

April-June
2018

Spring Cleaning for
the Pantry and Re-
frigerator! P. 2

In the Kitchen

P. 5-6

Did you know?

- More than half the desserts worldwide contain vanilla?
- Vanilla is the most labor intensive agricultural crop in the world?
- Vanilla takes up to three years after vines are planted before the first flowers appear, and the fruit must remain on the vine for nine months before it can be harvested.
- For more information go to pages: 3-5.



***Calling all Artists,
Food Preservers and Craft
People!***

The Santa Fe County Fair

Indoor Entry Times and Dates:

- Monday, July 23rd 12-7:00 Adult Check In
- Saturday, July 28th, 9-12:00 Adult Check In
Baked Goods.
- Monday, July 30, 3-7:00, Quilt Check In.

Mark your Calendars!



Welcome Back Quilters!

The College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences is an engine for economic and community development in New Mexico, improving the lives of New Mexicans through academic, research, and extension programs.

Planning Some Spring Cleaning? A Check List for a Food-Safe Pantry and Refrigerator

The refrigerator and pantry are where most people store their food. But these storage areas may also be one of the less frequently cleaned places in your home, which could be hazardous to your health.

The refrigerator is one of the most important pieces of equipment in the kitchen. Without it, our food would spoil and could make us sick. Refrigerators should be set to maintain a temperature between 34° and 40°F to preserve our foods. Setting the refrigerator temperature too low will cause your refrigerator to work overtime and could also freeze some of your foods. Many of today's advanced refrigerators have built-in thermostats that measure their internal temperature. If your fridge does not have a built-in thermostat, you should keep an appliance thermometer inside in a visible place to monitor the temperature.

Here are some tips to make your fridge (and your home) more healthy and safe:

- **Clean spills immediately** – Clean surfaces thoroughly with warm, soapy water; then rinse. Do not use solvent cleaning agents or abrasives, as these may allow chemical fumes/tastes into your food and ice cubes and make them unsafe to eat.
- **Store leftovers safely** – Throw out perishable foods that have spoiled and no longer can be eaten. Leftovers like meatloaf, pizza or casseroles shouldn't be left in the refrigerator more than four days. Refrigerate raw poultry and ground meats for no more than one to two days.
- **Clean the exterior** – Keep your refrigerator free of dust and lint. Clean the condenser coil several times a year with a brush or vacuum cleaner to remove dirt, lint or other accumulations to ensure efficiency and maintain proper temperature.

Cleaning your pantry will save you money by keeping you aware of what you have and help you avoid a pantry insect infestation. It will also ensure your foods are safe to consume.

Here are some tips for a clean, bug-free pantry:

- **Check your cans** – Discard cans that are leaking, rusted, bulging or badly dented. Never use food from cracked jars, jars with loose or bulging lids, or any container that spurts liquid when you open it.
- **Throw out any food you suspect is spoiled** – Never taste food to determine its safety. Wipe off sticky containers, along with crumbs and spills on your pantry shelves with all-purpose cleaner, vinegar, or warm soap and water.
- **Check the dates on your foods** – **“USE by”** date indicates that perishable products should be consumed by the date listed on the package or discarded once the date has passed. **“BEST if Used By”** date informs shoppers that after the specified date, the shelf-stable product is safe to use or consume, but has exceeded the window of its optimal taste or performance.
- High-acid canned food such as tomatoes, grapefruit and pineapple have a shelf life of 12 to 18 months beyond their listed dates. Low-acid canned food such as meat, poultry, fish and most vegetables can be kept for two to five years beyond their listed dates — if the can remains in good condition and has been stored in a cool, clean and dry place. **HINT: TAPE “USE BY” INFORMATION TO THE INSIDE OF YOUR PANTRY.**

Byline: Clara Yuvienco, Food Safety Education Staff, Food Safety and Inspection Ser-

Vanilla

The vanilla bean contains between 250 and 300 compounds that together create its intoxicating fragrance and flavor. There's no such thing as "plain vanilla"!

WHY GOOD VANILLA COSTS SO MUCH

The vanilla plant, native to Mexico, is a fruit-bearing orchid. That's right—the vanilla pod, which is picked, cured, and dried into the bean we use for baking, is technically a fruit. So why does a little vial of vanilla beans or a few ounces of pure extract often cost more than \$10? A vanilla plant blossoms only one day a year, during a 12-to-16-hour window, and when that happens, it has to be pollinated by hand, Nielsen says. Miss that time frame, and the plant won't produce any vanilla beans.

And then there's the labor-intensive, months-long curing process. In the three regions that produce quality vanilla—Madagascar, which leads in production, Mexico, and Tahiti—this involves rotating beans in the sun and shade to dry and "sweat" (a process in which the beans are kept in a hot, humid environment for several days to deepen their flavor and aroma).

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WHY CHEAP VANILLA IS SO CHEAP

In Indonesia, second to Madagascar in production, beans are harvested en masse regardless of whether or not they're ripe, and blasted with kerosene heat to speed up curing, resulting in a higher volume of cheaper product.

As for "imitation vanilla," which we'll get to in a minute, it contains—gasp!—no actual vanilla.

IT'S ON THE LABEL

How do you know which vanilla you're getting? The label on whole beans and extracts will specify the origin. If it doesn't, as is the case with a typical supermarket extract labeled "Pure Vanilla Extract," it's a blend of Indonesian and other vanillas, Nielsen says.

THE FLAVOR WHEEL

Madagascar vanilla, also known as Bourbon vanilla, has a classic, complex vanilla flavor. (The name refers not to booze but to what was once called Bourbon Island near Madagascar.)

"If you can only have one vanilla, make it Madagascar because it's the most universal within recipes," Nielsen says.

Tahitian vanilla is floral and fruity. It comes from a different species of the vanilla plant that yields a plumper bean. Mexican vanilla has some spice to it; Nielsen prefers this for holiday baking season. Indonesian vanilla is sharp and smoky-tasting because of how it's processed.

VANILLA EXTRACT

Vanilla extract, made by steeping beans in alcohol, must by law be 35 percent alcohol. Under FDA rules, it can also contain sugar, glycerin, propylene glycol, dextrose, and/or corn syrup. Check the label; the fewer the ingredients, the better.

A typical commercial extract takes three to five days to make, moved along by heat and/or pressure. Vanilla beans are chopped into small pieces both by hand and machine and added to a giant urn where they sit in alcohol.

“Imitation vanilla” is purely synthetic. It’s made from a chemical called guaiacol or from wood pulp (yes, really) and replicates vanillin, one of those 250 naturally occurring flavor compounds in true vanilla.

It’ll take months, but you can make your own extract by storing scraped-out vanilla beans in a bottle of vodka.

VANILLA PASTE

Sold in jars, vanilla paste is a mix of vanilla bean and extract, sugar, water, and a natural thickening gum. Pastry chefs dig this stuff because it’s basically a replacement for splitting and scraping a vanilla bean. A tablespoon of paste is equal to one bean, or it can be used as a one-to-one replacement for vanilla extract.

VANILLA POWDER

This is made by spraying vanilla extract onto maltodextrin, a starch. It can replace vanilla extract measure for measure, and it’s colorless, so it won’t add that tinge of tan that an extract does.

VANILLA SUGAR

This extract-infused sugar is made in a similar way to vanilla powder, but it’s more subtle in flavor than extract. It can sub for regular sugar or be used as a layering ingredient or topping.

For a DIY version, bury spent vanilla beans in sugar and let them do their thing. Vanilla Extract lasts a REALLY long time; just shake it if there is sediment in the bottom. Vanilla beans, past, sugar, and powder will last a while as well—

One to two years for beans and two to three years for the rest. The key is storing them in dry, cool, dark place.

www.epicurious.com, by Janet Rausa Fuller, 4/20/16

Madagascar Bourbon beans come from Madagascar’s Bourbon islands, and their sweet, creamy flavor is what we tend to think of as classic. This is a great all-purpose vanilla for using in any sweet or savory dish.

Mexican beans have a sweet, creamy flavor but with a bit of a spicy character, like clove or nutmeg. The flavor pairs well with spices like cinnamon and cloves, as well as chocolate and spicy chilies, salsas or barbecue sauces.

Indonesian beans have a smoky, woody flavor and aroma. Extracts are delicious in cookies and chocolate.

Tahitian beans have a fruity, floral flavor with cherry and anise-like notes, which means they work with fruit and are also excellent in ice creams, custards and drinks. This isn’t just because of Tahiti’s growing conditions, though. While Madagascar, Mexican and Indonesian beans come from the same type of vanilla orchid (the climbing vine whose flowers produce vanilla pods), Tahiti has its own variety. The beans, are distinctly plump.

Classic Vanilla Rice Pudding (eggless)

Ingredients:

- 3 cups of whole milk - a full fat milk like whole will give the best results - anything low fat will be thin and runny.
- 1/3 cup of uncooked rice (we used Jasmine)
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- cinnamon



Instructions

1. In a sauce pan, bring milk to a boil.
2. Add rice and stir well.
3. Cook covered with lid cracked for 40 minutes - 1 hour over medium heat, stirring every 15 minutes or so.
4. Mixture should be thickened.
5. Add sugar and vanilla and stir.
6. Let sit for 10 minutes to allow sugar to dissolve and flavors to blend.
7. Sprinkle with cinnamon, if desired.

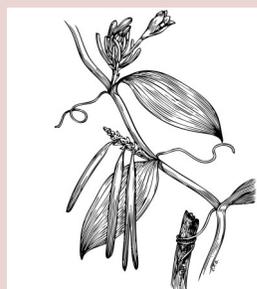
Vanilla Bean Rice Pudding

This rich, creamy pudding is delicious served warm or cold. If you feel like dressing up the dessert a bit, add a cinnamon stick while the rice is cooking, or top the finished pudding with a sprinkling of raisins and a little freshly grated nutmeg just before serving.

YIELD: Makes 6 to 8 servings

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cups water
- 3/4 cup basmati rice
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3 cups whole milk
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 vanilla bean, split lengthwise



PREPARATION :

Bring 1 1/2 cups water, rice, and salt to simmer in heavy large saucepan over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to low; cover. Simmer until water is absorbed, about 10 minutes. Add milk, cream, and sugar. Scrape in seeds from vanilla bean; add bean. Increase heat to medium; cook uncovered until rice is tender and mixture thickens slightly to a soft, creamy texture, stirring occasionally, about 35 minutes. Remove pudding from heat and discard vanilla bean. Divide pudding evenly among small bowls. Serve warm or press plastic wrap directly onto surface of each pudding and chill thoroughly. **DO AHEAD:** Pudding can be made 2 days ahead. Keep refrigerated. BY MOLLY WIZENBERG BON APPÉTIT MARCH 2009



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