2011 Communication Awards ~ Written Press Release
Program Outline

A. CATEGORY: Written Press Release

B. SUBJECT/ISSUE: Healthy Tailgating

C. TARGET AUDIENCE: Adults who participate in tailgating parties and social events.

D. WHERE THE PROGRAM HAS BEEN USED: The article was written as “Special Contributor” to the Jacksonville Daily Progress. The article appeared on Sunday, November 21, 2010, at the height of tailgating season. The article addressed the importance of eating a healthy and balanced diet especially when entertaining or attending social events, such as tailgating. Individuals generally do not stop and think that foods consumed while tailgating can blow months of striving to stay on the healthy eating track.

E. NUMBER OF PEOPLE REACHED: 3500
F. IMPACT ON PARTICIPANTS/CLIENTELE/AUDIENCE: Readers received solid, researched-based information on selecting healthy options in a non-threatening humorous style. Feedback from readers was positive, and many visited our website where they were able to print off selected recipes.

G. RESOURCES USED: Subject matter resources include the NetWellness (University of Cincinnati, The Ohio State University and Case Western Reserve University), Southern Living and HealthCastle.com.

H. PERCENTAGE OF THE INFORMATION WRITTEN/PREPARED BY APPLICANT: Wendi Green wrote 100 percent of the information found in the column. Approximately 30 percent was based on personal experience and an additional 5 percent from interviews with ardent tailgaters. The remainder came from cited sources.

I. INFORMATION FROM UNIVERSITY AND/OR USDA SOURCES: Case Western Reserve University, The Ohio State University and University of Cincinnati

J. HOW EXTENSION SERVICE IS IDENTIFIED: Texas AgriLife Extension Service is identified in the byline of the column, the second paragraph and the last paragraph of the article.
November 16, 2010

Tailgating...Not Just for Football Anymore!

Tailgating has become a nation-wide phenomenon. We now have tailgating websites, contests, newsletters, books and now we even have a magazine dedicated solely to tailgaters. In fact, this year the magazine is conducting an official census of what is known as tailgating nation. They are tracking the culture and lifestyle of tailgaters. Tailgaters are a breed all their own with special equipment, clothing, decorations and, of course food.

The only official rules usually will come from the venue itself. It’s important to check with those officials for the various rules that might be in effect. The Cherokee County Texas AgriLife Extension website (http://cherokee-tx.tamu.edu/) has some low-fat version recipes and the East Texas version of rules.

So...what happens when you tailgate?: You play games, you socialize, you eat, drink and more importantly, you show your team spirit. Now tailgating is not just for football anymore. What started with football now includes all sports from high school through professional as well as concerts and NASCAR. I recently read an article of the Santa Fe Opera’s opening night tailgate party complete with formal cocktail attire. The most unusual story was a wedding rehearsal tailgate party. All I can say is that couple must have been some serious sports fans!

But, besides all the fun and games, and decorating, the next most important aspect would be the FOOD! For those of us trying to eat healthy, this brings about fear that we are really going to blow it every weekend for months as we tailgate our way through a sports season. We ask the question... “Is it possible to socialize without blowing your diet?” So what can you do to keep on track and help others do so as well? All foods can be enjoyed in moderation, but here are some concrete suggestions that will assist in making your next tailgate party a healthy success.

- Have a small nutritious snack BEFORE you head out. Such as half a sandwich, fruit, veggies or even a big glass of water. Water is really good, especially if it is hot outside. This will help you stay hydrated and being outside during hot weather you run the risk of becoming dehydrated rather quickly, especially if alcohol and high salt foods are involved.
- Try preparing tasty, low-fat foods to take.
- Don’t be afraid to grill up a storm – fresh vegetables taste even better when grilled. Add extra veggies on your kabobs to cut calories and fat, but not the taste. Marinate them
• Ahead of time in fat-free teriyaki, sesame or Italian dressing for extra flavor. Try brushing veggies lightly with olive oil and rosemary.
• When grilling meats try substituting skinless chicken, seafood or game meats which are much lower in fat. Simply using cubed skinless chicken instead of chicken wings, you will easily save 400 calories per serving.
• Step back and look at all the choices before diving in and eating it all. That’s when we have regrets the next day that we really blew it once again.
• Try serving foods with a healthier twist. For example, Turkey Brats – 160 calories and 9 grams of fat versus 450 calories and 37 grams of fat when serving the pork variety. They can still be cooked the same way. What about grilled chicken sandwiches instead of burgers – beef has 500 calories and 43 grams of fat while the grilled chicken will have 281 calories and 6 grams of fat.
• Look at ways to make your dips healthier. Salsa instead of queso on top of baked chips. Just 2 tablespoons of cheese dip has 40 calories and 2.5 grams of fat, while the heart healthy salsa offers 10 calories 0 grams of fat. Try light or reduced-fat versions of sour cream and mayo when making your own dips. This will leave in all the flavor and less fat and calories. Besides baked chips, offer fresh vegetables to dip with. Pretzels are a great snacking alternative to chips; they are lower in fat and calories.
• Chili may be your stand-by, how about substituting extra-lean ground beef or turkey and add in beans. Beans add extra fiber as well.
• Think your drink! Drinking plenty of water will not only fill you up, but leaves less room for overindulgence on fatty foods. The average bottle of soda has 17 Tbsp. of sugar. You can always add in a low-calories powdered mixer for some flavor.
• If you wouldn’t serve it at home when you are trying to eat healthy, then don’t serve it while tailgating. The real key is self control. Tell yourself you will remain in control and not over-eat or over-drink. Survey the food options, and make the healthiest choices for both food and drink. The next day, you will thank yourself. The friendships and camaraderie at the event are the real focus for any true tailgater.
• And last, but certainly not least, toss out any food that has been unrefrigerated from more than two hours. If the temperature is above 90, toss after 1 hour. Have towelettes or hand sanitizer for guest to use. The last thing you want at your party is for someone to get sick from contaminated food.
Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U. S. Department of Agriculture, and the County commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating

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