

**For Immediate Release: August 31, 2017**

The mission of K-State Research and Extension Family and Consumer Sciences is to link education with life experiences to help people improve their lives, their families and their communities. Family and Consumer Sciences professionals support essential life skills including Community Development, Healthy Lifestyle Choices, Leadership & Volunteer Development, Relationship Development and Resource Management.

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## **New Life for Leftovers**

Many people have a difficult relationship with leftover foods. Throwing away good food wastes the time, money and other resources spent to get it. (Note: If your leftovers have spoiled, discard them immediately, and remember the old adage, “When in doubt, throw it out.”) A great meal could be made from small amounts of this and that, but how? Read on for ideas on how to reincarnate yesterday’s best, and last night’s remainders, and to gain new love for your leftovers.



**Too-ripe fruits.** “Going bananas” with too many too-ripe bananas? Freeze then blend them with cocoa for a Chocolate Monkey Treat, which tastes amazingly like chocolate ice cream. Banana bread is a good stand-by, too. Cook over-ripe peaches, apples or pears with oatmeal. Just put the fruit in with the water and let apples boil for up to five minutes (less time for softer fruits). Then cook the oatmeal as normal.

**Extra pasta, protein foods and vegetables.** Dice, label and freeze extra bits of cooked foods, such as pasta, vegetables, fish, poultry, pork and beef. When you have enough to feed the family, thaw them in the refrigerator and make a stir fry, pot pie, casserole or soup.

**Stale bread.** You can make delicious French toast from stale bread. Less-than fresh bread is also perfect for making breadcrumbs or croutons.

**Leftover plain rice.** Reheated rice is never as good the second time around, so don’t just reheat it — reinvent it! Rice pudding makes an excellent breakfast food or dessert. Or, try

a red beans and rice dish or a lentil and rice casserole for a nutritious and filling meatless meal. Or, combine leftover rice, cooked vegetables, low-sodium broth or vegetable juice, and chopped meat to make a comforting bowl of soup.

These ideas can help you get a second life for your leftovers. No matter how you plan to serve them, remember to use or freeze refrigerated leftovers within four days. Date foods before you stow them in the refrigerator, then follow a “first in, first out” rule. When reheating foods, heat them quickly to an internal temperature of 165 degrees F. Reheat only what you think your family will eat for that meal. Discard all leftover reheated leftovers.

For additional information, contact the Wildcat Extension District, Crawford County, 620-724-8233, Labette County, 620-784-5337, Montgomery County, 620-331-2690, Pittsburg Office, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education (EFNEP), 620-232-1930 and Wilson County, 620-378-2167. Our website is <http://www.wildcatdistrict.k-state.edu/> or follow us on Facebook: Wildcat Extension District.

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