

PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY



Fresh Ideas In Food Safety

(NAPSA)—According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 76 million people suffer from foodborne illnesses every year—many of which could be avoided by taking a few simple precautions.

Here are some tips and hints from Donna L. Visioli, Ph.D., a technical associate in the new product development area of DuPont Packaging, that can help keep you and your family safer.

- Look out for half-moon shaped puncture holes in meat and poultry wrapping. Surprisingly, an overwhelmingly high percentage of participants in consumer focus groups sponsored by DuPont Packaging admitted that their primary test of meat freshness is odor, and that they typically use a fingernail to discreetly puncture the plastic wrapping to smell the meat. “Good, bright color is a better indicator—red or purple is good,” advises Dr. Donna. “By the time the meat smells bad, a lot of bacteria already has built up and the color will be the first to be affected. It goes without saying: if you find a package with any kind of a puncture in it, don’t purchase it.

- Split seals and tiny pinholes will cause packages to leak, and will allow air in. This can accelerate spoilage. “One good way to be assured of package integrity is to look for meat and seafood products wrapped in packaging with the DuPont™ Sure Lock Air Tight



Avoid packages with half-moon puncture holes. Plastic should be smooth against the product.

Seal™,” said Dr. Donna.

- Packaging should look exactly the way it is intended to look, in order for it to perform properly. For example, most bacon is vacuum packaged, so the plastic should be smooth against the product—no bubbles, ballooning or bulging. “If there are pockets of air in a vacuum package, it could mean that bacteria is growing.

- Buy packaged meats in quantities to meet your needs and to avoid multiple handling that allows bacteria to multiply. Unwrapping and rewrapping food, even under the most sanitary conditions increases the chances of bacteria being introduced, says Dr. Donna.

Finally, remember that the most important factor to meat freshness is temperature. Maintain meat products at a consistent temperature of less than 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

For more information, see www.dupont.com/packaging.