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Freshness Can Be Found at your Local Farmer's Market.

If you are looking for flavor, variety, or the healthy benefits of the freshest produce, you need look no further than your local farmer's market. USDA's Local Food Directories help you locate farmers markets, on-farm markets, CSAs, and food hubs. ¹

The number of local food options is increasing all over the country. A 2015 survey of markets shows nearly two thirds reported increased customer traffic and 85% of

managers are seeking to add vendors and increase product diversity. ²

Of the two million farms in the USA, nearly 80% are small farms, and a large percentage are family owned. More farmers are selling directly to the public via CSA programs, Farmers' Markets, Food Coops, u-picks, farm stands, and other direct marketing channels. LocalHarvest.org provides a listing of small farms selling directly to consumers by state and city.

1- <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/local-regional/food-directories>

2- <https://www.ams.usda.gov/press-release/national-farmers-market-manager-survey-shows-farmers-markets-continue-grow>

Surprising Uses For Salt

Try salt in the following situations as an alternative to expensive and possibly toxic chemical options.



Fire Extinguisher: Keep salt close at hand in the kitchen to extinguish grease fires.

Removing Onion Odors From Hands: Rub fingers with salt moistened with vinegar.

Peeling Eggs: Eggs boiled in salted water peel more easily.

Relieving Bee Stings: If stung, immediately wet the spot and cover with salt to relieve the pain.

Cleanups: For oil spills and egg spills, cover the area with salt - it's a lot easier to pick up.

Pest Deterrent: Where ants frequent, pour a line of salt to prevent them from crossing.

www.greanlivingtips.com/article/s/274/1/uses-for-salt.html

Summer Road Trip: Tips for Driving More Efficiently

If you want to reduce expenses, your carbon footprint, or both on your summer road trips, take this refresher on efficient driving:

Slow Down. Driving 5 miles over 60 miles per hour is like paying 29 cents extra for every gallon of gas you burn. That premium goes up as your speed increases.



Be a Smooth Operator.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, drivers who accelerate moderately and evenly and go easy on the brakes (coasting whenever possible) can save \$1 or more per gallon.

Lose The Rack. Add-ons such as flags, bike carriers, and luggage racks undermine your car's aerodynamics. (Close the

windows, too, particularly at highway speeds.)

Chuck the Junk in your Trunk. Extra weight makes the engine work harder - so resist the urge to store your bowling balls in the backseat.

Kill The Engine. Fifteen minutes of idling can burn a quarter of a gallon of gasoline, especially if the AC is blasting.

Use the octane rating required for your vehicle by the manufacturer. While higher octane fuel may improve performance and gas mileage and reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions by a few percent during severe duty operation, under normal driving conditions, you may get little to no benefit.

Burley, Ron, Arthur, AARP.org/bulletin Page 33, "5 Habits of Highly Efficient Drivers"

<https://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/octane.shtml>

Quick Fresh Tomato Salsa (Pico de Gallo)



Yields 3 to 4 cups

Because this salsa is made with fresh ingredients, it's best eaten right after you make it. Refrigerated, it should last about 5 days or so.

Ingredients

2-3 medium sized fresh tomatoes, stems removed
1/2 red onion
2 serrano or 1 jalapeño chile (stems, ribs, seeds removed) - taste fresh chile peppers first before adding.
Juice of one lime
1/2 cup chopped cilantro
Salt and pepper to taste
Pinch of dried oregano
Pinch of ground cumin

How To Make It

Roughly chop tomatoes, chiles, and onions. Set aside some of the pepper seeds to add for more heat if needed.

Combine all ingredients. In a food processor, pulse only a few times, just enough to finely dice the ingredients, not enough to purée or finely dice by hand.

Let sit for an hour for the flavors to combine.

Uses

Serve with chips, tortillas, tacos, burritos, tostadas, quesadillas, pinto or black beans.

http://www.simplyrecipes.com/recipes/fresh_tomato_salsa/

Myths and Truths about Annuities



When it comes to annuities, myth and half-truths abound. Read on for an exploration of what annuities provide and myths associated with them.

If you die, the insurance company keeps your money.

There was a time when the insurance company did just that but thanks to more modern products, better regulation, and more oversight, it is now a myth. If you die and have an in-force annuity contract, your named beneficiaries receive the unused portion of your annuity immediately, without delay or probate expenses.

Annuities charge high fees and expenses. Variable annuities charge administration, management and ownership fees. Often these fees can be very high. Your funds invested in a variable annuity can be at risk. However, fixed

annuities have no fees or expenses, and fixed annuities pay interest.

Can I earn stock market returns with a Fixed Indexed Annuity (FIA)?

A FIA has no exposure to market risk - your funds can only increase or stay the same. FIA's will not lose value unless you remove funds yourself. But, FIA's will not return stock market yields; they are limited (or capped).

Since an annuity is not guaranteed by the FDIC, why should I trust an insurance company with my money?

In addition to annuity contract guarantees, the state DOI (Department of Insurance) also requires that insurance companies keep sufficient reserves and funds available to cover any guarantees offered.

<http://www.annuity.com/5-things-every-baby-boomer-needs-to-know-about-annuities>

It Happened In ...

AUGUST

August 1st 1819 – Moby Dick author Herman Melville (1819-1891) was born in New York.

August 5th 1962 – Film star Marilyn Monroe died at age 36 from an overdose of sleeping pills. She made 29 films during her career and came to symbolize Hollywood glamour.

August 16th 1896 – Gold was discovered in Rabbit Creek, a tributary of the Klondike River in Alaska, resulting in the Great Klondike Gold Rush.

August 17th 1786 – American frontiersman Davy Crockett was born in Hawkins County, Tennessee. He was a farmer, scout and politician who died at age 49 during the final heroic defense of the Alamo in Texas.

August 24th 79 A.D. – Vesuvius, an active volcano in southern Italy, erupted and destroyed the cities of Pompeii, Stabiae and Herculaneum.

<http://www.historyplace.com/specials/calendar/august.htm>

Selling Your Home? Income Tax Tips to Keep in Mind

The real estate market is especially active in summer. If you are selling property – your primary home or other property, here are some tax tips to keep in mind:



Homeowners may qualify to exclude from their income all or part of any gain from the sale of their main home. To claim the exclusion, the homeowner must meet the ownership and use tests. This means that during the five-year period ending on the date of the sale, the homeowner must have owned and lived in the home as their main home for at least two years.

If there is a gain from the sale of their main home, the homeowner may be able to exclude up to \$250,000 of the gain from income or \$500,000 on a joint return in most cases. Homeowners who can exclude all of the gain do not need to report the sale on their tax return. A main home that sells for lower than purchased is not deductible.

Reporting the sale of a home on a tax return is required if

all or part of the gain is not excludable. A sale must also be reported on a tax return if the taxpayer chooses not to claim the exclusion.

There are exceptions to the rules above for persons with a disability, certain members of the military, intelligence community and Peace Corps workers, among others.

More information is available in Publication 523, Selling Your Home.

Worksheets are included in Publication 523, Selling Your Home, to help you figure the adjusted basis of the home sold, gain (or loss) on the sale, and any gain that can be excluded.

<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p523.pdf>