

Summer Food Safety

Brooke Beam, Ph.D.

Ohio State University Extension, Highland County

Agriculture and Natural Resources/Community Development Educator

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Pictured: Want some tips on smoking brisket? See the Ohio State University Extension Facebook video.

Happy 4th of July weekend! I hope your weekend is filled with family, fun, and fireworks. Whatever your plans may be this weekend, remember to be safe and use good judgment for any activity you may partake in. In addition to family, fun, and fireworks, food is another component of many Independence Day celebrations. Whether you are the grill master or are supplying the side dishes, food safety is important, particularly with the hot weather we have been experiencing this past week.

Foodborne illnesses are also referred to as food poisoning. "There are over 76 million cases of foodborne illnesses each year in the United States" (Fisher & Mederios,

2010, p. 1). These illnesses can be a serious concern for young children, pregnant women, the chronically ill and the elderly as they are the most susceptible. Many symptoms of foodborne illnesses are similar to the flu; however, the severity of foodborne illnesses can range from nausea and diarrhea to extreme cases of septicemia or meningitis.

The first step to preventing foodborne illnesses is to frequently wash hands and anything that comes into contact with food during the preparation process using warm soapy water. Preventing cross-contamination between raw foods (especially meats) and other components of the meal also

reduces the opportunity for foodborne illnesses to develop.

Avoid eating foods containing raw eggs or use pasteurized eggs in foods containing raw eggs that will not be cooked.

Refrigeration is an important factor for food safety. Food that requires refrigeration should not be left out of a refrigerator for longer than two hours. Foods are in a Danger Zone if the temperature of the foods are between 40 and 140 degrees Fahrenheit. "With some exceptions, fresh foods, opened foods, and cooked foods should not be kept in the refrigerator longer than 4 to 7 days" (Fisher & Mederios, 2010, p. 2). If you are planning on keeping foods longer than 7 days, it is

recommended to freeze the foods. For a list of recommendations on the refrigerator storage dates, see <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/HYG-5403>.

Meats should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160 degrees Fahrenheit. A meat thermometer should be used to check the internal temperature of all meats. "All poultry products, chicken or turkey burgers, hot dogs and sausages" should be cooked to 165 degrees Fahrenheit (Bates & Ilic, 2017, p. 3). "Ground beef, including burgers, should be cooked to 160 degrees Fahrenheit and steaks, roasts, chops and seafood to at least 145 degrees Fahrenheit" (Bates & Ilic, 2017, p. 3).

In conclusion, wash your hands, use refrigeration and a meat thermometer to have a healthy and happy weekend. Practice these tips year-round to prevent foodborne illnesses for yourself and your family. If you would like a printed copy of the recommended refrigerator storage dates mentioned above, contact the Ohio State University Extension Office in Hillsboro at 937-393-1918.

References:

Bates, J. & Ilic, S. (2017). Backyard Grilling: Food Safety Practices to Keep on the Front

Burner. *Ohioline*. Retrieved from <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/hyg-5390>

Fisher, L. & Medeiros, L. (2010). Refrigerator Storage. *Ohioline*. Retrieved from <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/HYG-5403>

Rohrs, B. (2013). Foodborne Illness: Guess Who Came to Dinner? *Ohioline*. Retrieved from <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/HYG-5370>

Rohrs, B. (2012). Salmonella. *Ohioline*. Retrieved from <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/HYG-5366-11>

Stehulak, N. (2011). Staphylococcus aureus: A Problem When Food Is Left Out Too Long. *Ohioline*. Retrieved from <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/HYG-5364-11>

Upcoming Events:

Interested in learning more about insects and photography? Join OSU Extension Ed Tech Specialist and macro photographer, Danae Wolfe, at Secret Arboretum on July 7-8, 2018, for two photography sessions. The programs are from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. daily. The cost is \$65 to participate, but the registration fee includes lunch and snacks for both days. A digital camera with interchangeable lenses is required for participation in this program.

The Highland County Ohio State University Extension Office will host the second **Monthly Extension Programming** on July 25, 2018, at the Ponderosa Steakhouse in Hillsboro. The guest speaker will be Eugene Braig, the Program Director of the School of Environmental and Natural Resources' Extension Aquatic Ecosystems program. The program will consist of pond health and management. Please RSVP via email to beam.49@osu.edu or by phone at

937-393-1918. Plan to purchase lunch on your own.

Join the Highland County Soil and Water Conservation District, Ohio Department of Agriculture, USDA NRCS, Ohio State University Extension, and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife for a **Grazing Workshop**. The event will be held at the Millstone Creek Farm at 9061 Grabill Road, Hillsboro, Ohio. The event is free, but you should RSVP to the Highland SWCD at 937-393-1922. Dinner will be provided by the Highland County Cattlemen Association and Union Stockyards. The program will be held from 6 P.M. to 9 P.M.

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Brooke Beam, Ph.D.

Extension Educator, Agriculture and Natural Resources/Community Development

College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences

OSU Extension, Highland County

119 Governor Foraker Place, Suite 202
Hillsboro, Ohio 45133

937-393-1918 Office

beam.49@osu.edu

937-393-0222 Fax

highland.osu.edu



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