

## Giving recipes a food safety update



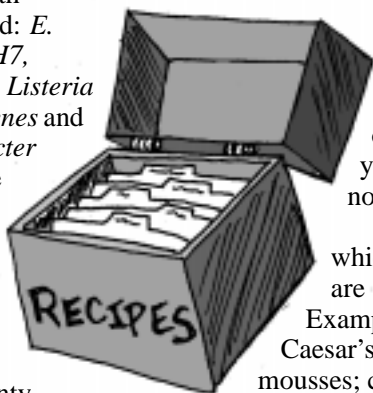
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The holiday season will soon be here. Many of us will be hosting family gatherings or preparing food to take to holiday events. Before you start mixing, stirring, cooking and baking, consider if any of your recipes need a food safety update. For example:

- Do you have favorite recipes that have been passed down through your family?
- Are you using food preparation techniques you saw others use as you grew up?
- Is your cookbook more than a few years old?

We wouldn't use the instruction book that came with the original Model T car for the most recent auto we purchased. Why is it different with food? Unknowingly, we may use outdated recipe directions inconsistent with what is now known about food safety.

New bacteria have emerged and others have gotten stronger since some of our favorite recipes were developed. For example, in 1990 the U.S. Public Health Service cited: *E. coli* O157:H7, *Salmonella*, *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Campylobacter jejuni* as the four most serious food-borne pathogens in the United States. Twenty years ago, three of these—*Campylobacter*, *Listeria* and *E. coli* O157:H7—weren't even recognized as sources of food-borne disease!



Here are some general checkpoints for evaluating recipes for food safety that come in part from U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recommendations.

### Checkpoint 1: Oven Temperatures

Use a minimum oven temperature of 325 degrees F for cooking meat, poultry, casseroles containing them. Lower temperatures may not heat the food fast enough to prevent bacterial growth.

### Checkpoint 2: Eggs

One hundred years ago, an 1898 "Receipt Book" by B. J. Kendall, M.D., offered a "recipe for egg water to cure vomiting." Today we'd no longer consider giving a sick family member a glass of egg white mixed with water. However, without thinking, we may still follow the unsafe practices of:

- Licking the cake batter from the bowl;
- Tasting raw cookie dough;
- Making ice cream with raw eggs.

Consider the following when cooking with eggs:

- Cook eggs—whether scrambled, fried, poached, soft-cooked, made into an omelet, etc.—until the yolk and white are firm, not runny.
- Avoid recipes in which eggs remain raw or are only partially cooked. Examples could include Caesar's salad dressing; mousses; chiffons; homemade ice cream, mayonnaise or hollandaise sauce.
- Heat cooked egg bases for recipes, such as custard (baked and stirred) and quiche to an

internal temperature of 160 degrees 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.

- Egg-nogs and homemade ice creams can be safely made using a stirred custard base.

Chill the cooked custard base thoroughly before freezing for ice cream to assure it rapidly reaches a safe temperature.

• Chill cooked custard in a shallow pan on the top shelf of the refrigerator. For thicker foods such as custard sauce, limit depth to 2 inches. Loosely cover to allow heat to escape and to protect from accidental contamination during cooling. Stir occasionally to help it cool; use a clean spoon each time. Cover tightly when cooled.

Although commercial pasteurized egg products can be used in place of raw eggs in recipes such as homemade ice cream, for optimal safety it's safest to start with a cooked base that has been heated to an internal temperature of 160 degrees F. When serving people at high risk for food-borne illness such as young children, older individuals, people with an illness and pregnant women, it's best to use a cooked egg base.

**Checkpoint 3: Marinades**  
Marinades help flavor meat and poultry. They DO NOT kill bacteria. Here are some general guidelines for safely using marinades:

- Marinate in a covered container in the refrigerator, not on the counter. A glass container is a

safe choice for marinating. Acidic ingredients in some marinades such as wine, vinegar and lemon juice could react with certain metallic or glazed ceramic containers and leach into the food being marinated.

- Marinating time in the refrigerator shouldn't exceed the recommended storage time for that type and cut of fresh meat or poultry.

• If you're not certain how long to marinate a particular food—for best safety AND quality—limit time to 24 hours or less.

• If some of the marinade is to be used for basting during cooking or as a sauce on the cooked food, reserve a portion of the marinade and store in the refrigerator until ready to use.

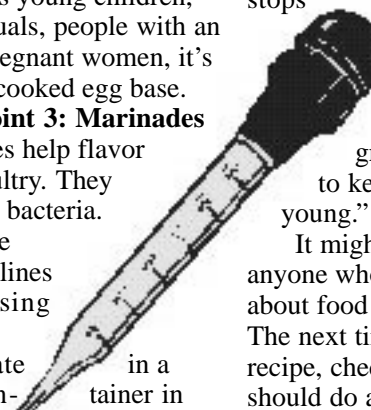
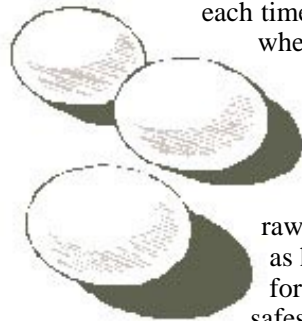
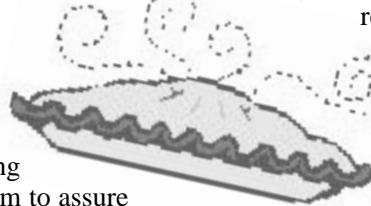
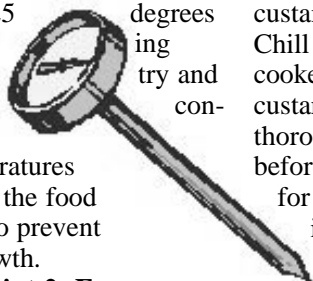
Do not put raw meat or poultry in it.  
• When basting, don't recontaminate fully cooked meat or poultry by adding sauce with a brush that has been used on raw or undercooked foods.

• For greatest safety, don't re-use leftover marinade that has been in contact with raw meat or poultry.

### Model T or Latest Model?

Henry Ford, the person behind the Model T car, is quoted as saying, "Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young."

It might also be said that anyone who keeps learning about food safety stays healthy! The next time you make a recipe, check to see if you should do a food safety update.



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