

## Gifts in a Jar

It is that time of year when we begin thinking of special gifts for special people in our lives. And with this past year being very different and maybe even difficult for some families, money may be tight. So, think about some special gifts you can make and share.

**“Gifts in a Jar”** is one way we can give a gift from our heart that is inexpensive. Even children can get involved in the project. Depending on their age, they can help to decorate the jars and labels.

**Begin with a clean mason jar.** These jars do not have to be home canning jars, since they are not going to be processed in a canner. You can recycle mayonnaise, pickle or spaghetti jars for this project. Save the lids also. They can be used to close the jar with the goodies on the inside. Decorate the lid with ribbon, lace or stickers.

**Think creatively.** The things you put in the jars can include soup, hot cocoa, or even cookie mixes. The ingredients can be layered in the jars to make it look pretty. Include a tag or label on the jar with the instructions as to how to prepare the contents. Decorate the jar to match the contents...or make the tag or label in the shape of the contents. For example, if it is a hot cocoa mix, make the tag in the shape of a mug.

**Think about food allergies.** Without your knowledge, the gift receiver may have some food allergies – maybe milk or gluten. To help them be aware and stay safe, list the contents of the mix on the back of the tag. They will appreciate this extra step.

**Choose a theme.** **“Gifts in a Jar”** does not always have to be food related. You could choose a theme such as a manicure. Include in the jar hand lotion, a nail file, nail polish, and a pair of gloves.

**Choose a container.** Jars aren't the only container that you can use. Zip bags can also be used, especially for items that are too big for a jar. Or look for coffee mugs that will hold enough hot cocoa mix for one. Or an ornament that can be filled with small, but special items. Again, be creative...think outside the box (or jar!)

If you need some ideas, you can request a booklet that has a number of suggestions in it, along with the recipes and tag instructions. Contact Renay Knapp at North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Henderson County Center for a free copy. Call our office at 828/697-4891 or email [renay\\_knapp@ncsu.edu](mailto:renay_knapp@ncsu.edu).

