

WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for June 12, 2023
Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about grilling safety, and as always look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

The grill has become an iconic symbol of summer cooking and eating. According to Traeger Grills, approximately 60% of US households own a gas grill, which equates to about 75% of US adults. A survey conducted by the Hearth, Patio and Barbeque Association found that the most popular days to grill or barbeque are in order: July Fourth; a tie between Labor Day and Memorial Day; and Father's Day.

When it comes to grilling safety there are two things to take seriously- physical safety (preventing burns and fires) and food safety (preventing foodborne illness).

According to the National Fire Prevention Association, over 10,600 home fires are started by grills each year. July is the peak month for grill fires. Nearly 20,000 patients go to the emergency room each year because of injuries involving grills, and about half of those are burns.

Here is a good checklist to consider before you fire up the grill next time.

- Propane and charcoal BBQ grills should only be used outdoors.
- The grill should be placed well away from your home, which also means away from deck railings and not under eaves and overhanging branches.
- Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grill area.
- Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grates and in trays below the grill.
- Never leave your grill unattended.
- Always make sure your gas grill lid is open before lighting it.

Safety should also be top of mind during food preparation. Food poisoning peaks during summer months. The microorganisms that cause foodborne illness thrive in warmer temperatures. When it comes to grilling, there are some keys things you can do to reduce the risk of making your friends and family sick.

It starts in the shopping cart and refrigerator. Shop for all the food in the aisles first and then wrap up with refrigerated and frozen items. Keep meat (and poultry and seafood) separate from produce.

Be sure to keep meat refrigerated at 40 degrees Fahrenheit or below until you are ready to grill. If you are transporting raw food to another location, use an insulated cooler with ice packs. Wash work surfaces and utensils before and after cooking. Wash your hands after handling raw meat.

Foodsafety.gov is a partnership of USDA, FDA, and CDC and is a wealth of food safety information, including safe cooking temperatures. When it comes to cooking, 145 degrees is the magic number for several meats including cuts of beef, pork, lamb, and fish. Let them rest a couple of minutes before serving.

Hamburgers and other ground meat are where things can get tricky. Ground meat that has not reached an internal temperature of 160 degrees means that harmful bacteria could still be present. You really can't judge by color. A meat thermometer is the only way to gauge the temperature. Poultry needs to be cooked to the highest temperature at 165 degrees.

The other important consideration is what to do with leftovers. Don't wait more than 2 hours to place leftovers in the refrigerator. At the very least, get them into a cooler with ice packs. If it is 90 degrees at your picnic, you have only about 1 hour before food should be taken off the grazing table and put into the refrigerator.

And now let's look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension. OSU Extension and Coshocton Regional Medical Center will once again be offering Dining with Diabetes. This is a cooking school and nutrition education program designed for people with diabetes and their family members or caregivers.

Dining with Diabetes will be held on four Monday evenings in July from 5:30-7:30 pm. The cost of the program is \$20 per person. You are also encouraged to register a support person to attend with you for an additional \$10. Paid registration is required by July 5. There are only 9 registration openings remaining. To register visit coshocton.osu.edu.

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and improve our families, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at coshocton.osu.edu. Make it a healthy day!