

# The Food Safety Times

## Grey Bruce Health Unit

"There is no sincerer love, than the love of food." (George Bernard Shaw)

### CANNING



In home canning, the food item must be heated to a high enough temperature and long enough to destroy any bacteria, yeast or mold organisms. These micro-organisms are always present in the air, water and soil. They can cause the food to spoil, or worse they could be the cause of a food-borne illness.

Proper care must be taken when doing home canning to prevent the contamination of the food being preserved. Follow recipe directions carefully as well as these steps to prevent a problem from occurring.

- The food must be canned in glass mason jars.
- Discard any jars or glass lids with chips, cracks or nicks in them.
- Replace old flat metal lids with new ones. They are to be only used once.
- Replace any rusted or bent metal bands.
- For jars requiring glass lids and rubber rings, purchase new rubber rings.
- Wash all equipment, jars and utensils in hot soapy water, and rinse well in clean hot water.
- Wash all food items with clean cold water to remove any dirt.
- Check all foods for blemishes, over-ripening or spoilage.
- It is recommended to use a pressure cooker to process jars instead of just a hot-water bath.
- Do not can meat or fish as they are particularly susceptible to botulism.
- After canning when jars are cooled ensure seals on jars are secure by tipping them upside down for 1 minute. If jar leaks, refrigerate and use contents within several days.
- Throw out any canned goods with signs of spoilage.

Take care when canning and you can enjoy the goodness of the summer all through the year.



### PACKING A SAFE LUNCH

Although many students buy lunch at school cafeterias, many more bring their lunch in the familiar brown paper bag or lunch box.

By following a few simple food safety rules, students can avoid getting sick from a lunch that was not handled properly.

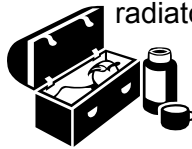
Here are a few tips for a safe school lunch.

#### Keep Cold Foods Cold (lower than 4°C or 40°F)



- Use an insulated lunch box.
- Even with insulated lunch box you must include a cold source such as frozen gel packs.
- Juice boxes can be packed frozen in the morning. By lunchtime they will have thawed.
- Paper and plastic bags become soggy or leak as cold foods thaw, try using double bags.

**Note:** whether a lunch box, paper or plastic bag is used, keep lunches in a cool place in the classroom, out of direct sunlight and away from radiators and other heat sources.



#### Keep Hot Foods Hot (more than 60°C or 140°F)

- Foods like soup, chili and stew need to stay hot.
- Use an insulated bottle stored in an insulated lunch box.
- Fill the bottle with boiling water, let stand a few minutes, empty, then put in the piping hot foods.
- Keep the insulated bottle closed until lunchtime.

**Please remember:** Lunch boxes and insulated thermoses are not designed to keep foods at the right temperature for extended periods of time. Therefore, all perishable foods that are not eaten at lunch should be discarded.

## LUNCH BOX SAFETY

D O S W X L K Y I M R C E T P  
 E R E N A E L C D K I C S O  
 S V A N P S U R I N S E I E U  
 I A D O O A J A J G F X U H L  
 C B L A B J R K G N H T J C T  
 K W P M L G E A I M L K Z I R  
 B A D W P Y N S T W G A K W Y  
 V V D P T P I I C E Y B Y D Y  
 C I R Y L D H T T H L Z E N P  
 V O B L L L H Q C T E C I A Z  
 A Z O B T E I N C A U S Y S E  
 T N K K R H U H M T A C V V C  
 D E U M J L Y F C U G A G Y D  
 O F O Q Q J X L Z L T B T N S  
 U S X F I A D B A C T E R I A

**BACTERIA**

**CLEAN**

**CUTTING-BOARD**

**ICE**

**LUNCH**

**RINSE**

**SEPARATE**

**SOAP**

**CHILL**

**COOK**

**DISINFECT**

**JUICE**

**POULTRY**

**SANDWICHES**

**SICK**

**THERMOS**



## POWER OUTAGE



Power outages can occur at any time. Foods that require a constant temperature are very vulnerable to power failures. Without power the refrigerator section will keep foods cool 4 to 6 hours, depending on the temperature of the refrigerator, the kitchen, as well as how often the door is opened. Ice can be used to keep foods on the shelves cool. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed unless absolutely necessary. Without power, a full upright or chest freezer will keep everything frozen for about 2 days. A half-full freezer will keep food frozen 1 day.

If your food has thawed, it can be re-frozen if it still contains ice crystals or feels "refrigerator cold". Discard any thawed hazardous foods whose internal temperature has risen into the danger zone (between 4°C/40°F and 60°C/140°F) and remained there for 2 hours or more. After 2 hours in the

danger zone bacteria can multiply to unsafe levels. Discard anything with a strange colour or odour immediately.

Perishables can be placed in coolers and packed with ice to keep for longer periods. A cooler is easier to keep cool than a large refrigerator.

## HALLOWEEN CANDY SAFETY

Halloween is a fun time for children. The following list of food safety tips for parents is to ensure that their children's holiday is a safe and healthy one, too.

- Children shouldn't snack while they're out trick-or-treating before the parents have a chance to inspect the food. To help prevent children from munching, give them a snack or light meal before they go--don't send them out on an empty stomach.
- Tell children not to accept--and, especially, not to eat--anything that isn't commercially wrapped.
- When children bring their treats home, discard any homemade candy or baked goods. Parents of young children should also remove any choking hazards such as gum, peanuts, hard candies or small toys.
- Wash all fresh fruit thoroughly, inspect it for holes, including small punctures, and cut it open before allowing children to eat it.
- Inspect commercially wrapped treats for signs of tampering, such as an unusual appearance or discoloration, tiny pinholes, or tears in wrappers. Throw away anything that looks suspicious.
- If juice or cider is served to children at Halloween parties, make sure it is pasteurized or otherwise treated to destroy harmful bacteria. Juice or cider that has not been treated will say so on the label.

Remember if you're in doubt of the candy throw it out. It is better to be safe than sorry.

