



News Across the Table

Our Neighbors' Table, February 2021 / Edition 7



Heather's Recipe: **Broccoli & Chicken** **Stir Fry**

This stir fry pairs well with rice or rice noodles.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2/3 cup soy sauce
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 pinch red pepper flakes, or to taste
- 2 tablespoons water
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil, or to taste
- 3 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves, cut into chunks
- 1 onion, sliced
- 3 cups broccoli florets

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Stir soy sauce, brown sugar, ginger, and red pepper flakes together in a bowl to dissolve sugar into the liquid. Mix water and cornstarch together in a small bowl; stir with a whisk until cornstarch dissolves completely.
2. Heat oil in a large skillet over high heat. Fry chicken and onion in hot oil until the chicken is no longer pink in the center and the onion is tender, 5 to 7 minutes. Stir broccoli with the chicken and onion; saute until the broccoli is hot, about 5 minutes. Push the chicken and vegetables mixture to the side of the skillet.
3. Pour the soy sauce mixture into the vacant part of the skillet. Stir the cornstarch slurry into the soy sauce mixture until the color is consistent. Move the chicken and vegetables back into the center of the pan; saute until the sauce thickens and coats the chicken and vegetables, about 5 minutes more.



Heather Paterson is ONT's Meal Manager. Her delicious recipes are made into meals and available free for takeout every Wednesday from 4pm to 6pm at Main Street Congregational Church, 145 Main St., Amesbury.



Volunteer Profile: Mary Ellen Jutras

When Mary Ellen Jutras first became involved with ONT several years ago, she had been working for a bank in Boston in their affordable housing division. Mary Ellen understood the connection between housing insecurity and food insecurity, and as an Amesbury resident, she wanted to help her local community.

Initially unable to volunteer due to her work schedule and commute, Mary Ellen began by donating to ONT through payroll deductions. She began volunteering on Saturday mornings in the market when the Jardis-Taylor Center opened. Over the years, Mary Ellen has volunteered doing intake of new guests, checkout, helping to load groceries in guests' vehicles, and just before COVID hit, was helping to set up the market before opening. Since COVID, Mary Ellen has been helping to pack non-perishable items into guests' food orders. Mary Ellen says she continues to volunteer at ONT because, "I know what it means to people and what a difference it can make." Mary Ellen enjoys the camaraderie of the other volunteers, saying, "Everyone here is open and generous and genuine and wanting to help." When asked if there was anything she wanted guests to know about her or volunteering at ONT, she said, "Even if you think there's nobody out there who cares, everyone here (at ONT) cares."

SNAP Update

Pres. Biden recently signed an executive order raising the amount households already receiving the maximum SNAP grant will get. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is consulting with the Justice Department on whether it has legal authority to implement this change, which would affect approximately 40% of SNAP households nationwide. USDA will also be reviewing revising the formula used to determine SNAP benefits, called the Thrifty Food Plan. In addition, changes were made making it easier for certain college students to qualify for SNAP.

P-EBT Update

Eligible students will get P-EBT funds on the 25th of each month for the remaining 2020-2021 school year. If you previously received P-EBT benefits, check your EBT or P-EBT card on the 25th of the month. If you are newly eligible for P-EBT, you will get a letter and card in the mail from DTA. For more information on P-EBT, visit <https://www.map-ebt.org>. In addition, one of the executive orders Pres. Biden signed will increase P-EBT amounts by 15%. DTA is waiting for federal guidance on how to implement this, so more details will come in the future.

Apply for SNAP by phone!

Our Neighbors' Table is a SNAP Outreach Partner. We can help you apply for SNAP (food stamps) by phone. **Call Tress at 978-388-1907, ext. 18** to apply, help with an open SNAP case, or to answer your questions about SNAP.



SNAP benefits are put on an electronic card that is used like an ATM card or a bank card and can be used at most supermarkets, convenience stores, and some farmers' markets. Income guidelines apply. This project has been funded at least in part with Federal funds from USDA. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. The SNAP logo is a service mark of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. USDA does not endorse any goods, services, or enterprises.

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Market Update

ONT will close if there are any major snow storms. Please be sure to check our social media or call for updates ahead of larger snow events.

We want to thank everyone for being respectful of our volunteers by wearing a mask when interacting with them. Please **continue to wear a mask** when picking up your groceries. We also ask that you turn off your car when the volunteers are loading your groceries. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Community Resource: TAFDC

Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) is a federally-funded cash benefit for families with children under 18, including teen parents and pregnant women whose child is due in less than 4 months. In Massachusetts, TAFDC is administered by the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA). To get TAFDC a family must meet basic requirements:

- Live in Massachusetts
- Include a U.S. citizen or person with certain legal noncitizen status
- Meet income and asset limits

To be eligible for TAFDC your family's gross income must not exceed the income limits based on your household size and the type of housing you live in. Income you don't usually get does not count toward the limit. Don't include the income of family members who are SSI recipients or foster children, or include them in your household size.

MONTHLY INCOME LIMITS:

Household Size	Public/Subsidized housing	Private housing
1	\$427	\$467
2	\$540	\$580
3	\$652	\$692
4	\$760	\$800
5	\$871	\$911
6	\$986	\$1,026
7	\$1,097	\$1,137
8	\$1,207	\$1,247
9	\$1,317	\$1,357
10	\$1,428	\$1,468

Each additional household member +\$116 +\$116

Income limits are different for teen parents. They can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/check-tafdc-eligibility-and-how-to-apply>

DEDUCTIONS: A deduction is the amount of your income that doesn't count. If your income is from a job, deductions are allowed as follows:

- \$200
- The cost of child care (restrictions apply)

ASSET LIMIT: Your family's total assets generally cannot add up to more than \$5,000. If you give assets away to qualify for TAFDC, you are not eligible.

Certain things, like the house your family lives in and your primary car, do not count as assets.

TO APPLY: You can apply for TAFDC by calling DTA at (877) 382-2363 or apply online at <https://dtaconnect.eohhs.mass.gov>



We have a new phone system at ONT. Please bear with us as we work out the kinks in the system. If you need to order food, please call between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm, Tuesday through Friday, and press 2 for assistance.

It's not too late to apply for **Fuel Assistance**

Even renters whose heat is included in their rent can apply. The income limit guidelines are higher than SNAP and MassHealth.

To get an application, call Community Action's Haverhill office at 978-373-1971 ext. 218.

Amesbury Market location and hours:

194 Main St., Amesbury

Wednesdays: 10:00am - 1:00pm and 2:00pm - 4:00pm

Thursdays: 12:00pm - 3:00pm and 4:00pm - 6:00pm

Fridays: 9:00am - 12:00pm and 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Saturdays: 9:00am - 1:00pm

Newburyport Market: Thursdays, 10:00am - 12:00pm

Newburyport Senior Center, 331 High St., Newburyport

Merrimac Market: The Merrimac Mobile Market is temporarily

suspended. ONT guests who live in Merrimac are invited to pick up their groceries at our locations in Amesbury or Newburyport.

Grocery orders can be placed online or by phone until 3pm the day before pick-up.

Questions? Comments? Ideas for future newsletters? Call or email Tress, ONT's Food Resource Advocate at: (978) 388-1907 ext. 18 or email: tress@ourneighborstable.org

Our Neighbors' Table

194 Main St., Amesbury MA 01913 (978) 388-1907

www.ourneighborstable.org

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