



FOOD SAFETY UPDATE

Summertime Food Safety

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Summer is here and with it comes a host of food related activities— from picnics and potlucks to barbeques and summer camp. This is no time to start bending the rules of food safety. They seem so simple, but people still forget food safety's basic steps.



- Wash your hands.
- Clean utensils and counter tops.
- Cook food to recommended temperatures.
- Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot, if not refrigerated.

This newsletter will serve as a refresher whether you are planning a summer outing, group picnic, or cooking at 4-H summer camp.

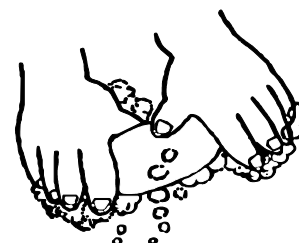
Wash Your Hands!!!

Washing hands properly is probably one of the easiest, cheapest things we can do to help prevent food borne illness on a daily out basis.

Before preparing food always wash your hands in hot, soapy water for 20 seconds. All soaps are not created equal, but when it comes to handwashing, it makes no difference. According to Karen Penner, a food safety specialist with K-State Research and Extension, "Any soap is better than no soap."

Bacteria on a person's hands is cited as one of the most common reasons for food contamination. In addition to possibly carrying food borne pathogens, people sometimes

can transmit dangerous viruses with their hands. "There's sort of a debate as to whether or not one should use antibacterial soap because (while it may kill dangerous pathogens) it also gets rid of normal micro flora that are on your hands and actually help protect against infectious organisms," Penner said. "In the research literature, it's really hard to determine whether or not to use an antibacterial soap, but clearly you need to wash your hands."



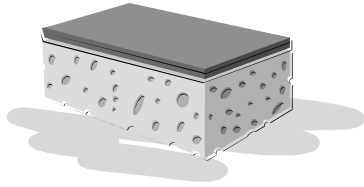
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Avoid Cross-Contamination

Cross-contamination is the transfer of harmful substances from one food to another by way of hands, utensils, equipment, or by splash and drippage. Research conducted in people's homes shows that consumers often contaminate food that is ready to eat with unclean hands, dirty utensils, or uncooked food. In studies, cross-contamination occurred in 31 percent of the households observed.



Avoid cross contamination in preparation area.

- Clean and sanitize food contact surfaces **after** working with raw foods and **before** working with ready to eat foods.

Avoid cross contamination in storage.

- Keep raw foods separate from ready-to-eat and cooked foods.
- Store cooked and ready-to-eat foods above raw foods.

Keep Food at the Correct Temperature

It is important to keep food out of the danger zone (40F–140F) as much as possible.

- Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator.
- Cook foods to correct temperature.
- Reheat foods to at least 165F.
- Reheat gravies, sauces and soups by heating to a boil.
- Cool foods from 140F to 40F quickly as possible.

Pass through the temperature danger zone as few times as possible.

- Hot foods should be cooled and reheated only one time.
- Foods that are not served after one reheating should be discarded.

Bacteria like warm temperatures.

Tap Water is Best for Cleaning Produce

Traditional cleansing of fruits and vegetables by washing with tap water is still the best method

for removing contamination. First make sure your hands are clean. Then, scrub the produce with plain water and a vegetable brush when possible. Produce sprays or dip solutions are now available and while they are designed to remove



unwanted residues, they are not marketed to remove bacteria.

Produce can easily become cross-contaminated from many sources. Bacteria live on towels, cutting boards, counter tops, utensils, and other kitchen areas; thus there is a need for frequent sanitation. *(See page 3 for produce pointers)*

Produce Pointers

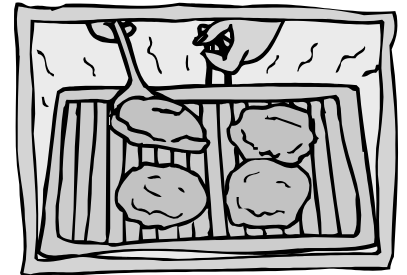
- Wash fruits such as oranges, cantaloupe, and watermelon before slicing. Cutting can cause bacteria on the peels to cross to the insides of the produce.
- Do not wash with bleach or soaps, since some fruits and vegetables can absorb liquids which could taint the taste of the product.



- Pre-packaged salad mixes are designed to eat directly from the bag.
- Wax coatings, used on some produce to retain moisture and to maintain fresh quality, can be cut off. This coating is not harmful.

Outdoor Grilling and Food Safety

- Keep meat cold until ready to grill. Do not leave meat out at room temperature.
- Pre-cooked meats can still be grilled to add authentic flavor and shorten grilling time.
- If starting with frozen products, thaw in the refrigerator or microwave. Grill immediately after thawing in the microwave.
- Do not use the same platter or utensils to handle raw and cooked products.
- Use a meat thermometer to check internal temperatures. Ground meat should be 160F, poultry 180F, and poultry breasts 170F.
- Once taken from the grill, keep the meat hot until serving in a warming tray or slow cooker.
- Place leftovers in the refrigerator. Discard anything left out more than two hours.
- Marinades enhance flavors, tenderize, and keep foods moist. Marinate food in refrigerator, not on the counter. If some of the marinade is to be used as a sauce on the cooked food, reserve a portion of the marinade before putting raw meat and poultry in it. However, if the marinade used on raw meat or poultry is to be reused, make sure to let it come to a boil first to destroy any harmful bacteria.



Grilling is a great way to spend time with family and friends.

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