

“Small Steps to Health and Wealth”
Monica Bonsett, Extension Agent—Family and Consumer Sciences
University of Florida/IFAS Citrus County Extension
3650 W. Sovereign Path, Suite 1
Lecanto, FL 34461
352-527-5700

With only a few days left in 2009, we look to the New Year. Perhaps after reviewing the past year, we set goals to achieve. Instead of wishing for health and wealth in 2010, follow these simple steps:

- Set realistic goals
- Identify small steps
- Identify obstacles and how to overcome them
- Set your mind to it and take action

Many do not achieve New Year’s resolutions because they aren’t attainable and we fail to break them into smaller steps. We become overwhelmed essentially before we get started. Remember that doing something is better than nothing and “*anything* you do to improve your health and/or accumulate wealth is a step in the right direction.” This small step approach is so powerful that the U.S. Health and Human Services department has designed an interactive website (<http://www.smallstep.gov/>) to encourage all Americans to make small dietary and activity changes to improve their health. Health and wealth are connected because both are important for living a happy and successful life and they can be achieved one step at a time. For example, to lose ten pounds in a year, reduce calories consumed by 100 calories per day. Some of the foods/beverages with 100 calories to consider eliminating—1 tablespoon of mayonnaise, 1 tablespoon of butter or margarine, 2 average size cookies, 8 oz cola beverage, 1 ½ tablespoons of regular salad dressing, etc.

Other strategies from Rutgers New Jersey Cooperative Extension's "Small Steps to Health and Wealth" program include:

- Think of calories and spending in terms of labor. How many hours of exercise does it take to work off this extra food or drink? For finances, how many hours do I have to work to buy this item I want? (Use after tax dollars for this calculation.)
- Say "no" to super-sizing. This works for food and finances as we say "no" to meal deals and to "buy three and save" offers when we only need one.
- Tracking your current habits can reveal what is going on. Food and activity logs are important when changing your eating/activity habits. Tracking your spending for a month can help you "find" money to save/invest.
- Take ½ of your restaurant meal home for leftovers the next day. With finances, you can increase your income or decrease your discretionary spending by 1/3 to ½.

The HCE Bi-Annual Community Yard Sale will be held at the Citrus County Auditorium on Saturday, February 6, 2010. Table rentals will begin on January 6, 2010 by calling 352-527-5700. Tables are 3 for \$20 or 1 for \$8. If your goal is to clear some clutter and make some extra money, this is a great opportunity for you!

For more information on building health and wealth, call Monica Bonsett at the Extension office at 352-527-5713. Citrus County Extension links the public with the University of Florida/IFAS' knowledge, research, and resources to address youth, family, community, and agricultural needs. All programs and related activities sponsored for, or assisted by, the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences are open to all persons with

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