It’s Fair Time

If you are entering an exhibit in the Tanana Valley State Fair, this is the time to scramble. The nonperishable entries have already gone in by the time this article hits the newspaper, but the perishables are due July 31 for the junior division and Aug. 5 for the adult division. Have you looked at all the rules of entry for your exhibits? Do your exhibits work for the categories you have chosen to show them in?

Lots of stress can be avoided by doing a little homework and preparation at home before getting to the fairgrounds. We have a free publication at the Cooperative Extension Service to help you enter exhibits in the fair, “Attractive and Safe Food Preservation Exhibits.” If it is too late for this year, stop by and pick it up for next year or download it from our website at www.uaf.edu/ces. It is never too early to start preparing for the next dazzling, stellar entry.

For those of us who judge or just wander around admiring all the entries, it is good to remember the hard work that goes into each exhibit and appreciate the work that went into getting it to the fairgrounds, getting it to the right place, getting it entered and ready to be judged.

I’ve watched the number of entries wax and wane over the years. I’m really hoping this year will be full of fun things to look at. I love to hang out in the barns and watch the 4-H kids work with and take care of their animals. I really love going to the quilt shows in the Totem Building and looking at the 4-H projects and Alaska Native art there. I love wandering around Badger Hall so I can soak in the artistry of the crocheted, woven and knitted projects. Looking at all the baked goods and cake decorating gives me even more appreciation for the time and effort it takes to develop, practice and execute the recipes. All the jams, jellies and different home-canned foods are an inspiration.

One of my real favorites is the Culinary Capers. Entrants have to prepare and present something on the spot at the new kitchen area in the Borealis Pavilion. This year’s capers
will be Aug. 2. Stop by and see the show. It is fun to watch the kids standing on stools to reach everything, so intent on doing things right. They can really turn out some amazing dishes too. And while you are in the Borealis Pavilion, be sure to enjoy the wonderful fine arts displays by children and adults.

Go to the fair’s website at www.tananavalleystatefair.com to check in on everything that’s happening. There is so much going on you’ll have to choose your favorites and mark them on your calendar … or get a season’s pass before the fair starts and live there for the week. I understand there will be new rides and amusements. And don’t forget the food booths!

Come and visit with us at the Cooperative Extension booth in the Borealis Pavilion. We will have most of our free publications and many knowledgeable people sitting the booth fielding questions about gardens, home, health, energy, recipes, etc. We love talking to you, so stop by for a chat. If we don’t know the answers, we try to find someone who does.

On a whole different note, there was a major food recall last week for pitted fruits, such as plums, nectarines and peaches, and some it seems have reached Fairbanks.

Wawona Packing Co. of Cutler, Calif., issued a voluntary recall on Saturday of conventional and organic varieties of yellow peaches and nectarines, white peaches and nectarines, black plums and pluots (a plum/apricot hybrid).

On July 21, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency issued its own recall of the fruit sold under the Wawona, Sweet 2 Eat or Harvest Sweet brands.

Listeria can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections in young children, frail or elderly people, and others with weakened immune systems. Although healthy individuals may suffer only short-term symptoms such as high fever, severe headache, stiffness, nausea, abdominal pain and diarrhea, Listeria infection can cause miscarriages and stillbirths among pregnant women.

The recalled products were shipped directly to retailers and wholesalers who resell the products and were shipped in both bags and boxes.

Please check out the following websites for more information:
www.fda.gov/Safety/Recalls/ucm405943.htm and
www.fda.gov/Safety/Recalls/ucm405945.htm

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