

FactSheet

Para Su Información

Food Safety

Outdoor picnics and grilling are favorite summertime activities. When handling fresh fruits and vegetables or cooking outside the kitchen, it is particularly important to follow safety guidelines that prevent food borne illness. The U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration offer these guidelines for safe food handling and preparation:

Meats

Buy Meats Last... Refrigerate at Home Promptly

At the grocery store, buy cold food like meat and poultry last, right before checkout. Separate raw meat and poultry from other food in your shopping cart, and guard against cross-contamination by putting packages containing raw meat into plastic bags. Be sure to refrigerate perishable foods within 1 hour when the outdoor temperature is above 90 degrees F. Keep meat and poultry refrigerated until ready to use.

When Preparing Meats, Keep Everything Clean

Prevent food borne illness by using separate platters and utensils for raw and cooked meats. Harmful bacteria present in raw meat and raw meat juices can contaminate safely cooked food.

Precook Food Safely

Precooking food partially in the microwave oven, conventional oven or stove is a good way of reducing grilling time. Make sure that the food goes immediately on a preheated grill after precooking. Never partially cook meat or poultry and finish cooking later.

Cook Food Thoroughly

Meat and poultry cooked on a grill often brown very fast on the outside. Use a food thermometer to be sure the food has reached a safe internal temperature:

- Poultry, 180 degrees F
- Chicken breasts, 170 degrees F
- Hamburgers and all cuts of pork, 160 degrees F
- Beef, veal and lamb steaks, roasts and chops, 145 degrees F

Fully Reheat Foods

When reheating fully cooked meats, like hot dogs, grill to 165 degrees F or until steaming hot.

Keep Cooked Foods Hot

Cooked meats should be kept at 140 degrees F or warmer until served. Keep foods hot by setting them to the side of the grill rack, not directly over the coals where they could overcook.

Promptly Refrigerate Leftovers

Refrigerate any leftovers promptly in shallow containers. Discard any food left out more than 2 hours (1 hour if the air temperature is above 90 degrees F).

Fruits and Vegetables

Purchase fruit and vegetable free of bruises or damage.

After purchase, put produce that requires refrigeration away promptly. (Fresh whole produce like bananas and potatoes do not need refrigeration).

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Fresh fruits and vegetables should be refrigerated within 2 hours of peeling or cutting. Leftover cut produce should be discarded if left at room temperature for more than two hours.

Wash Your Hands Often

Hands should be washed with warm soapy water before and after handling fresh produce and raw meat, as well as after changing diapers or handling pets.

Wash All Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

Wash all fruits and vegetables with cold tap water immediately before eating or slicing. Do not use soaps or detergents. Scrub firm produce, such as cantaloupes, watermelons and cucumbers with a clean produce brush. Cut away any bruised or damaged areas before eating.

Wash Surfaces Often

Cutting boards, dishes and utensils should be

washed with hot soapy water, and sanitized before and after coming in contact with foods. Be careful not to cross contaminate. Use one cutting board and utensil for produce, another for meats.

Keep Cut Fruit and Vegetables Cold

Use a cooler of ice packs when transporting or storing any perishable food outside of the kitchen.

For more information, visit the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service website at www.fsis.usda.gov.



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