

## FOOD SAFETY WHEN COOKING OUTDOORS

*Pamela Phillippe, 4-H/Youth Development Agent - Charlotte County UF/IFAS Extension Service*

*PDP-04012008-003*

Who doesn't like a barbeque or a picnic? Fresh air and the aroma are enough to tempt any appetite, whether it is around a 4-H campfire or at a family cookout in the backyard. A simple outdoor meal can be just as nutritious and appetizing as those meals prepared at home.

As with home cooking, when handling foods outdoors, you must be careful to keep food safe to eat. Develop these habits for food safety.

Always make sure your hands are clean before handling food. Be especially careful to wash your hands with soap and very warm water after handling raw fish, poultry, or eggs and before working with other foods. Several different kinds of germs or bacteria can cause food poisoning. Salmonella bacteria can be found in raw beef, pork, poultry and other meats, as well as in eggs or dairy products. Remove rings and

other jewelry before preparing food, indoors or out, as these are places that bacteria can hide.

Keep cold foods cold (40 degrees or below). Keep cold foods in the refrigerator until ready to use. Pack cold foods in an ice chest if a refrigerator is not available. When using a cooler, place ice, or frozen reusable ice packs, both on the bottom of the cooler and on top of the food items.

Take cold foods out only when you're ready to eat it or use it in cooking. When you're through with cold food, put it in a covered container and place it immediately in the refrigerator or ice chest. Do not let food stand outdoors or at room temperature.

Keep hot foods hot (above 140 degrees F).

*(Continued on page 2)*



---

*The use of trade names in this publication is solely for the purpose of providing specific information. UF/IFAS does not guarantee or warranty the products named, and references to them in this publication do not signify our approval to the exclusion of other products of suitable composition.*

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is an Equal Opportunity Institution authorized to provide research, educational information, and other services only to individuals and institutions that function with non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations. For more information on obtaining other extension publications, please contact Charlotte County Extension Service at 941.764.4340, or visit us online at <http://charlotte.ifas.ufl.edu>. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Florida, IFAS, Florida A. & M. University Cooperative Extension Program, and Boards of County Commissioners Cooperating. Larry Arrington, Dean.

---

April 1, 2008

Time your cooking so that the hot food is ready when you are ready to eat. Serve hot food immediately after cooking.

If using charcoal briquettes, make sure they have turned white before placing meat on the grill. This tells you that your fire is hot enough to cook the meat. If your fire is too cold, it will take much longer for meat to cook and will give harmful bacteria an opportunity to grow.

Avoid cross-contamination. Never place other foods on a surface that has come in contact with raw meat or poultry until it has been thoroughly cleaned. Scrub cutting boards and counter tops, as well as utensils, such as knives, with soap and hot water. Rinse well. This will keep harmful bacteria from spreading to cooked foods and salads. Chlorine bleach, used as directed on the label, can be used to sanitize cutting boards. Always wash raw fruits and vegetables before using.



There are several 4-H food and nutrition project areas, including outdoor cooking, suitable for youth and adults.

*Pamela Phillippe is the 4-H/Youth Development Agent for Charlotte County. 4-H/Youth Development is a University of Florida/IFAS Extension Program. Pam can be reached at 941.764.4345.*



**PAMELA PHILLIPPE**  
4-H/Youth Development Agent  
[Pamela.Phillippe@CharlotteFL.com](mailto:Pamela.Phillippe@CharlotteFL.com)

**CHARLOTTE COUNTY UF/IFAS EXTENSION SERVICE**  
25550 Harbor View Road, Suite 3 - Port Charlotte, Florida 33980  
941.764.4340 - 941.764.4343 (fax) - <http://charlotte.ifas.ufl.edu>