

BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION




FEBRUARY 2024


**LOVE YOUR HEART
WITH HEALTHIER
CHOICES**



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February is National Heart Health Month and one of the best ways to promote a healthy heart is with a healthy diet.

PERSONAL SWEET POTATO PIES
A healthier twist on a dessert favorite!

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**RECIPE OF
THE MONTH**

**COMMUNITY
SPOTLIGHT**

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BLAIR SCHAFFER

Potter County Commissioner, Precinct 2

February is **National Heart Health Month** and one of the best ways to promote a healthy heart is with a healthy diet. Try these tips to celebrate great food choices for heart health



>>> REDUCE YOUR INTAKE OF SUGARY DRINKS AND SNACKS

Make water more exciting by adding fruit for a delicious fruit-infused, refreshing beverage that will hydrate without added sugars. Choose snacks such as nuts or fresh, canned, or frozen fruits with no added sugars for snacks and desserts. Try reducing the amount of added sugar used in your favorite dessert recipes.

>>> CHOOSE LEANER CUTS OF MEAT

Look for cuts of meat that have less visible fat and remove skin from poultry like chicken or turkey before cooking. Baking, broiling, or grilling can cut down on added fats. Try to eat fish or seafood twice a week.

>>> SWITCH TO FAT-FREE OR LOW-FAT DAIRY PRODUCTS

Sliced and shredded cheeses have low-fat versions that cost and taste about the same as the higher fat cheeses.

>>> LIMIT FOODS WITH HIGHER AMOUNTS OF SODIUM

Limit foods with higher amounts of sodium. Sodium raises blood pressure, which may increase risk for heart disease. Sodium is most commonly eaten from the salt that is added in food. Look at Nutrition Facts labels to choose items with lower amounts, such as those with less than 20% sodium per serving, and cook at home to be in control of how much salt goes into your meals.

➤➤➤ AIM TO EAT MORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Try adding fruit to your cereal or oatmeal at breakfast or adding a small bag of frozen vegetables to pasta, soup, or stir fry at dinner. February is also National Sweet Potato Month, so enjoy this nutritious vegetable in many different ways – even baked into a pie! (see this month’s featured recipe pg 6).

➤➤➤ PICK WHOLE GRAIN PRODUCTS

Great choices for eating more whole grains are brown rice or 100% whole grain bread, popcorn, barley, and rye. Whole grains have a good amount of fiber, B vitamins, magnesium, zinc, and other heart-healthy nutrients.

➤➤➤ COOK WITH HEALTHIER FATS

Choose fats like olive oil or canola oil instead of saturated fats like butter or lard. Use cooking oils and added fats in moderation.

Every healthier choice in your eating routine can help reduce your risk of heart disease, so love yourself this February by trying a few healthier choices!



Written by: Brenda Anderson, Regional Project Specialist – Better Living for Texans.
 Content Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/resources-publications/benefits-of-healthy-eating.html>
<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/heart-healthy-living/healthy-foods>
 Photo: Canva.com

LOVE YOUR HEART WITH HEALTHIER CHOICES

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Better Living for Texans (BLT) is proud of the support received from Potter County government and its elected officials. This month we spotlight our Potter County Commissioner to Precinct 2, Blair Schaffer. Schaffer identifies the most significant contribution of BLT program as “the amount of useful information made available to the community on how individuals and communities can live a healthier life.”

Before, and concurrently, to the role of county commissioner; Schaffer has served the community as a firefighter for over 17 years. He and his wife, Blanca, also own and operate three local small businesses. When asked about his role in the community, he states, “I love being able to help people in a time of need, provide services and products, and being a leader in the community.” He feels that his leadership skills continually increase by surrounding himself with other great leaders. Commissioner Schaffer provided insight into plans for Potter County, “I see a bright future for Potter County. Potter County has done a good job bringing new businesses into the county. One of my goals is to find ways to work with developers to make new and affordable housing on the east side of Amarillo.”

Schaffer shares that he considers the 2020 purchase of the old Ghost Town of Jericho as his most noteworthy professional/personal achievement. “Jericho is a diamond in the rough to us. We’re always putting our time and energy into turning Jericho into one of the beautiful gems of the Texas panhandle.” Jericho is the location of Schaffer Farm and their Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. **Blair is Bringing HEALTHIER straight to your table!**



Blair Schaffer

Potter County Commissioner,
Precinct 2

Schaffer shares ‘life lessons’ learned from his garden experiences: “There’s been so many life lessons learned from our garden. Schaffer Farm started out as a few raised beds made from scrap wood pallets. Our goal was to make sure my family had reliable and fresh produce during Covid. This quickly turned into a 10,000 square-foot market garden and CSA program grown from our backyard, and Jericho. Even though you plan and design the garden, life and mother nature are going to throw some unplanned challenges at you to learn from and grow through. Like getting 7 inches of rain and hail in under an hour, gas prices going up and busting through the budget you had for travel, to being over ran with grasshoppers that eat your crops to the ground. The lesson is to expect the unexpected and work through the unplanned. Because it will happen.”



Community Engagement is the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity or special interests to address issues affecting the well-being of people. It is a powerful vehicle for bringing about environmental and behavioral changes that will improve the health of the community. It often involves partnerships that help mobilize resources serving as catalysts for change. (CDC, 1997)



DREAM BIG



YOU ROCK



What movie have you seen the most times?
"I love movies and have seen many of them over and over. I think the most watched would be the three original Star Wars movies. If I find one of them playing on the TV, I will stop and watch it every time."

What's something surprising that few people know about you?
"Not a lot of people know that I love to cook. Whether it's cooking for my family at home or cooking for the guys at the fire station. I truly enjoy making good healthy meals."

What are you most passionate about?
"I'm most passionate about living each day with joy and gratitude. Even though the day might be challenging and not going our way. Happiness is a choice that I choose."

Who would you invite to your fantasy dinner party?
"I think it would be so cool to have a dinner party with the characters from Lord of the Rings."

Photos adapted from Facebook with permission from Blair Schaffer and others in photos

RECIPE OF THE MONTH



Recipe adapted from MyPlate.gov

PERSONAL SWEET POTATO PIES

A healthier twist on a dessert favorite!

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line one standard 12-cup muffin tin with paper liners.
2. In a small bowl, mix crushed graham crackers and oil until well combined. Divide the crust mixture evenly into the bottom of each muffin cup and press down. Bake until golden and just set, 2 to 4 minutes. Set aside to cool.
3. In a large bowl, mix eggs, milk, and vanilla. Add white and brown sugar, salt, and pumpkin pie spice. Once mixed, add sweet potatoes. Stir until well combined.
4. Spoon the pie filling evenly over the graham cracker crust in the 12 muffin cups. Bake for 30 minutes. Let cool, and then chill in the refrigerator for 2 to 4 hours. Serve chilled, and top each pie with ½ tablespoon nonfat whipped topping (optional).

INGREDIENTS

Graham Cracker Crust

- 1 cup crushed graham crackers (6 sheets)
- ¼ cup oil (vegetable or canola)

Filling

- 3 eggs
- ¼ cup nonfat evaporated milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ cup white sugar
- ¼ cup brown sugar, lightly packed
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 cups sweet potatoes (about 2 pounds), cooked, skin removed, and mashed
- 6 tablespoons nonfat whipped topping, optional



SERVES: 12

Nutrients Per Serving: 130 calories, 3.5 g total fat, .5 g saturated fat, 40 mg cholesterol, 160 mg sodium, 22 g carbohydrates, 2 g fiber, 11 g total sugar, 5 g added sugar, and 3 g protein

ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE



HAPPY Valentines DAY





»»» EVENTS

FEBRUARY 1- Communities Unlimited
Amarillo United Citizens Forum Black Cultural Center
Fresh Start to a Healthier You! Session 1
12:00PM

FEBRUARY 8- Communities Unlimited
Amarillo United Citizens Forum Black Cultural Center
Fresh Start to a Healthier You! Session 2
12:00PM

FEBRUARY 9- Women's Coalition Meeting
Leo Caifa Jr. Center for Advancement
12:30-1:30PM

FEBRUARY 15- Communities Unlimited
Amarillo United Citizens Forum Black Cultural Center
Fresh Start to a Healthier You! Session 3
12:00PM

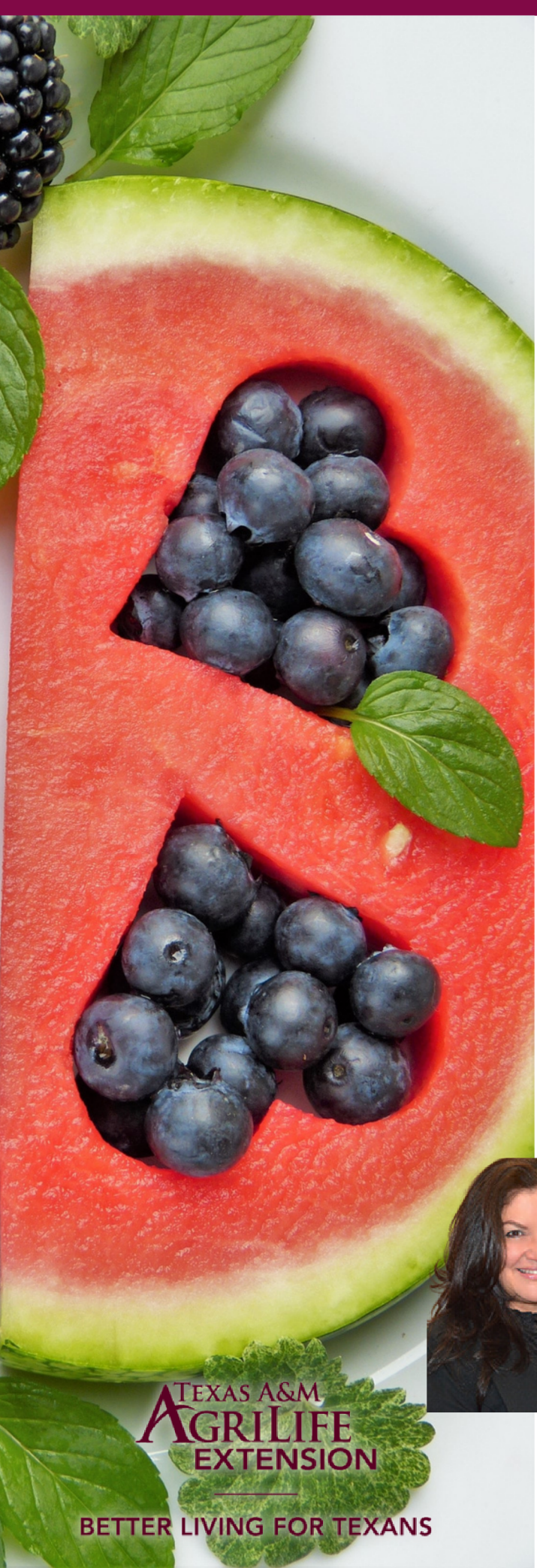
FEBRUARY 19- President's Day
Potter County Office Closed

FEBRUARY 22- Communities Unlimited
Amarillo United Citizens Forum Black Cultural Center
Fresh Start to a Healthier You! Session 4
12:00PM

FEBRUARY 25-29- North/West Regions Health Summit
San Angelo, TX

FEBRUARY 27- Head Start Policy Council
Region 16 Education Service Center
9:30AM

FEBRUARY 29- Communities Unlimited
Amarillo United Citizens Forum Black Cultural Center
"Leap Into Good Health" Health and Wellness Fair
6:00-8:00PM



TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS



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»»» **THE PROGRAM**

BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS offers nutrition and physical activity programs to limited-resource audiences. Our mission is to provide research and evidence-based nutrition, health, and wellness knowledge to empower individuals, families, and communities.

The BLT program helps people make healthy meals, improve their physical fitness, save money at the grocery store, grow their own foods, and adopt better food safety habits.

OUR FOCUS AREAS...



NUTRITION



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



GARDENING