



NEWS RELEASE

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## Giving Recipes a Food Safety Update

Are you using a favorite recipe that has been passed down through your family or unsure of the source or accuracy of your recipe? Does your recipe read, “bake in a moderate oven “ or bake until “meat loses its red.” New bacteria have emerged and others have gotten stronger since some of our favorite recipes were developed. Also recipe directions may be inconsistent with what we now know about food safety.

Here are some general checkpoints for evaluating recipes for food safety.

- Use a minimum oven temperature of 325° F for cooking meat, poultry and casseroles containing them. Lower temperatures may not heat the food fast enough to prevent bacterial growth.
- Avoid recipes in which eggs remain raw or are only partially cooked. Examples could include Caesar’s salad dressing; mousses; chiffons; and homemade ice cream, mayonnaise and hollandaise sauce.
- Heat cooked egg bases for recipes, such as custard (baked and stirred) and quiche to an internal temperature of 160° F. At this temperature, a knife inserted near the center of a quiche or custard comes out clean. For a stirred custard, the mixture will coat a metal spoon.
- Use a meat thermometer to judge meat “doneness”. Relying on the color of the juice or color of the food product is not always a reliable indicator of a safe internal temperature. The only way to really know if your food is done is to use a meat thermometer. A meat thermometer will also help avoid overcooking a food and lowering its taste and quality.
- Thoroughly cook ground meat or poultry BEFORE combining it with other ingredients in casseroles, meat sauces, etc.
- Marinades help flavor meat and poultry—they do not kill bacteria. Marinate in a covered container in the refrigerator, not on the counter. If you are not certain how long to marinate a particular food—for best safety and quality—limit time to 24 hours or less. For greatest safety, do not re-use leftover marinade that has been in contact with raw meat or poultry.

The next time you make or give others a recipe, check to see if you should do a food safety update. Learning about food safety helps you stay healthy.

Source: Henneman, Alicde, Food Reflections, “Giving Recipes A Food Safety Update”, Retrieved November 9, 2001 from <http://lancaster.unl.edu/food/ftfeb99.htm>