



Keep spreading word on food safety

Due to my work, I have learned a lot about food safety. But no matter what I say, friends and family think I'm too finicky, and they continue to take what I think are unnecessary risks. How can I get my message across?

Don't be discouraged. It's often difficult for people to distinguish between words to the wise and the cries of Chicken Little. But at least some of your guidance about practical food safety measures just might sink in over time.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warns that each year, about 1 in 6 Americans get a case of foodborne illness. Most people recover within a few days, but of those estimated 48 million cases, 128,000 result in hospitalizations, and 3,000 are fatal.

Some foodborne illnesses can cause long-lasting effects, including kidney failure (from some types of *E. coli* bacteria), chronic arthritis (occasionally from infections from *Shigella*, *Salmonella* or *Campylobacter*), and brain and nerve damage (possible from *Campylobacter* and, in infants, from *Listeria*).

So, food safety guidance shouldn't just be shrugged off. But too commonly, it is. Recent research reveals that 64 percent of families admit to not using a food thermometer regularly to check the temperature of meat and poultry,

and 33 percent aren't using different or freshly cleaned cutting boards to prevent cross-contamination between raw meat and produce.

You might suggest that your friends and family get online and take a look at <http://www.foodsafety.gov>, a one-stop shop for food safety-related information from the CDC, the Food and Drug Administration, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service. Currently, the site features "Recipes for Disaster," a new campaign with pointed messages on food safety, co-sponsored by the Ad Council.

Included is a listing of 10 common food safety myths (explaining, for example, why the "smell test" for leftovers doesn't hold up) and an accompanying list of dangerous food safety mistakes to avoid.

You can also point them to Ohio State University's Food Safety website at <http://foodsafety.osu.edu>. The experts behind that site also offer a food safety hotline at 800-752-2751 (Ohio only) or foodsafety@osu.edu.

Perhaps with the weight of that kind of expertise behind you, your friends and family will begin to heed your warnings. Let's hope it doesn't take a case of foodborne illness to do that.

Chow Line is a service of Ohio State University's College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences and its outreach and research arms, Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. Send questions to Chow Line, c/o Martha Filipic, 2021 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH, 43210-1044, or filipic.3@osu.edu.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

OHIO AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

July 26, 2013

By Martha Filipic

614-292-9833

filipic.3@osu.edu

Editor:

This column was reviewed by Linnette Goard, field specialist in Food Safety, Selection and Management, for Ohio State University Extension, the outreach arm of the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences.

Communications and
Technology
Strategic Communications
2021 Coffey Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1044
614-292-2011

208 Research Services
Building
1680 Madison Ave.
Wooster, OH 44691-4096
330-263-3780

Ohio State University Extension embraces human diversity and is committed to ensuring that all research and related educational programs are available to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. This statement is in accordance with United States Civil Rights Laws and the USDA. Keith L. Smith, Associate Vice President for Agricultural Administration; Associate Dean, College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences; Director, Ohio State University Extension; and Gist Chair in Extension Education and Leadership. For Deaf and Hard of Hearing, please contact Ohio State University Extension using your preferred communication (e-mail, relay services, or video relay services). Phone 1-800-750-0750 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. EST Monday through Friday. Inform the operator to dial 614-292-6181.