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Summer 2015

10 Food Safety Tips for Summer

The hot weather is the perfect time to picnic and cook outdoors, but the warm weather also creates the perfect environment to support the growth of harmful food bugs. Keep your food and family safe by following these simple tips.

#1: Use a thermometer

A thermometer is the number one tool to make sure your grilled goodies are cooked to the perfect temperature to destroy pesky pathogens. Studies show that checking the color of the food isn't an accurate way to tell if your food is cooked through.

#2: Monitor leftovers

Perishable food like cooked or raw meats and salads should never be left out at room temperature for over 2 hours. When the weather gets hot — above 90 degrees Fahrenheit — your window for leaving food lying out is only 1 hour. Toss any unrefrigerated food if it surpasses the time limit.

#3: Don't re-use marinades

During the summer, meats and poultry are oftentimes marinated then grilled. Be sure to discard used marinade—this will prevent raw meat juices getting on your cooked food. If you plan on using the marinade as a sauce for cooked meat, reserve some before marinating the meat.

#4: Separate raw and cooked foods

If you're getting ready to grill hot dogs, burgers, chicken or steak, be sure to use one plate for the raw stuff and a separate, clean plate for the newly cooked foods. The same rule applies for tongs and other serving utensils.

#5: Wash hands properly

Are you washing your hands properly?

#6: Pack a safe picnic

Raw meats and poultry should be packed in a separate cooler and surrounded by ice. If you have a long drive, coolers should be stored in the air-conditioned part of the car rather than in the hot trunk.

#7: Defrost meats properly

Leaving raw meat and poultry on the countertop to defrost will only allow dangerous food bugs to grow. Plan ahead and defrost meat 1-2 days in advance in the refrigerator.

#8: Wash produce thoroughly

Wash fruit and veggies in cool tap water before eating to eliminate any bacteria. This includes washing produce like melon before you slice or peel it to make sure bacteria isn't transferred from the knife to your fruit or veggies.

#9: Wash reusable grocery store bags

If use reusable grocery bags, it's important to wash them regularly. Studies found that harmful bacteria can linger in your totes and hitch a ride with ready-to-eat foods like produce.

#10: Decrease your cancer risk

Grilling is popular during the warm weather but improper cooking techniques can increase your cancer risk.

Follow [these simple tips](#) to make sure you're grilling safely.

Child Care Corner

How to make fireflies that really light up



Remember when you were a kid how magical it was when the summer sun finally set at the end of the day and the fireflies came out and you never wanted to come inside even though your older sister told you your house was built on a graveyard and the zombies would come out at night? Well, here's a super quick craft to help your kids feel a little bit of that magic.



These fireflies are super easy to make. Just pop a flameless LED tea light into a plastic Easter egg. You don't even need glue! Poke holes through the egg with a thumbtack to insert the pipe cleaners. The eyes are drawn onto white sticky labels, and the wings are silver duct tape. Quick, easy, and totally cute!



Homemade Bubble Recipe

Ingredients

- 4 cups of water
- 1/2 cup of corn syrup
- 1/2- 2/3 cup of dish soap



You want the water to be fairly warm. I heat it up in my kettle and well before it starts boiling I take it off and dump it into our bubble jar. If you have really hot tap water you can probably use that too.

You add the corn syrup to the warm water and stir it until it dissolves. Then add the dish soap.

Used to only use Dawn dish soap but now I use whatever I have. This batch was made with lime and sea salt Method dish soap and it smelled delicious.

After it sits and cools it's time to play!

I think the solution gets even more bubbly after the first day so feel free to make it in advance.

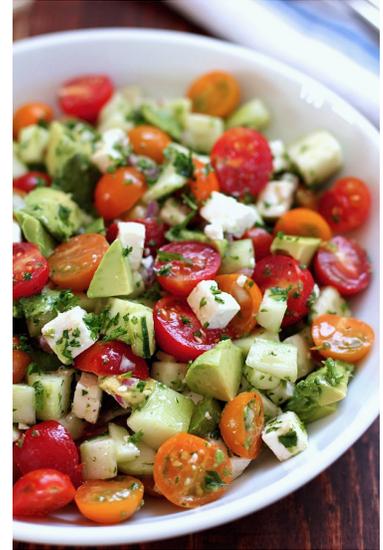
I make ours in a big half gallon mason jar because the measurements are on the side and there is a top for storage but if you are worried about the glass breaking use whatever container you have.

Recipe Corner

Tomato, Cucumber, Avocado Salad

Ingredients

- 1½ cups of chopped tomatoes - I used cherry tomatoes
- 1 cucumber - peeled and seeded then diced
- 1 avocado - diced
- 4 oz feta cheese - cubed
- 2 tbs minced red onion
- 1 handful parsley - minced - about 2 tbs
- 2 tbs olive oil
- 1 tbs red wine vinegar



Instructions

1. Chop tomatoes into a medium dice. If using cherry tomatoes, cut in half. Add to a bowl.
2. Peel and seed one cucumber and dice. Add to bowl.
3. Remove pit, dice avocado and using a spoon scoop out the avocado from the peel. Add to bowl.
4. Cube feta and add to bowl.
5. Add minced red onion and minced parsley to bowl.
6. Whisk together olive oil, red wine vinegar and black pepper - pour over salad.

Texas Extension Educators Association Corner

Texas Extension Educators Association meet every first Monday in the Bauer Exhibit building. If you are interested in joining us come by at 9a.m. and have coffee and donuts with us.

Any members who would like to donate non perishable food (not expired) for the food pantry please bring them to the meeting.

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