

**WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for May 31, 2021**  
**Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.**

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about gardening and food preservation, and as always, look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

After an unseasonably cold start to the month of May, we have been finishing with unseasonably hot weather. Somewhere in between these extremes, many around the county started planting their vegetable gardens.

Due to stay-at-home orders last spring, gardening was certainly on the rise across the U.S. Longtime gardeners spent even more time in their gardens, and with the newfound time at home, many tried gardening for the first time. Axiom Marketing recently published a 2021 Gardening Insight Survey "Gardening in a COVID-19 World."

According to the survey, 42 percent of gardeners spent more time gardening in 2020. Almost three-quarters of respondents in three age categories (19-28, 29-39, and 40-55) said they spent more time gardening in 2020 with the youngest age categories (19-28 and 29-39) increasing their time the most.

About 82 percent of all respondents felt successful in their gardening efforts. As far as plans to garden this year, 86 percent plan to garden the same amount or more in 2021. Almost all (94 percent) of those energetic 19 to 39-year-olds plan to continue gardening this year as well.

You may remember that canning supplies were in short supply last summer. This was a perfect storm of sorts. Increased home gardening and support of local produce growers led to increased interest in home food preservation. Wacky supply chains for raw materials led to decreased production by manufacturers. That trend is continuing in 2021.

When you find lids for purchase, be aware that not all lids are created equally. Be certain that they are specifically designed for food preservation and not just decorative. And that same advice goes for jars as well.

If you plan to can green beans or other vegetables this summer, you will need to use a pressure canner rather than a water bath canner. This is because a water bath canner does not reach the temperatures necessary to destroy the bacteria that cause botulism. Boiling water reaches 212

degrees Fahrenheit. But temperatures up to 240-250 degrees Fahrenheit, which can only be accomplished under additional pressure, are needed to inactivate these potentially deadly toxin-producing spores.

Some pressure canners use a weighted gauge, some have a dial gauge, and some have both. All of these are valid methods for indicating that proper pressure is reached and maintained during processing. Every dial gauge should be checked for accuracy annually. I will test dial gauges and examine canner lids on Friday, June 11, at the OSU Extension Office and Saturday, July 10, at Auer Ace Hardware. You can register for a time at [coshocton.osu.edu](http://coshocton.osu.edu). This is a free service of Extension. I will answer food preservation questions and have lots of resources available with approved recipes and the most up to date safety recommendations.

As more people get comfortable trying recipes in their electric multicookers (one brand being Instant Pot), I am sometimes asked if this is a safe method for canning. Some owner's manuals list this as a possibility. However, it is unknown if the time and temperature required by USDA approved recipes are being met. Therefore, OSU Extension does not recommend this as a valid canning method.

To address the wide variety of inquiries we get about food preservation, OSU Extension is offering a series of webinars on Tuesday afternoons at 4:00 PM. Topics include Pressure Canning on June 1, Freezing on June 15, and Drying on June 29. You can register for these at [coshocton.osu.edu](http://coshocton.osu.edu)

Other upcoming programs from OSU Extension include the ServSafe® Manager Food Safety Training series will be offered on Thursdays, July 8, 15, and 22 from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., with the proctored exam July 29 at 9:00 a.m. A separate ServSafe® Person-in-Charge certification training will be Monday, August 2 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Pre-registration is required at [coshocton.osu.edu](http://coshocton.osu.edu).

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help improve our families, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at [coshocton.osu.edu](http://coshocton.osu.edu). We are grateful for the dedication and sacrifice of our armed services for our nation. On this special day, make it a reflective and healthy day!