



\*\* This news release from K-State Research and Extension is available online at <https://ksre-learn.com/food-safety-fourth-of-july>

Released: June 25, 2024

## **Preparing food for the Fourth of July**

K-State food safety specialist offers tips for a fun celebration

*K-State Research and Extension news service*

MANHATTAN, Kan. – The Fourth of July is full of food, fun and fireworks. As family and friends attend gatherings and events, Kansas State University food scientist Karen Blakeslee says food safety should be a top priority during festivities.

The top four tips Blakeslee encourages include:

- Always wash your hands before handling food and eating. Wash them after handling raw meats.
- Keep raw foods away from ready-to-eat foods to prevent cross contamination. Consumer research has shown that 32% of consumers had contaminated plates and cutting boards. And don't forget spice containers, Blakeslee said. Of those surveyed, 12% had contaminated spice bottles.
- Keep hot foods above 140 degrees Fahrenheit during serving. If outside on hot days above 90 F, store leftovers within one hour.
- Keep cold foods below 40 F. Marinate meats in the refrigerator. Toss the used marinade or boil it to use as a dip. Refrigerate leftovers within one hour on hot days.

Blakeslee, who is also coordinator of [K-State's Rapid Response Center for Food Science](#), recommends using a food thermometer when cooking meats. Look for 145 F for steaks and chops, 160 F for ground beef, pork, lamb, and 165 F for all poultry. Hot dogs, hamburgers, grilled foods and barbecue are among the most common foods served at large gatherings. "Keep it simple. Use ice chests with ice or ice packs to keep foods cold. If using the grill, be sure someone is managing the grill for overall safety," Blakeslee said. Blakeslee publishes a monthly newsletter called [You Asked It!](#) that provides numerous tips on food safety. More information is also available from [local extension offices](#) in Kansas.

**FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS:** Links used in this story  
Rapid Response Center, <https://www.rrc.k-state.edu>

You Asked It! newsletter, <https://www.rrc.k-state.edu/newsletter/index.html>

K-State Research and Extension local offices, <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/about/statewide-locations.html>

K-State Research and Extension is a short name for the Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service, a program designed to generate and distribute useful knowledge for the wellbeing of Kansans. Supported by county, state, federal and private funds, the program has county extension offices, experiment fields, area extension offices and regional research centers statewide. Its headquarters is on the KState campus in Manhattan. For more information, visit [www.ksre.ksu.edu](http://www.ksre.ksu.edu). K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**For more information:**

Karen Blakeslee  
785-532-1673  
[kblakesl@k-state.edu](mailto:kblakesl@k-state.edu)