**Tips for Food-Safe Grilling** provided by University of Wisconsin Extension **Summer 2014**

Grilling season is shifting into high gear as many people enjoy Wisconsin’s all-too-short summer by cooking meals outdoors. When you’re grilling out, keep in mind that foodborne illness peaks in the summer, says University of Wisconsin-Extension food science specialist Barbara Ingham. She offers these tips to help you keep the grilling season food-safe.

--Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food, especially raw meat.

--Always marinate foods in the refrigerator, not on the counter or outdoors. “Boil used marinade before applying it to cooked food,” says Ingham. “Reserve a portion of unused marinade to use as a sauce for cooked meat. Do not rely on heating to decontaminate the marinade that has been in contact with raw meat.”

--When grilling foods, preheat the coals on your grill for 20 or 30 minutes, or until the coals are lightly coated with ash.

—If you partially cook food in the microwave, oven or stove to reduce grilling time, do so immediately before the food goes on the hot grill. “Partial cooking saves time, can help prevent flare-ups, and for products like chicken, often results in a better quality meal,” says Ingham.

--When it’s time to grill your food, cook it to a safe internal temperature. Use a food thermometer to be sure. “Place the food thermometer in the thickest part of the meat. Don’t let it touch the bone, fat or gristle,” says Ingham. Check the temperature in several places to make sure the food is evenly heated.

* Beef, veal and lamb steaks and roasts: 145°F for medium rare (with a 3-minute rest time) 160°F for medium.
* Ground pork and ground beef: 160°F.
* Poultry: at least 165°F.
* Fin fish: 145°F or until the fish is opaque and separates easily with a fork.
* Shrimp, lobster and crabs: The meat should be pearly and opaque.
* Clams, oysters and mussels: Until the shells are open.

--Never place cooked food on a plate that previously held raw meat, poultry, seafood or eggs. Be sure to have plenty of clean utensils and platters on hand.

--Grilled food can be kept hot until serving by moving it to the side of the grill rack, just away from the coals to avoid overcooking.

--Avoid placing foods in the Danger Zone (40°F to 140°F) for more than one hour on a warm summer’s day. “Never let raw meat, poultry, eggs, cooked food or cut fresh fruit or vegetables sit unrefrigerated for more than an hour on a warm day,” says Ingham.

To learn more about keeping food safe, contact Douglas County UW-Extension Nutrition Education Program Coordinator Julie Montgomery @ 715-395-1427 or email julie.montgomery@ces.uwex.edu

To stay abreast of all the latest food safety news, follow “Safe and Healthy: Preserving Food at Home” at <http://fyi.uwex.edu/safepreserving/>

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