

The Food Safety Times

Summer 2003

GREY BRUCE HEALTH UNIT

Barbecue Safety

Longer days and warmer weather inevitably lead to backyard barbecues. As the temperature rises so too does the incidence of food poisonings. This can be because of the increased temperatures of the season and careless food handling practices. So, before you put on your hat and apron, keep in mind a few facts about preparing and cooking meat.

Get Ready!



- Completely thaw meat and poultry before grilling so it cooks more evenly. Use the refrigerator for slow, safe thawing. Foods can be defrosted in the microwave if they will be placed immediately onto the grill.
- Ensure all marinating (meat and poultry) occurs in the refrigerator, not on the counter.
- Do not re-use any portion of the marinade that has come in contact with raw meat. Save a portion of the fresh marinade to use as a final baste for meat or salad.

Get Set!

- Pre-cooking meat or poultry can greatly reduce the amount of grilling time. However, this practice is safe **ONLY** if the food goes directly onto the grill.
- Be sure to use a fresh plate for cooked foods. Bacteria from the raw products can spread to cooked foods if they are placed on the same plate.
- Personal hygiene, handwashing, and utensil and work surface sanitation are all important factors when it comes to safe food handling.

- Wash and sanitize all utensils, cutting boards and counters to prevent bacteria from raw meats from contaminating other foods. Use warm soapy water to cut the grease and
- Effectively sanitize by mixing 1 oz. of bleach to 4 litres of water.
- Minimize the amount of food you take out to the grill. Allow foods to remain refrigerated until there is room for them on the grill.

Go!

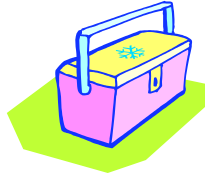
- **DO NOT** allow foods to remain at room or outside temperatures. Bacteria can grow quickly at these temperatures and may produce toxins in the food that will **NOT** be destroyed by cooking.
- All foods **MUST** be cooked thoroughly. For optimal safety, meat should reach an internal temperature of 68°C (155°F) or higher and poultry should reach an internal temperature of 74°C (165°F) or higher. Slice the meat to ensure that there are no signs of pink and the juices run clear.
- Serve food immediately after preparation. Hazardous foods should not be left out of the refrigerator for more than **one hour**.

Remember:

You play an important role in food safety. Summer is a special time so don't let it be ruined by a backyard barbecue. When it comes to food poisonings, prevention is in your hands.



Picnic Food Safety



With the hot, hazy days of summer upon us we want to spend as much time outside as possible. Picnics are an excellent way to get outside and enjoy the summer weather. If the food we take on our picnic isn't handled safely however it could spell disaster, causing people to become ill.

Hazardous foods are those in which food poisoning bacteria can grow rapidly unless proper heating or refrigeration is maintained. Hazardous foods include red meats, fish, fowl, dairy products and eggs. Below are some tips on keeping your picnics safe and enjoyable:

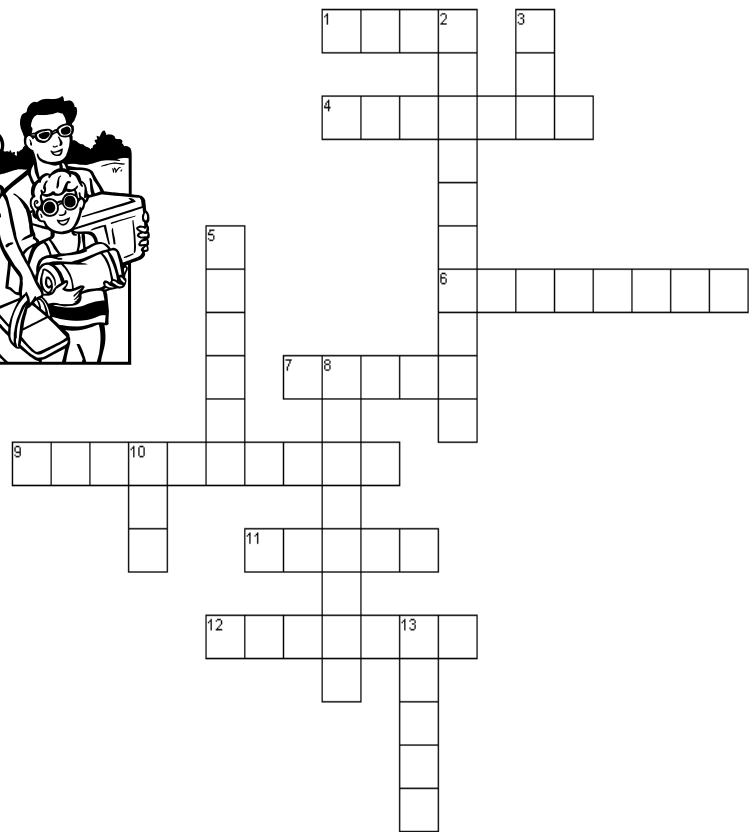
- Keeping foods at the proper temperature is the most important factor.
 - ✓ Keep hot foods hot: 60°C/140°F or higher
 - ✓ Keep cold foods cold: 5°C/40°F or lower
- An insulated cooler, not a picnic basket, must be used to ensure that potentially hazardous foods remain at the proper temperature.
- Pre-chill all foods in the refrigerator before packing the cooler. Keep foods refrigerated until just before you leave to ensure they remain cold for as long as possible.
- Pack ice packs on top of food items and freeze juice boxes. Frozen juice boxes will help keep the cooler temperature cold until you are ready to drink them.
- Store your cooler in the passenger part of the car, not the trunk. The cooler will have a hard time keeping foods cool if stored in the hot trunk.
- When outside, keep your cooler in the shade and open it as little as possible. It is best to eat when you arrive before the temperature inside the cooler rises to unacceptable levels. Return all leftovers to the cooler immediately or discard them.
- If you plan to take hot foods such as cooked chicken, wrap them tightly in foil and carry them in a separate insulated cooler so they do not heat up the cold



foods. Store chili and soups in a thermos container to make sure they stay hot.

- Handwashing is very important in preventing illness. If the picnic area you have chosen has the facilities, wash your hands prior to serving and handling the food. If you are picnicking where facilities are not available take some moist towelettes for wiping your hands.

Don't let your picnic end on a bad note. Follow these tips and enjoy the warm weather by eating outside.



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|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Picnic pests | 7. Makes your eyes water |
| 2. Named after an Earl | 8. Adds flavor to the meat |
| 3. Keeps everything cold | 9. Cook these well |
| 4. Picnic ground covering | 10. Short for barbeque |
| 5. Keep food in this | 11. Turns food over |
| 6. BBQ briquettes | 12. Sold at ball parks |
| | 13. Place food on here to cook |

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|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1. Ants | 6. Charcoal | 11. Tongs |
| 2. Sandwich | 7. Smoke | 12. Hotdogs |
| 3. Ice | 8. Marinade | 13. Grill |
| 4. Blanket | 9. Hamburgers | |