

Food Safety and You: TAILGATING



Football season is about to kick off. For some fans, tailgating is essential to the game day experience. But cooking out before the big game is quite different from cooking at home. The food-related challenges of tailgating include:

- Warm weather, especially in the South
- Transportation of raw and cooked foods
- No refrigerators or limited cooler space
- Fewer utensils
- Limited access to water

Don't let your game day get spoiled by foodborne illness, which is often referred to as food poisoning.

Remember the four rules for food safety: **separate, clean, cook and chill.**



Separate. Prevent cross-contamination.

- During transportation, make sure storage bags and containers are sealed properly so raw meat and poultry juices do not leak onto fruits, vegetables and cooked foods.
- When removing foods from the grill, place them on a clean plate.
- Separate utensils used for raw and cooked foods.
- Do not reuse marinades used on raw poultry and meat on cooked food.

Clean. Don't spread germs.

- Make sure you have lots of paper plates, napkins, utensils and clean dishes to hold cooked foods.
 - Wash your hands with hot, soapy water before handling food.
 - If water is not available, use alcohol-based sanitizer.
 - Wash fresh produce thoroughly at home under running water. Place the produce in clean storage bags or other containers. Cut the fruits and vegetables into smaller pieces if needed.
-

Cook. Heat food to a safe temperature.

- Use a food thermometer to make sure you cook foods to their required internal temperature.

Chill. Avoid the temperature danger zone.

- Remove from the cooler only the amount of raw meat that will fit on the grill at one time.
- Return leftovers to the cooler with plenty of ice or frozen gel packs within two hours of serving — one hour if the ambient temperature is above 90 degrees.
- Store drinks in a separate cooler to avoid the frequent opening of the food cooler.
- Pack spreads and condiments separately. Add mayonnaise, mustard, ketchup and salad dressing just before serving.
- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. The temperature danger zone is between 40 and 140 degrees. Bacteria will multiply rapidly in foods that stay in the temperature danger zone.



Authors:

Developed by Mandy Armentor, MS, RD, LDN. Extension Agent, Family and Consumer Sciences and Nutrition, LSU AgCenter

Updated by Wenqing (Wennie) Xu, Ph.D. Assistant Professor and Consumer Food Safety Specialist, LSU School of Nutrition and Food Sciences

Photo credit: Silar, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:08259_Grilling_on_the_bank_at_San_river,_Sanok.jpg

Visit our website: www.LSUAgCenter.com

William B. Richardson, LSU Vice President for Agriculture, Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station
Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service, LSU College of Agriculture

Pub. 3614 (Online Only) 10/17

The LSU AgCenter and LSU provide equal opportunities in programs and employment.
