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FAMU COOPERATIVE EXTENSION PROGRAM

Celebrates the 100th Anniversary of Florida Cooperative Extension Services 1914-2014

The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 established the Cooperative Extension Service, which allows us all to benefit from the knowledge of our land-grant universities.

As a unit of the Florida Cooperative Extension Service, FAMU Cooperative Extension program is responsible for coordinating activities and events of mutual benefit with the University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences (IFAS).
WASHINGTON, January 6, 2014 - Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture's intent to purchase up to $126.4 million worth of fruit and vegetable products, to be distributed to needy families under The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). The products to be purchased include tart cherries, processed apples, cranberries, fresh tomatoes, wild blueberries, and raisins. This purchase will expand efforts to provide high-quality, wholesome, domestically-produced foods to support low-income families in need of emergency food assistance.

"Food distribution programs are a vital part of our Nation's nutrition safety net, and today's food purchases will give communities additional means to help those in need." Vilsack said. "A comprehensive Farm Bill is absolutely critical to these efforts, and Congress should adequately support feeding programs for American families by passing a new Farm Bill as soon as possible."

Foods distributed through TEFAP are either purchased with funds appropriated specifically for TEFAP, or are procured through USDA's market support programs. The foods are provided to states for distribution to local agencies, such as food banks. These local agencies further distribute the food to organizations, such as food pantries and soup kitchens that provide communal meals or distribute foods directly to low-income families.

The purchase announced today is part of the surplus removal program, which allows USDA to purchase foods in order to help stabilize prices in agricultural commodity markets by balancing supply and demand, while providing healthy food to low-income households. Products purchased in the past year have included fruit, vegetables, catfish, lamb, turkey, and chicken. Surplus products are provided to TEFAP, as well as the National School Lunch Program, the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, and other USDA nutrition assistance programs.

Nearly 90 healthy products - including canned fruits and vegetables, dried beans, grains and pasta products, milk, juice, and meat products – are provided through TEFAP to local soup kitchens, food pantries, and community action agencies across the country. A recent analysis found that TEFAP foods achieved a score 89 out of 100 on the Health Eating Index, a measure of diet quality based on the Federal Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

In Fiscal Year 2013, Congress appropriated $311.34 million for TEFAP – $265.75 million for food and $45.59 million for administrative support for States and local agencies. In addition to these funds, TEFAP receives surplus foods purchased through USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) to support American agricultural markets. In FY 2013, 366.3 million pounds of food purchased for TEFAP through the congressional appropriation and another 270.8 million pounds of food through AMS surplus removal efforts. Surplus food purchases for TEFAP in FY 2013 totaled $228.51 million.

USDA provides food for TEFAP to states according to the number of unemployed persons and people living below the poverty level. States set the income standards for the program, and can adjust the eligibility criteria to ensure that assistance is provided only to those most in need.

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service oversees the administration of 15 nutrition assistance programs, including TEFAP, that touch the lives of one in four Americans over the course of a year. These programs work together to form a national safety net against hunger. Visit www.fns.usda.gov for information about FNS and nutrition assistance programs.

Courtesy of USDA Newsroom. Release No. 0002.14
The History of Hot Peppers

Hot peppers or Chili peppers as they are commonly called are fruits of plants from the genus Capsicum and the Solanaceae family. Hot peppers have been a part of the human diet as a staple food or medicinal item since around 7500 BC. Archaeological evidence indicates that hot peppers were cultivated more than 6000 years ago, and were one of the first crops cultivated in Central and South America (Collyns, 2007; Bosland, 1998). The modern crave for hot peppers dates back to medieval times, during the height of the ‘spice trade’. In an effort to gain a competitive advantage in the spice market, the Spanish relied on non-traditional spices brought back from the western hemisphere by Christopher Columbus and other 15th century pioneers. The name hot pepper originated from the fact that the pungency of the berries brought back from the western world and used primarily for seasoning the dishes of the European aristocracy, reminded early Europeans of black pepper, thus the origin of the name ‘hot pepper’ (Andrews, 1995). Before the arrival of Christopher Columbus to the western hemisphere in 1492, hot peppers had long been a staple commodity in the diets of Caribbean Indians. Conversely, in Europe, only the wealthy could afford to consume hot peppers. In medieval Europe, hot peppers and other spices were equally as important as gold, in terms of their economic value. Black pepper, in particular, was so craved after that its peppercorns were counted and valued individually to maximize profits (Andrews, 1995).

The tradition of using hot peppers for food or medicine has not changed much. Following the Christopher Columbus era, many cultivars of hot peppers are being cultivated worldwide and are still being used primarily for food or medicinal purposes. India is the largest producer, consumer and exporter of hot peppers and has factored capsaicin, the source of heat in hot peppers, into their biological and pharmaceutical products. The transition of hot peppers into value added products is evident in almost every aspect of our daily lives. Modern societies have seen the transition of hot peppers into confectionery: as can be seen in ice creams, jams, jellies and cookies; to salsas and hot sauces and even to pharmaceuticals, biological and law enforcement weapons, as can be seen in topical arthritis rubs, pepper sprays and mace. The rich tradition of hot peppers will continue to evolve. However, their value as an economic commodity is here to stay.

REFERENCES

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FENNEL is a member of the carrot or parsley family and is related to cumin, dill, caraway and anise, all of which bear aromatic fruits that are commonly called seeds.

A biennial or perennial, fennel sends up four or five smooth stalks, hollow but containing a white pith, and bearing feathery, finely divided linear foliage on clasping leafstalks; blooming in large, flat umbels of golden yellow flowers in late summer, which ripen to gray-brown seed. Plants can reach just under 6 feet in height. The vegetable fennel which is shown here is shorter, growing to only 2 feet.

As a larval plant for the swallowtail butterfly, fennel can be grown in butterfly gardens. Swallowtail caterpillars will feed on the leaves without overtaking and destroying the plant.

It is a highly aromatic and flavorful herb with culinary and medicinal uses, along with the similar-tasting anise; it is one of the primary ingredients of absinthe an anise flavored spirit bottled at a high level of alcohol by volume. For cooking, green seeds are optimal. The bulb is a crisp, hardy root vegetable and may be sautéed, stewed, braised, grilled, or eaten raw. Fennel pollen is the most potent form, but also the most expensive. Applications for fennel pollen range from dusting over pizza, pasta and risotto to rubbing on wild salmon or roasts. It can be that extra special ingredient in seafood stews, salads, added to bread dough or used to dress olives. Powdered Fennel has the effect of driving away fleas from kennels and stables. Fennel water mixed with sodium bicarbonate and syrup, constitute the domestic ‘Gripe Water,’ used to correct the flatulence of infants.

Reference
Herb Society of America
In 2012, Mrs. Vonda Richardson became the first female to serve as head administrator in Florida A&M University Cooperative Extension Programs, currently serving as Interim Director.

In 2011, under a cooperative agreement between FAMU Cooperative Extension and USDA/APHIS, over 1600 Socially Disadvantaged (SDA) Farmers/Ranchers were identified in the state of Florida.

For more DID YOU KNOW trivia facts, please follow us on Twitter at @FAMUEExt and “Like” us on Facebook.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations and welcome,
Dr. Elmira Mangum.
The newly-appointed 11th President of Florida A&M University.

Welcome to The Hill, Dr. Mangum!
Florida A&M University
College of Agriculture and Food Sciences
Cooperative Extension Program

Cordially invites you to attend
The Kickoff Celebration of the
100th Anniversary of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914

Friday, January 31, 2014
At 12:00 p.m.
Perry Paige Auditorium
1740 South Martin Luther King, Jr Blvd
Tallahassee, Florida 32307

Reception to follow
RSVP by January 27, 2014 at (850) 599-3546
122nd Annual Farmers Conference

February 20-21, 2014

Kellogg Conference Center

Tuskegee University - Tuskegee, Alabama

The Farmers Conference at Tuskegee University is often cited as the oldest event of its type in the nation. The first Farmers Conference, originally called the “Peoples Conference” was hosted on this historic campus on February 23, 1892. This conference exists today as a two-day educational forum that features tours, panel discussions, interactive demonstrations and concurrent workshops.

These sessions address emerging issues surrounding small farmers, farm families and rural communities. Unique conference features and events include but are not limited to:

- Annual Meeting of the State Extension Advisory Council
- Sustainable Practices for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Workshop
- T.M. Campbell Memorial Banquet
- Merit Farm Family Luncheon

For more information contact:
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Website: www.tuskegee.edu/farmersconference
“A Tuskegee Tradition since 1892”
CRD Team: Winter Harvest 2013

W. T. Moore Elementary School, Tallahassee, FL
December 2013 Harvest
Bond Elementary School, Tallahassee, FL
November 2013 Harvest

Magnolia Terrace Community, Tallahassee, FL
November 2013 Harvest

CRD Team Members:
Kieandra Nelson, Ardis Miller,
Andre Jackson and
Sandra Thompson (Program Leader)
The Florida A&M University Cooperative Extension Program is an equal employment/educational opportunity access organization which provides research-based educational information and other services only to eligible individuals and institutions regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status.

Dr. Robert Taylor, Dean and Director of Land Grant Programs, College of Agriculture and Food Sciences (CAFS)
Vonda Richardson, Interim Director, Cooperative Extension Programs
Dr. Lawrence Carter, Director of Special Outreach Programs
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