

Family and Consumer Science News

Spring, 2022

Food Safety

World Food Safety Day is in June, which makes it the perfect time to review the core four practices for food safety: Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill.

Clean: Wash your hands and kitchen surfaces often. According to the Partnership for Food Safety Education, a recent study found that 65 percent of consumers did not wash their hands before preparing a meal. This misstep can have dangerous consequences, since bacteria can spread through contact with kitchen surfaces and food. You should wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food, as well as after using the bathroom or handling pets.

Separate: Foodborne bacteria spread through cross-contamination. To prevent this spread, you should separate raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs from other foods. This separation should be maintained in your shopping cart at the grocery store, inside your refrigerator, and during meal preparation. Never place cooked food on a surface (such as a cutting board or plate) which previously held raw meat, poultry, seafood, or eggs without first washing the surface with hot water and soap.



Cook: Color is not a reliable indicator of food safety! Use a food thermometer to ensure the internal temperature of cooked foods is high enough to kill the bacteria which cause foodborne illnesses. Insert the thermometer in the thickest part of the food, and clean it with hot water and soap after each use. Beef and pork should be cooked to 145°F with a three minute "rest time" after being removed from the heat source. Ground meats should be cooked to 160°F. Poultry and leftovers should be cooked to 165°F.

Chill: Refrigerate foods promptly to slow the spread of bacteria. Temperatures below 40°F will slow their growth. All perishables, prepared foods, and leftovers should be refrigerated or frozen within two hours (or one hour if the temperature is greater than 90°F).

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to our Facebook page!



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More Plants on the Plate

by Linda Leonard, Allen County FCE President

Crispy, crunchy, colorful, and delicious – all are words that describe a wide variety of vegetable, fruit, and whole grain dishes. The body's nutritional requirements can be adequately met by consuming plant-based foods. Most plant-based foods are naturally low in calories and fat.

On the average, adults living in the United States consume almost 600 calories per person beyond what is needed each day for growth, maintenance, and physical activity. The estimated number of calories needed by the average adult is 2,200 each day.

Think about it. When our stomachs are empty and our schedules are full, we tend to grab and eat. Chances are, there is not much thought as to how nourishing or even how satisfying the foods really are.

The benefits of consuming more plants are many.

*Weight control: Weight is maintained when calories consumed in a day are consistently burned. Vegetables, fruits, legumes, and whole-grain foods typically provide a feeling of fullness with fewer calories, compared to other types of foods.

*High dietary fiber benefit: Several decades of studies have confirmed the health benefits of eating a fiber-rich diet. Only plant foods contain fiber. Diets containing fiber – such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains – may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease and improve regularity.

*Chronic disease management: Consuming a diet featuring more plants is good for your health. Complex carbohydrates are easy to digest and the antioxidants that are present in plants help strengthen your body's immune system. Doing whatever is in your power to prevent chronic diseases by making healthy food choices can save money in the long run.

Many people simply live to eat. For improved health, now is the time to eat to live. Adopting a more plant-based diet requires a change in thinking. As research in nutrition has advanced, it has become apparent that there is room for improvement with the typical American plate. Consider including generous portions of vegetables, fruits, whole grains and lean protein choices at each meal.

(Information taken from K-State lesson "More Plants on the Plate" written by Donna Krug.)

Spring Strawberry and Spinach Salad

1 bunch spinach or mixed salad greens
10 large strawberries, sliced
1 small red onion, cut into rings

Additional toppings may include:

Green onion	Slivered almonds
Garlic (minced)	Cheese (grated)
Asparagus (blanched)	Cooked turkey (cut into strips or cubes)
Sunflower seeds	

Dressing:

1/2 cup pineapple juice	2 tablespoons vinegar
1 tablespoon olive oil	1 1/2 teaspoons lemon juice
1 1/2 teaspoons poppy seeds	1/4 teaspoon dried basil or 1 tablespoon fresh basil

Nutrition information per serving; 4 servings per recipe:

100 calories, 3 g protein, 4.5 g total fat (.5 g saturated fat), 12 g carbohydrates, 70 mg sodium

(Source: *Simply in Season Cookbook*, and "Simply Seasonal Meals" KSRE publication MF3217)



Are You and Your Food Prepared for a Power Outage?

Power outages can be inconvenient or devastating. A prolonged outage can leave you with a refrigerator and freezer full of spoiled food. Many assume power outages are covered by their homeowners insurance, but vary between insurer carriers and policies.

Read your policy carefully, check if food spoilage is specifically excluded within your list of exclusions. If it is included, what situations does it apply to? Does it cover loss of power off-premises, such as a wind storm, or due to fault of the power company? Policies may only cover if the outage originated on your property. They may not cover if the loss is your fault, such as accidentally unplugging the unit for a home remodel.

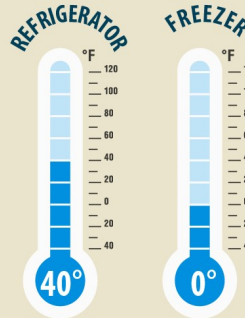
If there is coverage, what is the coverage amount? A policy may be limited to \$250 or \$500 per occurrence. Also, is it applied to the deductible or not? Utility companies may reimburse a policy holder the deductible if a claim is filed.

Eat Safe Food after a Power Outage

Before a power outage, keep appliance thermometers in your refrigerator and freezer.

⚡ The refrigerator should be at 40°F or below.

⚡ The freezer should be at 0°F or below.



It is also important to know what kind of documentation is required to make a claim. Document your loss before throwing food away by making a list and taking photos of the spoiled food, estimate the cost, and gather receipts for pricey items such as meat.

If you experience a temporary power outage, keep your family and food safe from foodborne illness. Monitor temperatures by keeping an appliance thermometer in both the refrigerator and freezer. Make sure the refrigerator temperature is at 40 F or below and the freezer is at 0 F or below.

Your refrigerator will keep food safe for up to 4 hours during a power outage if the door stays closed. Food will stay safe for up to 48 hours in a full freezer and 24 hours in a half-full freezer. Discard perishable food after these time frames.

Eat Safe Food after a Power Outage

During a power outage, keep refrigerator & freezer doors closed

⚡ If the doors stay closed, food will stay safe for up to:



4
Hours in a
Refrigerator



48
Hours in a
FULL
Freezer

24
Hours in a
HALF-FULL
Freezer

CS110309-C

Eat Safe Food after a Power Outage

After a power outage, never taste food to determine if it is safe to eat.

⚡ Throw out perishable food in your refrigerator after 4 hours without power or a cold source.

⚡ Throw out any food with an unusual odor, color, or texture.

When in doubt, throw it out.



When in doubt, throw it out! Even if the loss of food creates a financial hardship, it pales in comparison to the risks of consuming unsafe, contaminated food. Some foodborne illnesses can result in a costly hospital stay, if not death. If you have questions about the safety of your food, please call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) or chat live with a food safety specialist at [AskKaren.gov](https://askkaren.gov).

For more information or questions, contact Joy Miller at 620-223-3720 or e-mail joymiller@ksu.edu.

Let's Get Growing!

You read about eating and enjoying more vegetables. Now, read about growing your *own* vegetables and fruit.

Planting and tending a garden is still a favorite hobby and pastime for millions of Americans. But for many, a big garden can be too much to handle. Is that true for you? Or are you short on space for a garden? Consider then, a container or raised bed garden. You can enjoy your plants more fully by growing them on patios, balconies, window boxes, or small plots in your yard. And a home garden is an excellent source of the freshest, most flavorful and nutritious produce!

According to a KSRE news service article, containers can make gardening easier because it's a small space. Using a good, quality potting soil makes it easy to maintain. Containers eliminate the need to stoop over or bend to work the ground.

How big should the container be? That depends on the type of plants you plan to grow. Most small vegetables will grow in containers ranging from 5-inch pots to gallon-size. Larger vegetables, such as dwarf tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers will require 1- to 3-gallon containers, while full-size tomatoes will need at least a 3-gallon container. You can also plant two or three small vegetables together in a larger container.



The biggest concern or challenge with container gardening is the water and fertilization. If you want a lower maintenance garden, always go with a larger size container, because the smaller the container, the more rapidly it dries out. Frequent watering also washes out the fertilizer. Many gardeners prefer to apply a dilute fertilizer solution at every other watering. If you choose that method, use only one-fourth the recommended rate unless the instructions state otherwise for continuous feeding. Controlled-release or time-release fertilizers are also widely available. These are pellets designed to release fertilizer gradually over a long period of time. Use these according to label directions.

Raised bed gardening has also become a popular gardening practice. The beds are usually raised off the ground 6- to 8-inches. Most gardeners use some sort of framing materials such as railroad ties, landscape timbers, planking, rocks, or bricks.

The size of the bed varies depending on the gardener. Many are 4 by 8 foot or 4 by 10 foot. The 4-foot width is preferred because it allows for an easy reach into the bed from either side to tend the plants. A 6- to 8-inch depth of the bed at minimum is recommended because most of the main feeder roots of the vegetable crops will be located for nutrients and water uptake at that depth.



No matter which kind of garden you choose, there are many resources available from K-State Research and Extension. Information for this article came from KSRE publications, including these:

"Kansas Garden Guide", publication S-51 rev, Raised Bed Gardening" publication MF2134 rev, "Harvest and Storage of Fruits and Vegetables" publication MF661, and "Making Everyday Choices for a Healthy, Sustainable Diet" publication MF3060. Publications are available online:

<https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu> or at your local Extension office. You can also direct questions to Krista Harding, Southwind Extension District Horticulture agent: 620-244-3826