

Careless Chilling and Grilling: Bacteria's Best Friend

(NAPSA)—Food safety is the biggest concern of 57 percent of those consumers surveyed about food and nutrition issues, according to the 2001 Barbecue Lifestyle Usage & Attitude Survey. However, only 14 percent of those surveyed regularly use a meat thermometer when cooking food on the grill.

“Backyard barbecues, neighborhood get-togethers in the park, and cookouts around the campfire can be year-round events,” said Sara Lilygren, senior vice president, Legislative & Public Affairs, American Meat Institute. “Add a lack of refrigeration, thermostat controls, soap and running water, and you have the right mixture for grilling up foodborne illnesses.”

Wal-Mart and The Partnership for Food Safety Education offers the following food safety tips to Fight BAC!™ (bacteria):

CLEAN

- When grilling away from home, pack clean, soapy washcloths, disposable moist towels, or paper towels for cleaning hands and surfaces.

GRILL

- Meat and poultry on a grill tend to brown very fast, be sure to use a food thermometer to make sure that food reaches a safe internal temperature. Hamburgers should be cooked to 160° F, while large cuts of beef such as roasts and steaks may be cooked to 145° F for medium rare or to 160° F for medium.

- Cook skinless, boneless poultry breasts to 160° F, bone-in breasts to 170° F, ground poultry to 165° F and poultry parts (drumsticks, thighs and legs) to 180° F.

- Avoid partial cooking of food ahead of time as it allows bacteria to survive and multiply to the point that subsequent cooking cannot destroy them.

SEPARATE

- Keep raw meat, poultry and seafood in sealed containers or plastic bags so juices will not cross-contaminate.

- When taking foods off the grill, put cooked items on a clean plate.

CHILL

- Keep perishable foods such as meat, poultry, seafood, eggs,



and mayonnaise-based salads cold or frozen until ready to cook—store drinks in a separate cooler to avoid frequent opening of the food cooler.

- Pack cooler with plenty of extra ice or freezer packs to ensure a constant cold temperature—a full cooler will maintain the temperature longer than one that is partially filled.

For more Food Safety Tips from the Partnership for Food Safety and Wal-Mart Stores, visit www.walmartstores.com and look for “Fighting BAC!™ At Wal-Mart.”

Robert L's Ice Box Slaw* (Makes 6 to 8 servings)

Ingredients:

- 1 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup cider vinegar
- 1 tsp. McCormick® Yellow Mustard Seed
- 3/4 tsp. McCormick® Celery Seed
- 2 lbs. cabbage, shredded
- 2 medium green peppers, finely chopped
- 1 medium carrot, shredded (optional)
- Salt

Directions:

In large bowl combine sugar, vinegar, mustard seed and celery seed. Stir in cabbage, green pepper and, if desired, carrot; mix well. Season with salt to taste. Cover and chill 2 to 6 hours. Serve with slotted spoon.

* *Wal-Mart Family Cookbook: 80 Delicious Winning Recipes from Wal-Mart Associates.*