

PANHANDLE PATH TO HEALTHY LIVING

JULY 2021



TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE

Ways to Save

- Thermostat settings can be a hot topic, especially as Texas heat hovers around triple digits. Try adjusting your thermostat 4 degrees higher to use up to 20% less energy.*
- Making small changes throughout your home can help you find valuable savings. Turn your blinds upward to reduce incoming heat.
- Run your fans counterclockwise.
- *Texas summers are long and hot. Tips and tools to help you save all season long.*
- Change your air filters regularly, especially if you have pets.
- Run larger appliances in the morning or after sundown.
- Use a grill, slow cooker or Instant Pot instead of the oven.

Kelli Behman

ENERGY USERS



LOW

Ceiling Fan & Stove

A fan doesn't use much electricity, but it lets you raise the thermostat about 4° without reducing any comfort.

Be sure to turn it off when you leave though. Fans cool people, not rooms.

Try grilling more. Cooking outdoors means your stove and oven can sit one out.



MEDIUM

Lighting & Home Media

Some appliances use electricity even when they're off.

Older bulbs use more too. Use LED bulbs. They're 75% more efficient than some other bulbs.

Plug electronics into a power strip and shut the strip off when it's not in use.

Take advantage of natural sunlight when you can.

Fridge and Dryer

Efficiency is key – avoid keeping your fridge too cold and your dryer running for too long.

Set your fridge temp between 35-38° and your freezer at 0° so it's not too cold.

Clean the coils on the bottom or back of your fridge monthly.

Give your dryer a break - hang washed clothes outdoors or lay flat to dry inside.



HIGH

A/C & Electric Heat

This is the biggest driver by far of your home's electricity use.

When it's hot out, raise your thermostat by 4° to use up to 20% less electricity. When it's cold, lower it by 4° to use up to 15% less.

Set a reminder to clean or replace your filter every 3 months.

Water Heater

Most people don't realize that heating water uses lots of energy. Lower it to 120°. Going on vacation? Turn it off. Take shorter showers – you'll save water and energy. Wash your clothes in cold water to cut your washer's energy usage in half.

Other Top User Tips

Separate Freezer & Fridge
Unplug them if you aren't using them. The average cost to run a 2nd fridge is about \$70 annually and for a freezer it's about \$60.

How to Pick a Perfect Watermelon



**Uniform Size
& Heavy**
Sweet



Elongated
Watery



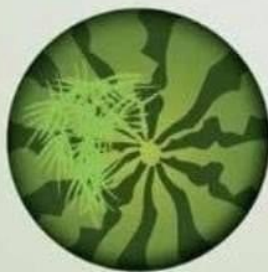
**Orange
Field Spot**
Full of Flavor



**White
Field Spot**
Little to No Taste



**Smaller
“Webbing”**
Bland



**Larger
“Webbing”**
Sweet



Dark & Dull
Ripe



Shiny
Not Ripe



HarvestTime
Simply Fresh

DID YOU KNOW?

Yellow watermelons lack lycopene, which is the chemical that produces a reddish color in fruits and vegetables like tomatoes and red grapefruit. While the large amounts of lycopene in red watermelon give it a pinkish-red inside, the lack of lycopene in yellow watermelon yields a yellowish color.

Surprisingly, yellow watermelon was cultivated before red watermelon. Yellow watermelons were bred to have higher lycopene content once watermelon became more popular, which turned it redder over-

time. Originating in Africa, this yellowish kind of watermelon is said to have a somewhat sweeter flavor and a thicker rind than its red cousin.

In terms of nutritional value, yellow watermelon amounts to about 46 calories in a cup and makes for a wonderful snack. Similar to red watermelon, yellow watermelon is high in vitamins A and C, which can support the immune system and skin health. Unlike red watermelon, yellow watermelon contains more beta-carotene, which is an antioxidant that may protect against cancer and eye diseases.

Leftover Safety Guidelines

Preparing Leftovers to Refrigerate or Freeze

- Refrigerate or freeze within in 2 hours after cooking
- Cool food before placing in the refrigerator or freezer
- Divide large cuts of meat or items in shallow containers for quicker cooling
- Wrap in tight packing or an air tight storage container
- Label packaging with a date to know when to use it or toss it
- Refrigerate at 40 degrees or below or Freeze at Zero degrees

Thawing Leftovers Safely

- Refrigerator method takes the longest but is the safest
- Cold water thawing is a little quicker - Food should be placed in a leak-proof package or bag and water should be changed every 30 minutes
- Microwave method is the quickest
- After thawing use food within the leftover storage guidelines

Heating Leftovers

- Heat to 165 degrees
- Reheat soups, sauces and gravies to a rolling boil
- Cover the leftovers to keep in the moisture, making sure it gets heated all the way through when heating in the microwave
- Cover and rotate food for even heating

Refreezing Previously Frozen Leftovers

Safely freeze the food after reheating to 165 degrees and freeze following above guidelines

"According to the Centers of Disease Control (CDC) there are 48 million cases of foodborne illness yearly equivalent to 1 of 6 Americans"

*"Annually 30 - 40% of food in the U.S. is wasted
Approximately 20 lbs per month/person = \$165 billion in food waste each year"
Source: U.S. Food & Drug Administration*

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Sources: <https://www.fda.gov> & www.fightbac.org

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BETTER LIVING
FOR TEXANS
TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

Path to Randall County



Quit itchin' to pitch out old panty hose!

Reuse those hose from hips to toes.

Think you're ready to give your tired, worn, and/or holey panty hose the old heave ho? Well, you can forget that noise—move 'em to your shed instead. You never know when they'll come in handy...in and around your yard and garden!



- Use old nylon stockings as tethers for staking tender young trees and other new plants without chafing the bark. Gently tie up vines and floppy plants with strips of panty hose, too.
- To protect grape clusters from bugs and birds, wrap the ripening fruit in the cut-off feet of panty hose.
- When collecting rainwater, cover the downspout with an old piece of panty hose, and fasten it in place with a sturdy rubber band. That way, the water that winds up in your rain barrel will be debris-free.
- Fasten a panty hose foot to the end of a garden hose, and you'll have a terrific diffuser for gently watering delicate container plants and baby seedlings.
- To keep rabbits and other small varmints out of your vegetable garden, wrap bunches of dog or cat hair in old nylon stockings, and hang them in various areas. The critters will think that Fido or Fifi is on patrol.

WATERMELON

What fruit comes to mind when you think of summer time? Watermelon! Watermelon is delicious, and it's super healthy!

- The USDA developed the classic variety of watermelon, called Charleston Grey, in 1954.
- Texas, Florida, Georgia & California grow 66% of the watermelon in the U.S.
- Watermelons are commercially grown in 44 different states!

Sources: <https://myplate-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/2020-12/Watermelon%20Fact%20Card%20%282017%29.pdf>
<https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/seasonal-produce-guide/watermelon>
To learn more, visit: pathtotheplate@tamu.edu

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION PATH TO THE PLATE



TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

Panhandle Path to Healthy Living is a Family and Community Health information resource for area families in the Texas Panhandle Counties. The newsletter is published monthly. Readers are encouraged to read the newsletter and then pass it on. Any information may be reproduced for education purposes in any form and credit cited appropriately.



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Path to Plate..... **Watermelon Salad with Feta & Mint**

Ingredients

Dressing

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons lime juice
- 1/2 garlic clove, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt

For the salad

- 5 cups cubed watermelon
- 1 heaping cup diced English cucumber
- 1/4 cup thinly sliced red onions
- 1/3 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 avocado, cubed
- 1/3 cup torn mint or basil leaves
- 1/2 jalapeño or serrano pepper, thinly sliced, optional
- Sea salt

Instructions

Make the dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, lime juice, garlic and salt.

Arrange the watermelon, cucumber, and red onions on a large plate or platter. Drizzle with half the dressing. Top with the feta, avocado, mint, and serrano pepper, if using, and drizzle with remaining dressing. Season to taste and serve.

Serves 4

