



FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

Newsline

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Handling food safely while on the road

With the Thanksgiving holiday just around the corner, many families are making plans to hit the road to visit family and friends.

When it comes to holidays, there are some traditional foods that make the day special. If you are planning to travel with these special edibles, keep food safety in mind to help ensure an enjoyable holiday.

Barbara Brown, Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service food specialist, said traveling to visit family is an annual event for many Oklahomans during the Thanksgiving holiday.

“Whether you’re traveling with most or just part of the family meal, or if you’re simply packing snacks for the trip, there are things to consider that will keep your food safe to eat,” Brown said. “The ‘road’ to food safety can be bumpy or smooth depending on what precautions are taken.”

Keep in mind that even though the weather has cooled off, steps must still be taken to keep cold foods cold. Be sure to discard any perishable foods that are left out more than two hours. That time frame is reduced to just an hour should the temperature be above 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Remember that on a warm day the temperature of food left in a car trunk could be in a 90 degree environment.

One of the keys to traveling with perishable food is to plan ahead. Place food in a cooler with ice or freezer packs. Families who are going a long distance will want to pack these foods separate from snacks and drinks they will consume along the way. Plan to keep perishable foods to be eaten enroute on ice as well.

“If you’ve cooked your favorite casserole or other dish to take to another destination, transport the food cold rather than hot if it must be carried for more than two hours. Keeping food cold minimizes bacterial growth,” she said. “Use an insulated cooler with

enough ice or ice packs to keep the foods at 40 degrees Fahrenheit or below. Pack cold food directly from the refrigerator into the cooler immediately before leaving home. Plan accordingly so you arrive at your destination with enough time to heat foods to the proper internal temperature.”

Freezing foods such as sandwiches, juice and milk before leaving home will help them keep cold longer. Meat and poultry can be packed frozen. For those who may be traveling for several days, plan to purchase sandwich meat and other perishables every day if there is not enough cooler space available. Always wrap and pack raw foods separately from cooked foods or food such as fruit that can be eaten raw.

Keep in mind that a full cooler will maintain its cold temperature longer than one that is partially filled. If the cooler is only partially filled, pack the remaining space with more ice.

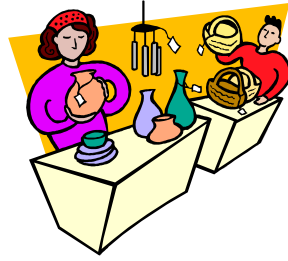
If you plan to eat out while on the road, keep food safety in mind as you make your choice of restaurant and food. Although the U.S. food supply is high quality and the sanitation in most restaurants reduces the risks of foodborne illness compared to some other countries, food poisoning can occur.

Brown said common symptoms are diarrhea, upset stomach, cramps and general malaise.

“You want to enjoy this holiday season and keeping food safety in mind will help you meet that goal,” Brown said.

Holiday Bazaar

December 6th has been set aside for our annual Holiday Bazaar and Santa's village celebration. Set up and decorating will begin December 4 & 5th. Please help these committees as they undertake this project. There are many places to volunteer and help make this event one for everyone to enjoy (especially the kids and Santa). Call Patsy Sinclair to volunteer during the bazaar and for decorating.



Country Store at Holiday Bazaar

Last year the Country Store was operated during the Holiday Bazaar and raised monies for the HCE Scholarships. We are once again opening and asking each member to donate at least one item to the store (it can be more). Bring either food/baked goods or craft items the morning of December 6th. Contact Rose Godwin, President Jolly Workers, if you can help man the booth during the day.

Wild Game Food Safety DVD

A new DVD was introduced at the Wildlife Expo in September, 2008. Our Office has free copies available, if you wish to stop by and pick one up. If you received a card at the Expo reserving your copy, please pick it up as soon as possible. Our remaining supply is available on a first-come-first-serve basis.

2009 HCE Yearbooks

Our county yearbooks should be available around the first of the year. Stop in to pick up your group's yearbooks after the Holidays.

N.W. District HCE Meeting

March 19, 2009 is the date for the Northwest District HCE Meeting to be held at the Guymon High School. Save the date and plan to attend our district meeting. More details will follow.

HCE Lesson Topics for 2009

Month	Lesson
January	Preparing for a Disaster
February	Crock-pot Cooking
March	Living "Green"
April	Xeriscaping Your Landscape
May	Passing on your Personal Belongings
June	FREE Month
July	30 Minute Meals
August	Digital Photography
September	Money on the Bookshelf OR Personal Information to Keep & Throw Away
October	Benefits of WD-40, Duct Tape, Vinegar & Baling Wire OR Aging Care & Issues
November	Oriental Cuisine & Culture
December	FREE Month

HCE Leader Lesson

The January 2009 Lesson is called "Preparing for a Disaster". This lesson should be available for pick up at the Extension Office after December 12th.

Gingher Scissors

If anyone is interested in ordering Gingher Scissors at a reduced cost, please contact the Extension Office or Hazel Ariola. These



quality scissors are available at almost half-price when placed in a group order. A description and price sheet are available for viewing. The deadline for ordering will be November 19th to ensure delivery by the Holidays.

“Annie’s Project” Workshop Series

Annie’s Project

Annie’s Project is based on the life of a farm woman in Illinois. Annie was a woman who grew up in a small town in northern Illinois. Annie spent her lifetime learning how to be an involved business partner with her farm husband. Together they did great things, but it wasn’t easy. This is Annie’s project – to take her life’s experiences and share it with farm women living and working in a complex, dynamic, evolving business environment. Annie’s Project is designed to empower farm women to manage information systems used in critical decision making processes and to build local networks throughout the state. The target audience is farm women with a passion for business and involvement.

Farm women will receive training for managing information in the areas of: (1) Financial Records, (2) Production Records, (3) Marketing Plans & Risk Management, (4) Legal/Regulation Records and Documentation, and (5) Human Resources & Time Management. This women’s empowerment program will offered in six, three-hour sessions beginning Monday, January 5, 2009. We will be partnering with Custer and Dewey Counties. The cost of the program is \$50 per person and class size is limited. A location will be determined in the near future.

Participants should pre-register by contacting the Blaine County Extension Office at 580-623-5195.

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Editor,

Joy Rhodes, Extension Educator-FCS/4-H

Neat Things to Know

- ❖ Easy Deviled Eggs – Put cooked egg yolks in a zip lock bag. Seal, mash till they are all broken up. Add remainder of ingredients, reseal, keep mashing it up, mixing thoroughly, cut the tip of the baggie, squeeze mixture into egg. Just throw bag away when done for an easy clean up.
- ❖ Expanding Frosting – When you buy a container of cake frosting from the store, whip it with your mixer for a few minutes. You can double it in size and get to frost more cake/cupcakes with the same amount. You also eat less sugar/calories per serving.
- ❖ Reheating Refrigerated Bread – To warm biscuits, pancakes or muffins that were refrigerated, place them in a microwave with a cup of water. The increased moisture will keep the food moist and help it reheat faster.
- ❖ Flexible Vacuum – To get something out of a heat register or under the fridge, add an empty paper towel roll or empty gift wrap roll to your vacuum. It can be bent or flattened to get into narrow openings.
- ❖ Reducing Static Cling – Pin a small safety pin to the seam of your slip and you will not have a clingy skirt or dress. Same thing works with slacks that cling when wearing panty hose. Place pin in seam of slacks and –viola! – static is gone!
- ❖ Hate foggy windshields? – Buy a chalkboard eraser and keep it in the glove box of your car. When the windows fog, rub with the clean eraser! Works better than a cloth!
- ❖ If you seal an envelope and then realize you forgot to include something inside, just place your sealed envelope in the freezer for an hour or two. Viola! It unseals easily.
- ❖ Use your hair conditioner to shave your legs. It’s a lot cheaper than shaving cream and leaves your legs really smooth. It’s also a great way to use up the conditioner you bought, but didn’t like!

SUNUP Agricultural T.V. Program Returns to OETA

SUNUP will air at 7:30 a.m. each Saturday morning on OETA channels throughout the state. Visit the SUNUP website at SUNUP.okstate.edu to obtain additional information.

Credit Cards vs. Debit Cards –Debit Card Realities

Debit card use is taking off. The cards look like credit cards, but when consumers make purchases using debit cards, the dollar amounts are deducted from their checking accounts. It's a pay-as-you-go mechanism; there's no loan balance and no interest to pay.

In 2003 credit and debit card payments in stores outpaced cash and checks, and debit card use surpassed credit. Credit cards accounted for 21% of all in store payments, and debit cards for 31%, according to a study conducted in 2004. Check use fell significantly, accounting for only 15% of in-store purchases. Consumers cite speed, convenience, and security as the chief debit card attractions, along with rewards card issuers offer for some debit card transactions. Debit's a handy way to pay, but to use the cards effectively you need to understand how they differ from credit cards.

- **Do not have the same legal protections as credit cards.** Legal liability with a lost or stolen credit card is a maximum of \$50. With a debit card, federal law limits your liability to \$50 only if you notify your financial institution within two business days of the theft (\$500 if you don't meet the two-day deadline). Experience has found that in many instances, although stolen funds are eventually replenished, the compromised funds are usually not available during the interim (a deficiency most people aren't prepared financially to deal with effectively).
- **Consumer protections for debit cards are not as strong as those for credit cards.** Because funds are withdrawn from your account quickly, you aren't able to 'stop payment' during a dispute.
- **Payment Acceptance.** Many large rental card firms (namely Hertz and Avis) have stopped people from renting cards using debit cards (you can pay for the rental after;

credit
vs.
debit

you simply can't reserve the car with a debit card).

- **Merchant "blocking.** A common practice where merchants withhold an amount on a debit card until the transaction is fully processed. Hotels, gas stations, and rental card agencies are the most common culprits of this practice. Because the "held" amount is 'unavailable' in your account, it can cause the account to be over drafted.
- **Can be charged for "potential" overdrafts.** With signature (non-pin) transactions, the debit is processed through a credit card payment system (meaning the money will take a couple days to clear your account). Even though the money is "physically" in your account, some banks will charge an overdraft fee if the pending activity exceeds the available balance, even if the balance is sufficient to cover the debit when it finally posts.
- **Debit cards aren't necessarily a way to avoid debt.** One common reason debit cards are favored by some over credit cards is "fiscal responsibility" – not allowing one to spend money they don't have. The reality? Some banks will process debit card charges despite insufficient account balances, creating overdraft fees and undermining your management system.
- **Debit card usage.** Many card issuers limit the number of uses each month; after that, fees are charged. Some will enforce maximum daily spending limits.
- **Credit.** Using a debit card to the exclusion of a credit card can affect your creditworthiness...a debit card won't build your credit. That may or may not matter to you, but is worth consideration. Obviously good credit is important when searching for credit (card loan, mortgage, insurance, etc.)

Source: Marilyn Bischoff, adapted from M. Oleson, *Debit Card Realities, Financial Tip of the Week electronic newsletter.*