Welcome to the Winter 2016 issue of the Home Baked and Confectionery Goods Program Newsletter! This newsletter is designed to inform registrants of Program requirements and changes and to connect home bakers from across the state. Questions or comments? Send an e-mail to HomeBakedGoods@azdhs.gov.

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Hot New Look: We Updated Our Website!

In November 2016, we updated our website so that the answers to your biggest questions were put front and center. The changes that we are most excited about (and we hope that you are too!) are the creation of the “Approved Foods” and “Frosting & Seasonal Foods” sections.

The “Approved Foods” section has the following information:

- A list of our most commonly approved and rejected products,
- A link to our list of registrants so you can see all the food items we have approved in the past, and
- An explanation of what “potentially hazardous” means.

The “Frosting and Seasonal Foods” section lists all the ingredients that should not be in your frostings or icings, and gives you a list of substitutions that past home bakers have used with success. It also lists popular seasonal foods and what you can make with them. Please feel free to let us know about any non-potentially hazardous substitutions or alternative products that you make, so we can share that information!

Check out the updated website and tell us what you think!
‘Tis the Season: How to Avoid Giving Your Customers the Stomach Flu a.k.a. Norovirus

What people often call the stomach flu is actually not related to the influenza virus at all. It’s an illness caused by the Norwalk virus, or Norovirus for short. Illness is characterized by vomiting, diarrhea, nausea, stomach pain, and sometimes fever, headaches, and body aches. Although the duration of illness is relatively short, between 1 and 3 days, it probably won’t be an experience you soon forget.

Unfortunately, Norovirus is highly contagious. It takes as few as 10 virus particles to make someone ill. Compare that with the number of virus particles that are transferred via vomiting and diarrhea onto surfaces and hands in the course of illness - the number is in the billions! Not only that, Norovirus can survive on surfaces for days or weeks, and a number of common disinfectants can’t kill it. It’s no wonder it’s the number one cause of foodborne illness, with CDC estimating more than 19 million cases per year!

The good news is you can take steps to prevent giving or getting this most undesirable gift this season.

Follow these tips:

1. If you have had vomiting or diarrhea in the last two days, do not prepare food for others.

2. Never touch ready-to-eat food (foods that will be eaten without further cooking) with your bare hands – Norovirus can be transferred from your hands to foods and then ingested by others, making them ill. Use non-latex gloves and/or utensils to prevent bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat foods.

3. Wash your hands properly and often. Wet hands, apply soap and scrub for 20 seconds, rinse with water, then dry thoroughly with disposable paper towels. Don’t rely on hand sanitizer - most aren’t effective against Norovirus. Nothing beats a good handwash!

4. Properly wash, rinse, and sanitize food preparation surfaces and utensils. See the next article for more details!

For more information about Norovirus, visit the CDC website: www.cdc.gov/norovirus.

Washing, Rinsing, and Sanitizing, Oh My! Tips for Preparing Your Kitchen Work Area

Did you know? There’s a big difference between “cleaning” and “sanitizing”.

Cleaning removes food and other types of soil from a surface such as a countertop or plate. Sanitizing reduces the number of microorganisms on that clean surface to safe levels.

It is important to clean and sanitize your kitchen counter before and after each use to prevent cross-contamination from an unclean countertop to your home baked goods.

Just follow three simple steps:

1. Wash. Clean your counter of any noticeable debris. You can do this by using paper towels and a mixture of regular dish soap and water.

2. Rinse. Wipe the counter with a paper towel and clean warm water to remove any detergent residue.

3. Sanitize. Use a clean cloth that has been soaked in sanitizer solution to do a final wipe of the surface and let the counter air dry.

Wiping cloths should be kept soaking in a sanitizing solution when not in use. If you do not have a container in which to mix the bleach solution and store the wiping cloth, use your kitchen sink. Discard sanitizer solution in your kitchen sink after you are finished using it. Remember that sanitizer solution must be made fresh each day.
Sponges must not be used in place of wiping cloths. Sponges can harbor bacteria that often cannot be killed by sanitizer solution.

Finally, be sure to keep pets out of the kitchen when preparing your home baked and confectionery goods. Believe it or not, we have received complaints of pet hair in home baked food items!

Washing, rinsing, and sanitizing are essential to controlling contamination that may cause foodborne illnesses. For more information on this and other Production Guidelines, visit our webpage, www.azdhs.gov/homebakedaz

Calling All Home Bakers!

Calling all home bakers! Would you like to be featured in a future newsletter? We love to put the spotlight on the amazing home bakers registered in Arizona.

If you meet the following criteria, contact us so that we can feature you!

👍 You are a registered home baker.

👍 You follow program guidelines for labeling, production, product offerings, etc.

Send us an e-mail at HomeBakedGoods@azdhs.gov!

Recipe: Whole Grain Soft and Chewy Ginger Cookies

**Ingredients**
- 2 1/2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 1/2 tsp ground cloves
- 1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 2/3 cup loosely packed brown sugar
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1/3 cup molasses
- 1 egg, room temperature
- 1 1/4 cups chopped crystallized ginger
- Granulated sugar, for rolling the cookies mixed with zest of two oranges

**Directions**

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. In a large bowl, mix the flour, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, ginger, and salt.

2. Beat the sugar, olive oil, and molasses in an electric mixer on medium speed for 5 minutes. Add the egg, and beat for 1 minute on low speed. Scrape the sides of the bowl and then beat for another minute. Slowly add the dry ingredients and mix on medium speed for 2 minutes. Add the crystallized ginger and mix until combined.

3. In a separate bowl, mix some granulated sugar with the orange zest.

4. Roll each cookie into a 1 3/4-inch ball and flatten them slightly with your fingers. Press each side of the cookie in the sugar and orange zest mixture, and place it on a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper.

5. Bake for 13 minutes. As soon as they’re crackly, take them out. If they’re not crackly, they’re not ready.

6. Cool the cookies on the sheets for 1 to 2 minutes, then transfer to wire racks to cool completely.

Recipe via Texanerin Baking, www.texanerin.com

Read more at: http://www.texanerin.com/100-whole-grain-soft-and-chewy-ginger-cookies/