



Food Safety Update

Information from the desk of the State Extension Consumer Food Safety Specialist

April-June 2014

Welcome to the sixth edition of the Kansas State University/University of Missouri Extension Food Safety update. This update is intended to provide timely, credible food safety information to county/district FCS agents, regional Food and Nutrition Specialists, as well as anyone else interested in such information. I hope this is helpful to you- please let me know any comments or questions you may have on this newsletter or any other food safety matters.

Contents:

Handouts now available- Storing Fresh Produce, Tips to Shop Safe at Farmers Markets

Blog posts- Shopping Safe at Farmers Markets

GMPs and HACCP Fact Sheets

Updated Publications- Refrigerator and Freezer Storage, Cupboard Storage

Trends in FB Disease press release

Homefoodsafety.org

**International Food Information Council Foundation
2014 Food and Health Survey**

Food Safety Q&A

Q. If hand washing is not possible, what is the next best option to use before eating or food handling?

Q. How can I make my own baby food safely?

Q. Is it safe to ferment foods at home?

Handouts now available- 1) Storing Fresh Produce, 2) Tips to Shop Safe at Farmers Markets

Some half page handouts were recently developed, which hopefully will be helpful to you if you have a display table at a Farmers Market or similar venue. The handouts are available as a 1 page (front side only) or 2

per page. The first one gives information on storing fresh produce for safety and quality and the second provides some food safety tips for consumers to look for when shopping at farmers markets. They are available in the upper right corner of this page: www.ksre.ksu.edu/FoodSafety/p.aspx?tabid=1 A 4 page [fact sheet](#) and 4 page [leaders guide](#) on "Shopping Safe at Farmers Markets" are currently available, with the formatting to be finalized soon. The [Partnership for Food Safety Education](#) also recently released some consumer produce safety materials.

Blog posts- Shopping Safe at Farmers Markets

Information on shopping safe at farmers markets is also available as blog posts on the [MU Nutrition Mythbusters blog](#) and the [KSU Food and Fitness Focus blog](#).

GMPs and HACCP Fact Sheets

If you get questions from people wanting to sell foods, here are a few resources that may be helpful to point them to (and I am working on some others as well). Everyone selling foods (regardless how that food is regulated) should be following Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs). Some products (and some buyers) will also require a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plan. Brief fact sheets covering these

two topics are available from

<http://missourifamilies.org/foodsafety/newsletters/>
and www.ksre.ksu.edu/FoodSafety/p.aspx?tabid=1

Updated Publications- Refrigerator and Freezer Storage, Cupboard Storage

These KSU publications are a great resource to find out how long products can be stored in the cupboard, frig, or freezer for safety and quality. They are available at: [Refrigerator and Freezer Storage](#) and [Cupboard Storage](#)

Trends in FB Disease press release

A [press release](#) on the latest trends in US Foodborne Illness cases was released on May 2, 2014.

Homefoodsafety.org

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and ConAgra Foods recently launched a website with a number of resources, including an "Is My Food Safe?" app that may be useful, available from: www.homefoodsafety.org

International Food Information Council Foundation 2014 Food and Health Survey

This report includes information on food safety perceptions of consumers, among other topics: www.foodinsight.org/Food-and-Health-Survey-2014-findings

Food Safety Q&A

Q. If hand washing is not possible (no running water, soap, etc), what is the next best option to use before eating or food handling?

Handwashing with running water and soap and drying with a single use towel is the best option by far. If your hands are visibly dirty, the next best option would be moist towelettes, rather than hand sanitizers.

Moist towelettes (even something like baby wipes) can help to remove soil/grease/food remains from hands. The "dirt" can be rubbed away from your hands and will stay on the moist towelette. You could then follow up with hand sanitizer once your hands are free of visible dirt, as hand sanitizers are not effective at all if your hands have dirt/grime on them. Further, hand sanitizers are not effective against bacterial spores and certain viruses, which are important to food safety. *Antiseptic* towelettes (containing Benzalkonium chloride (BZK) 0.13% w/v in the towelette) have been found in a study to be more effective in removing peanut allergies from hands than alcohol-based hand sanitizers. You would not need to follow up with hand sanitizer if an antiseptic towelette is used.

References: [University of Guelph](#), [Fairfax County \(VA\) public schools](#), and the [Journal of Food Protection](#)

Q. How can I make my own baby food safely?

This is an important question to me right now as well as our 8 month old son seems to devour all the food that we give him! You can make your own baby food safely- some good tips are available from the [University of Maine](#), [Clemson](#), and the [University of Minnesota](#), among others.

Q. Is it safe to ferment foods at home?

Fermenting foods (particularly vegetables) at home seems to be gaining popularity across the US. However, it is important to ensure that this is done as safely as possible. Here are a few tips: 1) start with vegetables that have been grown using good food safety practices; 2) wash all surfaces and containers that will be used; 3) Use the amount of salt called for in the recipe as it is important to its safety (and texture and flavor); 4) be certain that foods contact only food-grade materials. References: [National Center for Home Food Preservation](#), [Tufts](#), [Food Safety News](#) (with info from USDA and the University of Idaho)

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