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Foodborne illness prevention starts at the grocery store

You always thaw meat in the refrigerator. You have separate cutting boards for raw meat and vegetables. You cook food to the proper internal temperature. You do everything possible to prevent foodborne illness at home.

But did you know that consumers can help prevent foodborne illness starting at the grocery store, supermarket or any other place food is purchased?

Barbara Brown, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service food specialist, said consumers play a key role in preventing foodborne illnesses.

“According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, foodborne ailments cause about 325,000 hospitalizations and 5,200 deaths per year,” Brown said. “By combining food safety practices from home with the following tips while at the grocery store, you can help cut down the number of cases of foodborne illness.”

First, check for cleanliness. Purchasing food items from a retailer who follows proper food handling practices helps ensure that the food is safe.

Always separate raw meat, poultry and seafood from other foods in your shopping cart. Consumers should place all raw meat, poultry and seafood in plastic bags to prevent their juices from dripping on other foods. Also try to keep these foods separated from other foods during the checkout and bagging process.

Do not purchase food in cans that are dented or bulging. Pass up foods in jars that are cracked or have loose or bulging lids.

“Foods that have been commercially processed are sterile and have an extended shelf life as long as the can or jar is intact,” she said. “A bulging can or jar lid can possibly mean the food was under-processed and is contaminated. A dent in a can, especially if the dent is near a seam, may damage the seam which could allow contamination. A loose lid on a jar

means the vacuum has been lost and the food may be contaminated.”

When purchasing frozen foods, make sure the package is not damaged. Packages should not be open, torn or crushed on the edges. If the package cover is transparent, check for signs of frost or ice crystals. This could mean that the food in the package has been thawed and refrozen or has been stored for an extended period of time.

“Select frozen foods and other perishables last when grocery shopping in order to ensure food safety. Meat, poultry, fish and eggs should be the last items you place in your cart,” Brown said.

When selecting eggs, open the carton and make sure that the eggs are clean and none are cracked. Be sure to follow the “Safe Handling Instructions” on the carton.

Once consumers get home it is important to refrigerate perishable foods as quickly as possible. Food safety experts stress the “2-hour rule.” This is the time limit in which harmful bacteria can start to multiply.

“Perishable foods should not be left at room temperature for more than two hours. Modify that time frame to just an hour if the temperature is above 90 degrees, as it often is in cars that have been parked in the sun. If it will take more than an hour to get groceries home, pack frozen foods and other perishables in an ice chest. It’s also a better idea to transport foods inside the passenger compartment of the vehicle and not in the trunk.”

Blaine County Fair

Our County Fair will be here before we know it! I hope that you are making lots of entries as we speak. Please keep in mind that due to the cancelled fair last year, any items that were constructed for that fair (except 4-H items) are eligible for this year's fair as well as items from this year. Hope to see lots of entries for 2008!

A new category added this year will be "Geneology".

Fair Kitchen

Dana Syzmore will once again be our Kitchen Manager. Each group is asked to donate home-made pies and work their shift.

Each group will need to furnish six pies and one other dessert (i.e. brownies, cake, Rice Krispie treats, etc.) Please bring pies before noon, if at all possible.

HCE Fair Kitchen Schedule

Thursday, August 21st

4:00-8:30p.m. 1 member from each group

Friday, August 22nd

8:00am-12:00noon – 2 members each group

11:00 – 3:00p.m. - 2 members each group

3:00-8:30p.m. - 2 members each group

Saturday, August 23rd

8:00am-12:00 noon – 2 members each group

11:00-3:00 p.m. - 2 members each group

3:00-7:00p.m. - 2 members each group

Blaine County Fair Cake Auction

The proceeds from this auction pay the adult premiums in the Foley Building during the County Fair. We are counting on our HCE cake bakers to help make this event a success.

The auction will be on Friday, August 22nd at 7:30 p.m. Cakes need to be delivered by 6:30 p.m. on Friday. A cake entered in the fair can also be used at the auction. Please tell the superintendents, if it is to be auctioned when you enter the cake in the baking division.

Please encourage our local businesses to come out and support this project.

Blaine County Free Fair Schedule August 21, 22 & 23, 2008

THURSDAY

- 4:00p.m. - Entries by Exhibitors - THURSDAY Evening
- 4:00p.m. - Livestock Entries Weigh-in By Superintendents
- 6:30p.m. - Entries close for non-livestock exhibits
- 8:00p.m. - All livestock Entries must be in place, including Poultry & Rabbits
- 9:00p.m. - Exhibit Room Closes

FRIDAY

- 7:00a.m. Judging of Swine Exhibits
- 7:30a.m. Non-livestock Entries by Exhibitors
- Livestock Entries must be entered on Thursday Eve.
- 8:00a.m. Commercial exhibits open
- 9:00a.m. Judging of Poultry & Rabbits Exhibits
- 10:00a.m. All exhibits must be in place
- 11:00a.m. Judging of Home & Community Education, 4-H, Agricultural, & Open Class
- 2:00p.m. Judging of Sheep Exhibits
- 4:00p.m. Blaine Co. Elected Officials Watermelon Feed
- 6:00-7:00pm – Practice for Tractor Driving Contest
- 7:00p.m. Tractor Driving Contest
- 6:00p.m. Bucket Calf Show
- 6:00p.m. Entries to Pet Show, Arena Building
- 6:30p.m. Judging of Homemade Ice Cream
- 7:00p.m. Ice Cream served
- 7:30p.m. Cake Auction, Foley Bldg
- 8:30pm. Gospel Concert, Foley Bldg
- 9:00p.m. Exhibit Room Closes & **Release of Poultry & Rabbits ONLY**

SATURDAY

- 8:00a.m. Commercial & Fair Exhibits open
- 9:00a.m. Judging of Cattle Exhibits
- 9:00-12noon. 4-H Consumer Judging Contest, Foley Building
- 1:00p.m. Entries for Pie Baking Contest Taken
- 2:00p.m. Judging of Goat Exhibits
- 2:00p.m. Judging of Pie Baking Contest
- 3:00p.m. Most Man Appealing Pie Contest, Foley Building
- 6:00p.m. Entries to Youth Horse Show
- 6:00p.m. Non-Livestock Entries Released
- 7:00p.m. Youth Horse Show

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Editor:

Joy Rhodes

Extension Educator-FCS/4-H

2008 Fair Catalogs

The 2008 Fair catalog will be available in the Extension Office and at local businesses by July 15th. Fair tags are also in stock at the Extension Office. Be sure and check out the "Special Categories" for the 2008 Fair.

Country Store & County Fair

The fair will be here before we know it! Hope that all of you have been busy completing your exhibits or at least making plans to finish right away. Don't forget about the Country Store. The Country Store sells donations from your garden and kitchen. Please have the cookies packaged in ready to eat portions, produce in bags and items priced. All of the proceeds from the Country Store assist in funding the scholarships that are awarded to high school seniors from Blaine County.

HCE Leader Lessons

The lesson for August will be presented on July 24th, 10:00 a.m. at the Fairgrounds, Foley Building. Topic for the lesson is "Thrifty Fashions". Paul Post, Kingfisher Extension Educator, will be our guest presenter.

Our lesson for September will be a mail-out. Leaders may pick up the lesson after August 15th or at the fair.

Lesson Ideas for 2009

Before long it will be time to choose our lesson topics for 2009. To assist in the creation of the ballot, we need everyone to brainstorm and send in your ideas. Please submit your topic suggestions to the Extension Office following your meeting in July. A ballot will be created and sent in our next newsletter. Thanks for your assistance.

Green HCE Cookbooks

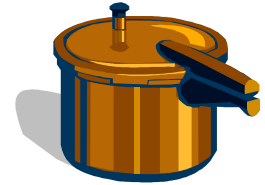
We still have a supply of the Green HCE Cookbooks available for sale. The price is \$10. We will receive another shipment at the State OHCE meeting, so be sure

and get your copy or do your holiday shopping early!



Pressure Cooker Tester

In the past, Blaine County has not had the capability to test your Pressure Cooker Gauge.



We recently acquired a Pressure Cooker Gauge Tester. You are welcome to bring the gauge to your canner to the Extension Office for testing. Your canner gauge will be tested and ready for you within a few days. Make an appointment with Joy for this service. If you have not canned for a few years, or just want to be sure your gauge is accurate, please take advantage of this free testing.

Thanks for the Cookies

Thanks to all the groups who donated cookies for Farm Safety Day. We had approximately 150 students and volunteers for the day. A special thanks to the HCE ladies who helped prepare and serve the meal. You are greatly appreciated for all of your time and assistance.

Meals on Wheels

Don't forget to volunteer to help deliver meals on wheels at the Watonga Senior Citizens Center. You will only need to deliver on three days of the week, so be sure and help out when you can.

Support Our Military Families

Don't forget to be contributing to our State HCE project of supporting our Military.



State OHCE Meeting

Remember that your registration for the State OHCE meeting is due by June 30th. Everyone received information in the most recent OUTREACH newsletter. We will need to supply two (2) items or baskets for the Ambassador Fund Raising Silent Auction. If you would like to donate a handmade item (i.e. jelly, doily, or such) please bring it to the Extension Office by July 3rd. Your donation is greatly appreciated.

Women in Ag Conference

If you are interested in attending the Oklahoma Women in Ag Conference, please call the Extension Office for more information. It is scheduled for September 18 & 19th in Norman. I have a registration form available.

Bite the Dust

Asthma and allergy attacks are triggered by tiny airborne particles called allergens. These allergens lurk in dust mites, animal dander, cockroaches and their droppings, mold and mildew, and pollen. One way to help control these allergens is to get rid of the dust in your house, as well as the pollen that seeps indoors. Dusting with a dry cloth may make you feel like you are accomplishing something, but all it really does is spread the dust around, leaving it there to act as triggers for family members and guests who suffer from allergies and asthma. Fortunately, there are a host of dusting products to choose from that are designed to trap those triggers.

1. **Dusting spray.** Apply the spray to your dusting cloth, and then wipe the desired surface.
2. **Microfiber cloths.** These cloths are designed to gently grab and hold the dust, while eliminating the

- need for polish or a dusting product. They are available in disposable and washable versions.
3. **Microfiber mitts.** This specialized version of microfiber cloth fits over your hand. It is especially useful for tight spaces where there would not be a room for your hand and a rag.
 4. **Microfiber dusters.** These are the modern version of Grandma's feather duster. They are available in handheld styles and with extension poles for reaching high areas like the tops of appliances, cabinets, and furniture, and get into tight areas such as behind the computer and television.
 5. **Electrostatic dusting cloths.** Available in mitt or cloth forms, these products have a built-in electrostatic charge that grabs and holds the dust. They are designed for hand-dusting; the cloth forms are also designed for floor dusting and fit most sweepers.
 6. **Dust wipes.** These reusable cloths, pre-moistened with a dusting product, are stored in a re-sealable pouch to retain their moisture. Dispose of them when they get dirty or dry out.
 7. **Vacuum cleaner.** If possible, use a vacuum that has a HEPA filter and/or exhaust filter; or use a special bag that holds allergens inside the bag. These are available in canister, upright, or handheld versions.

Source: Cleaning Matters – Soap & Detergent Assn. June 2008

OKLAHOMA HOME & COMMUNITY EDUCATION ANNUAL

July 13, 14, and 15, 2008 at the Clarion Hotel and Convention Center, OKC

Registration Form

2008 STATE MEETING OKLAHOMA HOME AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION- July 13-15, 2008

Return this form by June 30, 2008 to: OHCE Annual Conference, Agriculture Conferences, OSU Student Union, Room 430, Stillwater, OK 74078

Name _____ County _____
Address _____ 1st Timer Yes _____ No _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Enclosed is a check payable to OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY for:

_____ Annual Meeting Registration Fee @ \$15.00 or = \$ _____

_____ Late Registration Fee @ \$20.00 = \$ _____

_____ Sunday Event (bus, museum & dinner) @ 28.00 = \$ _____

_____ Monday Luncheon @ \$15.00 = \$ _____

_____ Friendship Banquet @ \$24.00 = \$ _____

_____ Tuesday Luncheon @ \$15.00 = \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED = \$ _____

I would be willing to serve as a hostess: ____ Yes ____ No

No one will be admitted to a meal function without a paid meal ticket, no exceptions.

When registering, notify Ag-Conferences if you have special physical or dietary considerations.

Registration is required to attend any portion of the Conference. No refunds after 5:00 p.m. on July 7, 2008

Determine the Importance of Driving that Truck by Scott Nash

Last May I replaced my 1996 three-quarter ton pickup that had a 460 gas engine for a 2007 diesel pickup. The 1996 pickup got 12 miles per gallon not towing and 6 miles per gallon towing. It had plenty of power to get the job done but was starting to show it's age. The 2007 diesel pickup gets 19 miles per gallon not towing and 12 miles per gallon towing. When I bought the new truck, diesel fuel was \$.75 per gallon less than gas. My sons convinced by wife and I buying a diesel truck was a good thing. It seemed like a pretty good trade off at the time.

Today diesel fuel is \$.75 per gallon more (the current price is \$4.25). I really enjoy the truck, but is the cost I'm paying to drive it and pull the trailer worth it? Can I afford to drive it like I've gotten used to? My wife drives about 16 miles round-trip to work and I drive 40 miles round-trip. I drive her car that gets over 30 miles per gallon and she drives the truck (so much for the enjoyment of driving a truck). The only time I typically drive the truck is when I have to haul something or hook up to the trailer. I'm sure many of you that own pickups are experiencing something similar.

I ran across an article written by Ron Torell, University of Nevada Extension Livestock Specialist, titled: Back to Basics; The Town Truck. The question he asks in his article is, "How much does it cost per mile to operate your one-ton diesel ranch/town truck"? As I considered this question I think about the cost of buying my new truck last year. It cost more than my parent's house! Add that to the cost of diesel at over \$4.00 per gallon and figure how much it costs to operate that truck. The author calculated the cost of operating a used pickup with \$4.00 per gallon diesel and a current value of \$20,000. If the pickup gets driven an average of 20,000 miles per year, averages 15 miles per gallon, adding insurance and repair and maintenance costs, the total cost to operate that pickup is \$.67 per mile. Drive the truck only 15,000 per miles per year and the cost per mile increased to \$.74.

Let's figure a new \$40,000 truck at 20,000 miles per year. The cost of operation comes in at \$.91 per mile. Drive that truck at 15,000 miles per. The cost of operation comes at \$.91 per mile. Drive that truck only 15,000 miles per year and the cost per miles goes up to \$.98. Now move the price of gas to \$4.25 per gallon and the cost to operate that new truck rises to over \$1.00 per mile.

The author suggests having the used one-ton diesel sit idle until it's needed for big jobs and heavy loads. Reduce the miles driven from 20,000 per year to 5,000 per miles; purchase a smaller economy truck to drive those other 15,000 miles. The cost per mile to operate the one-ton will be a scary \$1.36 per mile but the cost to drive the smaller used vehicle is only \$.34 per mile. The total cost of maintaining and driving two vehicles will amount to \$11,888 as compared to \$13,352 for driving only the one-ton.

I found this scenario to be interesting. With the costs of driving continuing to rise, it's important to review our situation and make the decision that best suits our financial means and lifestyle. Change is hard but sometimes those hard changes end up bringing success into an operation and into our families. I'm still pretty sure that I needed to trade pickups last year and that I did the right thing by buying a diesel. I do know I am going to evaluate my driving needs to make sure I am driving where I need to instead of driving where I want to.

Source: Scott Nash, University of Idaho Extension Agent for Bingham County. He can be reached at snash@uidaho.edu