

# EVERYDAY MATTERS

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## Get the FACS

Family and Consumer Sciences

### Indoor Air Quality

During the cold winter months, as we spend time indoors it is important to increase our awareness of indoor air quality. When we talk about air quality, we are referring to the contaminants within our environment that negatively affect our health and therefore, our quality of life. The contaminants most often found in the home include household products and chemicals, carbon monoxide, formaldehyde, dust, mold and mildew, asbestos, radon gas, lead poisoning, and tobacco smoke. Scientific evidence has indicated the air people breathe in their homes could be more polluted with toxins than outdoor air. This is astonishing since the research tells us that most people spend up to 90% of time indoors.

Information from The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

- Indoor air quality problems in schools are responsible for triggering asthma related problems such as children's absenteeism and visits to the emergency room.
- Yearly 21,000 people die from radon-related lung cancer.
- According to the 2003 Georgia County Guide, chronic respiratory diseases caused 3,089 deaths accounting for 4.8% of deaths in 2001.



How is the Air Quality in Your Home?

Home safety during the winter months is important. Use all fireplaces and heaters appropriately. Make sure your fire extinguishers and smoke detectors are working properly.



### 3 Ways to Improve Indoor Air Quality

#### Grow Indoor Plants:

A study performed by NASA identified three main toxins in our homes, Formaldehyde, Benzene, and Trichloroethylene. These are found in cleaning products, paints, varnishes, and building materials. Common houseplants absorb these and other pollutants so we can breathe easier.

#### Go Green >> Cleaning Products:

Green Cleaning refers to using products that are safer to both persons and the environment by using less toxic ingredients. Green Cleaning improves indoor air quality and is usually less expensive. Many products are available to purchase or you can make your own with little fuss.

#### Hypoallergenic Pets:

The hairless or allergy free pets are bred to shed less and thus provide the owner with a more positive pet experience if they suffer from allergies. These pets require less grooming as well, saving your wallet too. Ask your veterinarian or look online for more information.

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At UGA/ Cobb County Extension our role is to provide research based information and increase awareness about topics that impact our community.

Staff are available Monday-Friday 8-5 on topics of Family & Consumer Science, Agriculture, and 4-H



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## Recipe of the Month— Southern Black Eyed Pea Soup

From Eating Well Magazine



### Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 large carrot, sliced
- 1 stalk celery, sliced
- 5 cloves garlic, (4 sliced and 1 whole), divided
- 1 sprig fresh thyme
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper, or to taste
- 4 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 15-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 5 cups chopped collard greens, or kale leaves (about 1 bunch), tough stems removed
- 1 15-ounce can black-eyed peas, rinsed
- 6 1/2-inch-thick slices baguette, preferably whole-grain, cut on the diagonal
- 6 tablespoons shredded Gruyère or Swiss cheese
- 2 slices cooked bacon, finely chopped

### Preparation

**1.** Heat oil in a Dutch oven over medium heat. Add onion, carrot and celery and cook, stirring, until just tender, 5 to 7 minutes. Add sliced garlic, thyme and crushed red pepper and cook, stirring, until fragrant, a few seconds. Increase heat to high and add broth, tomatoes, and their juice. Bring to a boil, scraping up any browned bits. Stir in collard greens (or kale), reduce heat to maintain a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until the greens are tender, 5 to 10 minutes. Discard the thyme sprig. Stir in black-eyed peas; remove from the heat and cover.

**2.** Position rack in upper third of oven; preheat broiler.

**3.** Place baguette slices on a baking sheet and broil until lightly toasted. Rub each bread slice with the remaining garlic clove. (Discard garlic.) Turn the slices over and top with cheese. Broil until the cheese is melted. Serve the soup topped with toast and bacon.

## New Years Resolutions— what's Yours?



Wikipedia states, a New Year's resolution is a promise that you make to yourself to start doing something good or stop doing something bad on the first day of the year.

A 2007 study from the University of Bristol found that, "resolutions are more successful when you tell someone and have peer support".

Common resolutions include: losing weight, saving money, trying a new hobby, healthy eating, and traveling more.

Extension has many educational resources to help you keep all your resolutions.

[www.extension.uga.edu](http://www.extension.uga.edu)

The traditional meal of black eyed peas also includes collard, turnip, or mustard greens, and ham. The peas, since they swell when cooked, symbolize prosperity; the greens symbolize money; the pork, because pigs root forward when foraging, represents positive motion

## Customer Corner— answers to your everyday questions

**“ Is it safe to eat my potatoes when they have turned green?”**

Whether store-bought or homegrown, potatoes will turn green when they are exposed to light. The green color comes from the pigment chlorophyll, produced as a response to light. Chlorophyll itself is not toxic; however,

another response to light exposure is increased production of a colorless alkaloid called solanine. Large amounts of solanine can cause illness, or even death in extreme cases. Most people are not likely to eat enough of the affected tissue to cause illness, because of solanine's bitter taste. The highest concentration of solanine is in the skin of the potato; removing the green portion will also remove most of the toxin. Sprouts of the eyes are also high in solanine and should be removed before cooking.



**Call us or email us anytime for answers to your everyday questions!**  
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