

A Food Safe Game Plan For Tailgate Parties

Food Safety Information From The Experts

(NAPSA)—Don't give bacteria a sporting chance at your next football tailgate party. Although tailgating is considered a cool weather activity, you still need to exercise the same safe food handling practices as for summer picnicking.

Food and football have long been paired. In fact, football fields are called "gridirons" after a grate used for grilling food. Keeping food safe at parties takes a team effort.

The Food Safety Inspection Service at USDA offers four simple rules to keep your party safe:

- **Clean.** Wash hands and surfaces often.

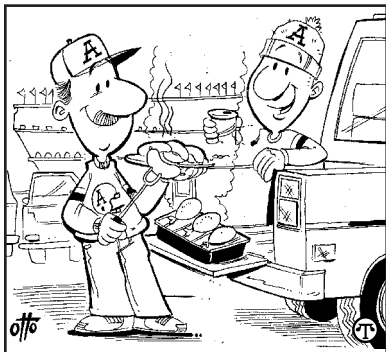
- **Separate.** Separate raw meat and poultry from cooked foods to avoid cross-contamination.

- **Cook.** Use a food thermometer to ensure raw meat and poultry are cooked to a safe internal temperature to destroy harmful bacteria that may be present.

- **Chill.** Store leftovers in the cooler within two hours of taking food off of the grill. When the temperature is above 90° Fahrenheit, store food within one hour.

No matter what team you're rooting for, make sure you plan a good defense for keeping food safe at tailgate parties.

Following the four food safety steps will ensure all tailgaters



Plan a good defense for your food at tailgate parties with tips from the USDA.

enjoy safe food.

Keeping food safe from home to stadium helps prevent foodborne illness. Carry cold perishable food, such as uncooked hamburger patties or chicken salad, in an insulated cooler packed with ice or frozen gel packs. Include lots of clean utensils—disposable is best—not only for eating, but also for serving. In addition to a grill, pack a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of the meat and poultry.

For more information on food safety, call the Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) or TTY 1-800-256-7072 or visit www.fsis.usda.gov.