

## Camping Food Safety

While food safety is important any time of year, proper food handling is essential for summer meals, especially when away from your home kitchen. Since any food-related illness can spoil a camping trip or family vacation, it is worth being extra careful with food in the summer. Fortunately, you can help keep food safe with four simple steps!

### What we know

**Food-related illness is under-reported and misunderstood:** One in six Americans get sick from a food-related illness every year. Many of them blame it on the flu or other “bug.”

**Looking, smelling, and tasting are not accurate ways to check if food is safe to eat:** Food can look, smell, and taste fine - and be full of bacteria that make you very sick.

**Food safety involves four key steps:** Any perishable food can be a place for disease-causing bacteria to grow. Visit [FoodSafety.gov](http://FoodSafety.gov) to learn about *Food Safe Families*.

### What you can do

#### 1: CLEAN - Wash your hands often.

- When water is available, use biodegradable soap. Rub hands together for at least 20 seconds, scrubbing all parts thoroughly. Rinse with water and dry with paper towels.
- If water is not readily available, carry plenty of hand sanitizer and disposable wipes for cleaning hands carefully and often (before/after eating, touching animals, etc.).

#### 2: SEPARATE - Keep raw foods and ready-to-eat foods separate.

- Cross contamination can occur in coolers, especially when juices from raw meat or poultry drip onto other foods. Double-wrap all meat products in sealable plastic bags.
- When preparing meat/poultry/fish for grilling, use separate dishes and utensils. Wash carefully before using the same items for cooked meats or other foods.

#### 3: COOK - Cook to proper temperatures.

- Always use a digital or dial food thermometer in your camp kitchen. Ensure all that ground meat is safe to eat by cooking patties to an internal temperature of 160 °F.
- Cook all other beef/veal/pork/lamb to a minimum internal temperature of 145 °F. Cook all poultry and wild game to a safe minimum internal temperature of 165 °F.

#### 4: CHILL - Refrigerate all perishables promptly to 40 °F or below.

- Take plenty of cold power (ice blocks, water frozen in plastic milk jugs, or gel packs) to keep cold foods COLD. In camp, keep the cooler in shade or covered with a tarp.
- Put ALL perishable and cooked foods into a cooler after 2 hours. For more tips, visit [www.fsis.usda.gov/factsheets/food\\_safety\\_while\\_hiking\\_camping\\_&\\_boating/index.asp#9](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/factsheets/food_safety_while_hiking_camping_&_boating/index.asp#9).