K’s Kitchen: Pasta for an athlete

By Kathryn Reed

Carb loading has long been said to be beneficial before an athletic endeavor. I think it works after the fact, too.

After coming back from the district tennis tournament last Sunday the last thing I wanted to do was fix dinner. Sue came through with a concoction that was wonderful. Since I have a thing for mushrooms – as in I think I could live off of them – she was already on the right track.

I must have worked up quite an appetite because I helped myself to seconds. Either that or I was drowning my sorrows in good food. While the 7.5 women’s doubles team out of Zephyr Cove went undefeated in the regular season and in playoffs, we went 1-2 at districts in Folsom. Sectionals will have to wait until next season.

The fig balsamic vinegar adds a unique flavor to this dish. It also complements the sesame oil. Regular balsamic would work, too, but it will change the flavor profile.

Keep the mushrooms and sundried tomato pieces large enough to get a good mouthful with the pasta. Wild mushrooms would make this dish even more rich and complex.



Post-match Pasta

Olive oil

Sesame oil

Fig balsamic vinegar

½ C onion, chopped

4 cloves garlic, minced

Handful of sundried tomatoes

1½ C mushrooms, sliced

1 C peas

Parmesan cheese

Parsley, optional

Pasta

Cook pasta according to directions.

In large frying pan cover bottom with combo of olive and sesame oil. Start light, more can always be added later.

Cook onion and garlic until opaque. Add mushrooms and sundried tomatoes. Add fig balsamic vinegar. Add peas. Cook until heated all the way through.

Smother veggie concoction over pasta. Sprinkle with Parmesan and parsley.

Serves 4.

Restaurants do their part to conserve water

By Bethany Clough, Fresno Bee

The California Restaurant Association urged restaurants Wednesday to conserve water as the state deals with a historic drought, including only serving water to customers upon their request.

Local association representatives say there’s even more that restaurants can do, despite an existing emphasis on water conservation learned in past droughts.

Many valley restaurants stopped serving glasses of water to customers unless they requested them years ago after drought put a spotlight on the practice. And although Fresno homeowners recently had water meters installed, restaurants have had them for as long as restaurateur Tom Ferdinandi can remember.

Read the whole story

Drought worries Calif. brew masters

By Alastair Bland, NPR

Brewers around the country boast that their “pure” local water is the key to their beers’ unique flavor. Coors credits the trout streams of the Rockies. Olympia Beer’s slogan is, “It’s the water.” Cold Spring Brewing Co., in Minnesota, is named

for a nearby natural spring.

In Sonoma County, Lagunitas Brewing Company, founded in 1993, has grown into one of the largest craft breweries in the nation. Like several other smaller local breweries, Lagunitas makes its beer with water from the Russian River, a 110-mile waterway that provides drinking water for more than half a million people.

But in the wake of 2013, the driest year ever recorded in California, Lagunitas' owners say they're nervous about shortages that could mean a switch from the river water to not-as-tasty well water.

Read the whole story

Manufacturers make push to with gluten free food

By Stephanie Strom, New York Times

The Girl Scouts recently introduced a gluten-free chocolate chip shortbread cookie to their annually anticipated line of sweet treats. Vodka companies vie over which one of them was the "first" to introduce a gluten-free version of their products. And Trader Joe's recently joked in an advertising flier promoting gluten-free foods that it was selling "Gluten Free Greeting Cards 99 Cents Each! Every Day!" – even though it then went on to say the cards were not edible.

Makers of products that have always been gluten-free, including popcorn, potato chips, nuts and rice crackers, are busy hawking that quality in ads and on their packaging.

And consumers are responding with gusto. The portion of households reporting purchases of gluten-free food products to Nielsen hit 11 percent last year, rising from 5 percent in 2010.

Read the whole story

Bill would put warning label on sugary drinks

By Patrick McGreevy, Los Angeles Times

SACRAMENTO – Citing studies linking soda to obesity, a state lawmaker and medical experts proposed a first-in-the-nation bill Thursday that sugary drinks sold in California carry health warning labels similar to those on cigarette packs.

They want warning labels on the fronts of all cans and bottles of soda and juice drinks that have sugar added and 75 or more calories per 12 ounces.

The label would read: "STATE OF CALIFORNIA SAFETY WARNING: Drinking beverages with added sugar(s) contributes to obesity, diabetes, and tooth decay."

Read the whole story

Bacon becoming a staple in the food world

By Charles Passy, MarketWatch

How far can the bacon boom go?

It’s a question that veteran “As Seen on TV” marketer Scott Boilen asked when he was given the opportunity to introduce yet another bacon product to an already crowded marketplace. But Boilen couldn’t resist the invention, a simple gizmo that turns a few strips of bacon into an edible shell. And so the Bacon Bowl was launched by Boilen’s Allstar Products Group via a series of infomercials in late 2013.

In a brief period, Boilen’s New York-based company has sold more than 2 million units of the $10.99 bacon cooker, making the Bowl a success story potentially on par with the Snuggie, to name Boilen’s biggest “As Seen on TV” hit.

The lesson? Never underestimate the power of bacon, says Boilen: “It’s almost become a cult-like food.”

Read the whole story

Youngsters consuming coffee in greater numbers

By Allison Aubrey, NPR

Energy drinks tend to get a bad rap. The Food and Drug Administration has investigated reports of deaths and sickness

linked to them. Hospitals have reported increased ER visits. And on Capitol Hill last summer, senators grilled energy maker execs about marketing to kids.

But when it comes to caffeine intake, teenagers seem to be getting far more caffeine from coffee drinks.

A new report, published in the journal Pediatrics, finds that 17- and 18-year-olds are consuming almost double the amount of caffeine from coffee compared with a decade earlier. And increasingly, younger tweens and teens, ages 12-16, are getting more caffeine from coffee, too.

Read the whole story

Italian wines more popular in U.S. than Italy

By Leslie Gevirtz, Reuters

NEW YORK – Americans are drinking more Italian wines than Italians themselves, owing to the popularity of sparkling wines from the southern European country and millennials.

Italian varieties are the top imported wine in the United States, which is the world's largest consumer market, according the Italian Wine and Food Institute.

Winemakers attending the Vinitaly trade show in New York said despite such classic Italian wines as Barolo, Brunello and Babaresco, the sparkler Prosecco is the favorite.

Read the whole story

’13 grape crush sets record in California

By Mark Glover, Sacramento Bee

California’s 2013 grape crush hit a record high 4,685,075 tons, up 6.8 percent from the previous record high 2012 crush of 4,387,434 tons, according to new statistics released Monday by the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

The department’s 2013 Preliminary Grape Crush Report said red wine varieties accounted for the largest share, at 2,405,942 tons, up 5 percent from 2012.t from 2012.

Read the whole story

Food industry to label GMO products

By Eliza Barclay, NPR

Remember those ballot initiatives California in Washington and that aimed to get food companies to label products containing genetically modified ingredients?

They failed, in 2012 and 2013, respectively, thanks in part to the tens of millions of dollars lavished by the Grocery

Manufacturers Association and other food industry groups on campaigns to convince consumers that labeling would make their food more expensive.

Even though the food industry won those battles, it’s not exactly eager to rehash them elsewhere. So now the GMA – along with a new coalition of 28 groups representing farmers, seed companies and other food producers who rely heavily on GMO ingredients – is changing its tune a bit.

Read the whole story