



# Safe Food for the Hungry

A Newsletter for the Staff and Volunteers of Emergency Feeding Programs

Fall 2000

## Safe Foods Newsletter Welcomes New Editors

We would like to welcome two new editors to the Safe Food for the Hungry Newsletter--Dr. Carol Boushey from the Department of Foods and Nutrition and Barb Nolan from Consumer and Family Sciences.

Carol directs the Safe Food for the Hungry Project. This project includes the Safe Food for the Hungry Newsletter, the maintenance of the Directory of Food Assistance Organizations, maintenance of the Safe Food for the Hungry website, and research addressing nutrition issues for food pantry patrons.

Barb will be putting together the Safe Food for the Hungry newsletter, with Carol assisting and supervising.

Carol and Barb are very excited about being able to continue with the newsletter. We have a new office, phone number, and new ideas but will continue with the same great newsletter. We are looking forward to hearing from all of you. Welcome!

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## Food Safety On The Web

*Every day new web sites are emerging and food safety is a hot topic. Here are several sites you may find interesting.*

<http://vm.cfsan.fda.gov/~lrd/advice.html>

The National Food Safety Initiative sets up this site. You can get information about specific produce and food products. Current FDA legislature, Federal regulations, controls and standards are also discussed.

<http://www.foodsafety.org/index.htm>

This site, from the **National Food Safety Database**, discusses everything related to food safety. Tips on food handling, and food risks are just a couple of the issues discussed. This is an easy to use web page that even allows you to "ask the expert" through e-mail if you have any special concerns.

<http://www.cdc.gov/>

A site set up by the **Centers for Disease Control**. This site discusses major issues in all diseases affecting the United States, including foodborne illness. Just select "search" and type in food safety, and a number of reports about food safety will emerge. Also, it is a great place to get reports about foodborne illnesses.

<http://www.fightbac.org/>

This is an easy to use site from the **FIGHTBAC** campaign, which is dedicated to controlling the spread of foodborne illness. It discusses four easy steps to prevent the spread of foodborne illness, the various types of illnesses, what organisms cause them, and how to prevent them in foods.

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/>

A site put out by the **USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service**. This is a more technical site, but has lots of useful consumer information about special food safety concerns, such as in a disaster situation or a power outage. There is also a running scroll along the bottom of the screen giving food safety tips.



*SPOTLIGHT ON*

# CHERRIES



**How Many  
Different Kinds  
Of Cherries  
Can You Find?**

SWEET

BING  
BLACK TARTARIAN  
BURLATS  
CHAPMAN  
CHINOOK

DEACONS  
LAMBERT  
RAINIER  
REPUBLICAN  
ROYALANN  
VANS

SOUR

SAND CHERRIES  
MORELLO  
CHOKECHERRIES  
GROUND CHERRY  
MONTMORENCY

V C K Y P N X T Z B J S S W S  
 W H M R L A M B E R T E T Y E  
 Q I O R O C K R S M X I A C I  
 R N R E Q I T X N M E R L N R  
 A O E H L L D Q N I X R R E R  
 I O L C I B N B N H A E U R E  
 N K L D P U A B A T Z H B O H  
 I C O N T P M T L O P C B M C  
 E S O U R E P E A H U D I T E  
 R T Y O O R A E Y E D N N N K  
 C E P R J O H W O D I A G O O  
 T P O G S M C S R S S S M M H  
 B L A C K T A R T A R I A N C  
 W J G K W C F P T A J S D R M  
 V A N S F B D E A C O N S P R

*Dried cherries will be arriving at your local food pantry this month. Store them at a constant temperature avoiding high heat. They can be stored in the refrigerator or freezer up to six months in the original packaging. Dried cherries may be put into your favorite recipe or just eaten as is for a snack. They may be substituted for raisins in any recipe. A 1/4 cup serving of dried cherries is low in sodium and high in vitamin A. Listed below are a couple of recipes using the cherries you will be getting in a simple, tasty way.*



### Cherry Apple Salad

4 peeled, diced apples  
1/2 cup dried cherries  
1-8 oz. pkg. frozen whipped topping  
1 cup miniature marshmallows  
Sugar to taste

Mix apples and cherries.

Thaw topping and fold into fruit. Stir in marshmallows and sugar to taste.

Pile lightly into a serving dish and decorate with cherries.

### Cherry Sandwich

#### Ingredients:

Dried cherries	1/4 cup
Cottage or cream cheese	1/4 cup
Bread	4 slices

#### Directions:

1. Chop dried cherries, and mix with the cheese.
2. Spread between two slices of bread.



*Dried cherries can also be added to your favorite relish or stuffing recipe for the Thanksgiving holidays.*



### Cherry Oatmeal Crisp

8 crisp apples  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
3/4 cup dried cherries  
Juice of 1 lemon  
2 Tablespoons whole wheat flour  
Water or apple juice

#### Topping

1-1/3 cup oatmeal  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/2 cup whole wheat flour  
2 teaspoons cinnamon  
1/2 cup margarine or butter



Preheat oven to 375° F.

Slice apples into a large greased bowl with lemon juice, cinnamon, flour and dried cherries.

Pour into a baking dish, adding enough water or apple juice to cover the bottom.

Mix toping in a bowl and press onto top of apples.

Bake for 25 minutes or until apples are soft.  
Serves 8.

# Hunger and Obesity

*Linking “hunger” and “obesity” in the same title may at first appear foolish. Usually when you picture someone who is hungry you don’t think of him or her as obese. So is there a connection? Yes!*

In research published by *the Journal of Nutrition*, women from food-insecure households were more likely to be obese than women in either food secure households or households in which food insecurity became so severe their children were going hungry.

This research makes sense when you think about the food available in the home of the people who come to the pantry over the course of a month.

They probably have the most food at the beginning of the month when they receive their checks and food stamps. As the month continues to wind down, so does the food supply.

By the end of the month, there is little in the house and they come to the food pantry to pick up more for their family.

These people are less sure about the amount of food they will have in their house. They tend to eat more food when they have it because they are unsure when they will have sufficient food again.

This binge pattern of eating results in women overeating as a response to their food insecurity. So it is possible for an overweight person to be truly hungry.

## What kinds of problems are associated with hunger?

In children, cognitive and motor development are impaired by undernutrition because the body primarily uses the energy consumed for critical organ function and growth, and leaves inadequate energy for infants, toddlers, and young children to play or explore their environment.

Undernutrition...

- Limits a child’s learning potential and later ability to succeed in school and the workforce.
- Can limit growth, restrict brain development, and reduce immune function.
- Is often associated with poor living environments, including lack of parental support, social stress, and inadequate access to proper medical care. The environmental conditions of poverty magnify the negative effects of undernutrition.



***Food insecurity** exists whenever the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or the ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways is limited or uncertain.*

***Hunger** is the painful or uneasy sensation caused by a recurrent or involuntary lack of food. Over time, hunger may result in malnutrition.*

## What about hungry children and obesity?

The rise in overweight children is seen across the whole population, not just in hungry children. Weight is not related to income or race.

Children from food-secure households have safe environments to play in, have adequate nutrition that includes a variety of food, and they have healthcare and transportation.

Food-insecure children have fewer food selections. Their household may purchase foods that are high in calories and fat but low in nutrients because they are less expensive. This happens more often at the end of the month when Food Stamps and other resources run out.

Food-insecure families consume less milk, fruits, and vegetables because they are more expensive and not as easy to obtain. Transportation to a grocery store is a problem for some food-insecure families.

Many communities do not have adequate bus service and grocery stores are no longer located close to all residential neighborhoods.

Food-insecure children also have less access to safe places to play so their activities may be limited to quiet indoor games. Inactivity and limited food choices can lead to a problem with weight.

Olson, C.M. (September 1999). *Food Insecurity: A New Measure of Nutritional Well-Being*. Cornell Cooperative Extension Food and Nutrition, Ask the Nutrition Expert (on-line). Available: <http://www.cce.cornell.edu/food/expfiles/topics/olson/olsonoverview.html>

The Center on Hunger and Poverty. (1999) *Child Hunger, Child Obesity Myths and Realities*. Medford, MA: Tufts University, School of Nutrition Science and Policy.

## Programs Help With Hunger Problem

What are some of the programs that assist with hunger?

The **Food Stamp** program allows families to obtain food through grocery stores, improves household food availability, and improves dietary intakes, especially for children.

**WIC** (Women, Infants, and Children) provides supplemental food, nutrition education, and referrals to health care services for pregnant women, new mothers, and their infants and young children (under five years).

This cost-effective program reduces the number of low birth weight babies, related medical costs, and decreases the level of anemia in young children.

**School meals** provide balanced meals to millions of children each school day and meet up to half of a child's daily nutrient requirements.

All children can participate; low-income children can receive meals at little or no cost. School breakfast has been shown to improve the ability of children to learn.

The **Summer Food Service Program** fills a critical gap for children who rely on school meals for nourishment by providing meals at no cost during the summer months.

The **Child and Adult Care Food Program** enables day care homes and centers to offer balanced meals and snacks to the children in their care. It is especially beneficial for low-income providers.

## New Cookbook Provides Menus, Recipes, and Shopping Lists

Have you seen the new cookbook from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)?

The USDA has printed and made available on their web site a new cookbook for people on a limited budget.

Called *Recipes and Tips for Healthy, Thrifty Meals*, the 75-page cookbook has nutrition, cooking, and food safety information. It also has a menu for two weeks with recipes for that menu. There is a shopping list for the menus in the back of the book. All of the recipes are nutritious, simple, and quick to make.

If you would like a copy of this cookbook, there are two ways to obtain one.

The first is to order a copy from the Government Printing Office. The cookbooks cost \$4.25 each. Ask for



GPO stock number 001-000-04680-2 when you call 1-202-512-1800 to place your order.

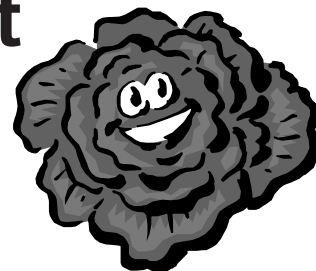
It is also available electronically. The cookbook may be downloaded in pdf format from the website of the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion at: [www.usda.gov/cnpp](http://www.usda.gov/cnpp).

Please note that the file for this book is very large and will take some time to print.





# Storing Summer's Harvest



This is the time of year when there is often a glut of fresh produce either donated from grocery stores or home gardeners. What do you do with bushels of tomatoes or baskets of zucchini? How can you keep perishables safe to preserve their nutrition and appearance?

## What to do when you receive fresh produce

Fresh produce should be used as soon as possible. When you first receive the produce, look through it to see what condition the food is in.

If any of the produce is moldy, slimy, or just smells bad, throw it out. Any produce that is still in good condition should be stored in the refrigerator where there is higher humidity until it can be used. Handle produce gently.



## Tips for preparing fruits and vegetables

Once you're ready to eat the fresh fruits and vegetables, they need to be handled properly. Germs can adhere to the surface of produce and can be passed to the flesh when the item is cut or handled.

Therefore, the most important thing you can do is wash all fruits and vegetables in clean drinking water before eating.

This applies to all fruits and vegetables, even if you don't eat the rind or skin (such as melons and oranges). Remember to wash produce just before you use it, not when you put it away.

The one exception is leafy greens, such as lettuce, which should be rinsed before refrigerating to maintain their crispness.

You should not use detergent when washing fruits and vegetables because you might eat detergent residues. Produce items are porous and can absorb the detergent. Detergent is not labeled by the Food and Drug Administration for use on foods.



## How to distribute all of that fresh produce!

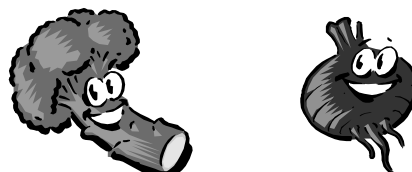
Encourage locations that make meals to consider putting fresh produce in a soup or sauce instead of using a canned item that would keep.

For food pantry clients, keep recipes on hand to give out with the fresh produce. Tell clients how they can use the fresh produce several different ways. For example, zucchini and tomatoes can both be used in spaghetti sauce. Encourage clients to try adding fresh produce to the foods that they fix at home.

Many garden fresh foods can also be eaten raw. Children love raw vegetables for a snack especially if they can dip it in a sauce.

Try packing a food bag with other items that would go well with fresh produce, so the family will have what they need to use the fresh produce.

- In addition to washing, you should: Peel and discard outer leaves or rinds. Scrub hearty vegetables such as potatoes and carrots if you want to eat the fiber-and nutrient-rich skin.
- Clean surfaces, utensils, and hands after touching raw meat and poultry and before you use them on fresh produce.
- Keep refrigerators clean and cold. Cover and refrigerate produce you have cut.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after using the bathroom, changing diapers, and before preparing food.



**Answers to Cherry Word Search**

V	G	K	Y	P	M	X	T	Z	B	J	S	S	W	S
W	H	M	R	A	A	M	B	E	R	E	E	T	A	L
O	I	O	R	O	C	K	R	S	M	X	I	R	R	E
R	N	O	R	Q	I	T	X	N	M	E	R	A	L	L
A	I	N	O	R	E	L	D	Q	N	I	X	R	R	E
I	N	O	R	E	L	D	Q	N	I	X	R	R	E	E
E	S	O	U	R	P	E	A	B	A	L	H	U	D	N
C	T	Y	O	O	B	A	E	Y	O	E	D	N	A	N
T	P	O	G	S	M	G	S	R	S	S	S	M	M	H
B	L	A	C	K	T	A	R	T	A	R	I	A	N	C
W	J	G	K	W	C	F	P	T	A	J	S	D	R	M
V	A	N	S	F	B	D	E	A	C	O	N	S	P	R

# FOOD SAFETY QUIZ

*How safe are your food safety habits?  
Take this quiz and find out.*

QUESTION		TRUE	FALSE
1	Perishable food should not be left at room temperature longer than 2 hours.		
2	It is important to wash counters, cutting boards, and utensils after handling raw foods.		
3	I can eat any fruit without first washing.		
4	If I don't eat the rind of the fruit I don't need to wash it before I eat it.		
5	To prevent cross-contamination, it is important to wash your hands after handling raw meat.		
6	Bacteria don't grow at room temperature.		
7	The best place to thaw frozen foods is on the kitchen counter.		
8	It's important to take the internal temperature of foods before serving.		

## ANSWERS

**1. True**

Refrigerate or freeze perishables within 2 hours to keep harmful bacteria from growing and multiplying.

**2. True**

Bacteria can spread throughout the kitchen and get onto cutting boards, utensils, sponges and counter tops. Cleanliness is the key to food safety.

**3. False**

Germs can adhere to the surface of produce so it's important to wash all fruit in clean drinking water before eating.

**4. False**

Germs on the surface of fruits and vegetables can be passed to the flesh when the item is cut or handled. Always wash produce in clean drinking water before eating.

**5. True**

Always wash your hands, cutting boards, dishes, and utensils with hot soapy water and rinse well, after they come in contact with raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs.

**6. False**

Bacteria grow rapidly between 40°F and 140°F and room temperature is right in that range. In two hours, five bacteria, sitting at room temperature, can multiply to become 1280--more than enough to sicken you.

**7. False**

Frozen foods should NOT be thawed on the countertop. Bacteria can multiply when the outside thaws and the inside is still frozen.

Frozen foods should be thawed in the refrigerator, OR in a watertight plastic bag submerged in cold water (change the cold water every 20 minutes.) OR, defrost in the microwave and cook immediately after thawing.

**8. True**

The internal temperature of food should always be taken to ensure it is above 165°F. -- the temperature at which bacteria are killed.

## Safe Food For the Hungry

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## Food Safety Questions?

Educators at your local Purdue University Cooperative Extension Office can answer your food safety questions. To contact your local extension office, call **1-800-EXT-INFO**.



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This newsletter is created by the staff in the Department of Foods and Nutrition at Purdue University, with funding from a Community Foods and Nutrition Block Grant administered by the Family and Social Services Administration, Division of Family and Children, Housing and Community Services Section.

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