has been so interested in bringing back the true "Jersey Tomato" that until recently Rutgers University received a small stipend each year specifically dedicated to this quest. The Jersey tomato is renowned for having a sweet/tart taste. This is due to a near perfect balance of sugars (for sweetness) and acids (for tartness) in addition to certain aromatic volatiles. While trying to rediscover this taste, researchers found it in two older varieties - *Ramapo* and *Rutgers*. *Ramapo* was released by Dr. Bernard Pollock of Rutgers University in 1968 and it soon became a favorite of gardeners and local commercial growers. Despite its popularity, commercial seed companies eventually stopped offering it in favor of higher yielding more modern varieties. In 2008, forty years after its introduction, *Ramapo* seed was re-released and has been well received by both home gardeners and commercial growers.

Before we start throwing stones at tomato breeders, let's consider the complexity of the industry. For the past twenty or thirty years the concern has been tomato size, color, yield, firmness and resistance to disease. According to Dr. Jay Scott, a tomato expert with the University of Florida, "to do flavor and get all of the other characteristics is very difficult." Three factors are involved - sugars, acids and aromatic volatiles. There are literally hundreds of volatiles in the chemistry of tomatoes and about 17 of them are known to be important to good tomato taste. (This info excerpted from a recent article by Theresa Friday at www.gulf1.com)



Betcha Didn't Know!

Here are some interesting and helpful household hints gathered from the Internet—from the kitchen to the backyard— that will save you some time and money!

- Take your bananas apart when you get home from the store. If you leave them connected at the stem, they ripen faster.
- Peppers with 3 bumps on the bottom are sweeter and better for eating. Peppers with 4 bumps on the bottom are firmer and better for cooking.
- Add a teaspoon of water to your skillet when frying ground beef. It will help pull the grease away from the meat while cooking.
- Add garlic immediately to a recipe if you want a light taste of garlic and at the end of the recipe if you want a stronger garlic taste.
- Heat up leftover pizza in a nonstick skillet on top of the stove. Set heat to med-low and heat till warm. This keeps the crust crispy. No soggy, tough 'nuked' pizza.
- Venturing out into the great outdoors? Place a dryer sheet in your pocket. It will keep the mosquitoes away.
- To get something out of a heat register or from under the fridge, make your own 'flexible vacuum.' Add an empty paper towel roll or empty gift wrap roll onto your vacuum hose. It can be bent or flattened to get in narrow openings.
- To get rid of pesky fruit flies, take a small glass, fill it 1/2 full with Apple Cider Vinegar and add 2 drops of dish washing liquid; mix well. You will find those flies drawn to the cup and gone forever!
- Store your opened chunks of cheese in aluminum foil. It will stay fresh much longer and not mold!
- To keep squirrels from eating your plants, sprinkle your plants with cayenne pepper. The cayenne pepper doesn't hurt the plant and the squirrels won't come near it.



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