News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: 5/15/2013

Serve nutritious and delicious smoothies anytime of the day

A smoothie is a blended and sometimes sweetened beverage made from fresh fruit and perhaps chocolate or peanut butter. They can also contain milk, yogurt or ice cream. In addition to fruit, many smoothies include crushed ice, frozen fruit, and honey. They have a milkshake-like consistency that is thicker than slush drinks. These thick, cold blender beverages are tasty, refreshing and, if made with the right ingredients, nutritious. Smoothies are easy to concoct with ingredients you have in your pantry and can be a great choice for a snack or mini-meal.

Start with high-quality fresh fruit at the peak of ripeness. Always wash fruit before adding it to your smoothie. Cutting fruit into either slices or chunks before putting it into the blender will make it easier to blend.

When blending ice into your smoothie, it's best to start with crushed ice or small ice cubes. If you only have large ice cubes, place them into a strong, self-sealing plastic bag and crush down into smaller pieces with a hammer or the bottom of a heavy metal pan before adding to the mixture to be blended.

For a thicker smoothie, blend in cubed or pureed frozen fruit. Strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, melons, bananas and peaches are all excellent fruits to freeze ahead for use in smoothies. To freeze fruit, first wash it and cut it into cubes, slices or chunks. Sprinkle light colored fruit, like bananas, with lemon juice to help prevent them from darkening. Place the fruit in a single layer on a cookie sheet and freeze until firm. Once frozen, pop the fruit into self-sealing plastic bags and store in the freezer. You can also puree fresh fruit, freeze it in ice cube trays and then store it in freezer bags.
To lower the fat and calorie content of your smoothie, use skim or soy milk instead of whole milk; plain, nonfat yogurt in place of regular fruit yogurt; frozen yogurt or sorbet rather than ice cream; and unsweetened fruit instead of sweetened frozen fruit.

Boost the fiber content of smoothies by leaving the skin on fruit and/or by adding ground flaxseed, wheat germ or wheat bran.

Increase the calcium content by choosing a milk product as the smoothie's base and/or by mixing in nonfat dry milk powder.

For added sweetness, blend a touch of honey or maple syrup into the smoothie. Adding half of a very ripe banana will also make a sweeter smoothie.

For a twist, try using flavored ice cubes. Flavored ice cubes can be made by pouring fruit juice, tea or nectar into ice cube trays and freezing.

Avoid adding raw eggs because they may contain Salmonella, a bacteria responsible for a type of food poisoning. To get the protein eggs provide without the cholesterol or bacteria, try using pasteurized eggs or a pasteurized egg substitute.

Smoothies are both simple to make and packed with nutrients! They are perfect for a quick breakfast, a healthy lunch or a refreshing mid-afternoon snack.

University of Maryland Extension programs are open to all citizens and will not discriminate against anyone because of race, age, sex, color, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, or national origin, marital status, genetic information, or political affiliation, or gender identity and expression.