

WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for October 25, 2021
Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.

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

It is comforting and satisfying to walk in the door after a long day at work and be hit with an aroma that means dinner is ready to serve. My Extension colleague in Washington County, Amanda Bohlen, has been celebrating "Crock-tober Fest" the entire month of October. Each day she has posted a new slow cooker recipe on their website. From apples to zucchini and everything in between, there is a variety of slow cooker entrées and sides, and even beverage and dessert options.

When it comes to using my slow cooker, I'll admit I am boring. Roasts or poultry with some vegetables or a hearty soup are usually the extent of my repertoire. This Crock-tober Fest list has expanded my horizons to think outside the crock. In case you are searching for some new dinner options, here are a few to try.

The Slow Cooker French Toast would be a great brunch item. One thing I like is that prep happens the day before. Cubed bread is combined with an egg mixture and then refrigerated overnight. In the morning simply butter the slow cooker, add in the eggy bread, and top with cinnamon and brown sugar. In as little as 2 hours, you can enjoy it with maple syrup and fresh fruit.

The Breakfast Casserole is ideal to prep the night before and then slowly cook until morning as it takes 6-8 hours on low heat. Using low-fat milk, reduced-fat cheese, and lower sodium bacon are all ways to reduce total calories and create a dish that is better for your heart than with full fat and higher sodium ingredients.

The Bean Pot Medley is definitely getting added to my list. Beans are a rich source of protein and fiber. This recipe is a great combination of black beans, red beans, Great Northern beans, black-eyed peas and lima beans with onions and peppers and a sweet and sour sauce.

There is also recipe for Bean and Cornbread Casserole, where the cornbread cooks right on top of the beans in the slow cooker. I love that this recipe calls for no-salt-added tomatoes and

tomato sauce. One way to make many of these convenience recipes healthier is to drain and rinse beans and choose low sodium options when using canned vegetables.

The Fruit and Nut Baked Apples recipe has little added sugar as it calls for no-sugar-added jam and brown sugar Splenda. Leaving the peel on most of the apple adds valuable fiber. With chopped nuts and a touch of butter, these are simple to pop in the slow cooker during the afternoon and enjoy on a chilly autumn evening.

Warm Berry Cobbler is another healthy dessert option when you are craving something sweet. The cobbler batter is poured in the bottom of the slow cooker and mixed berries are added on top. If you keep a bag of frozen berries (or peaches) in your freezer, this can be a quick dessert to prepare with little notice as it cooks on low for less than 3 hours. This would pair perfectly with a small scoop of vanilla or cinnamon ice cream.

Are you hungry yet? If so, check out these recipes at coshocton.osu.edu or contact our office, and we would be happy to send you copies. Here's hoping you have time in the next few weeks to slow down and warm up with one of these tasty, convenient recipes.

I will be teaching a Holiday Jams and Jellies Class at Clary Gardens on Thursday, November 4. We'll be making some uniquely flavored jams and jellies, perfect for Christmas gifts- including Pomegranate Jelly, Carrot Cake Jam, and Low-Sugar Apple Pie Jam. You can find registration information on our website, coshocton.osu.edu.

Does the holiday season stress you out instead of making you smile? Do you feel like you don't have time to spend doing the important things? Join Ohio State University Extension for the "Play Your Way Through the Holidays" 6-week email wellness challenge to learn more about these and other wellness topics. The email challenge connects participants with tips, research, and resources to help you navigate life so you can spend time doing things that are truly important to you. Sign up for this free program on our website, coshocton.osu.edu.

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and 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. Make it a healthy day!