



Food Safety and Inspection Service

1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250
Web: www.fsis.usda.gov

News Release

Food Safety Education Staff
Press Inquiries (202) 720-9113
Consumer Inquiries (888) 674-6854

This Super Bowl, Don't Get Sacked by Foodborne Illness

WASHINGTON, Jan. 30, 2020 — According to the National Chicken Council, Americans will consume more than 1.4 billion chicken wings this Super Bowl Sunday. Add to that countless slices of pizza and other munchies, and you'll have a recipe for a winning Super Bowl party. But if you're not careful, you could be putting your guests at risk for foodborne illness. Follow the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service's (FSIS) game plan to avoid getting sick this Super Bowl Sunday.

Play a Clean Game: DO wash your hands. In a recent USDA study, participants who attempted to wash their hands failed 99 percent of the time, not following all the steps of correct handwashing. Make sure you wet your hands with running water and lather them with soap for a full 20 seconds. Then rinse and dry with a clean towel or paper towel.

DON'T wash chicken wings, other poultry products or meats. Many people who wash or rinse meat and poultry do so out of habit or because it's how their parents or grandparents taught them how to cook. USDA research found that washing or rinsing these items greatly increases the spread of germs. Doing so can increase the chances of cross-contamination by splashing bacteria onto kitchen surfaces and other food items being prepared. The only way to kill bacteria is to cook meat and poultry to a safe internal temperature. Whole cuts of meat should reach 145 °F, with a three-minute rest time, and chicken wings should reach at least 165 °F.

Separate the Teams: DON'T cross contaminate. When you're shopping at the grocery store, keep raw meat, poultry, eggs and seafood in separate plastic bags to prevent their juices from dripping onto other foods. Always remember to use separate cutting boards – one for fresh fruits and vegetables, and another for raw meats. Keep raw meats away from ready-to-eat foods.

Cook the Opponent: Raw meat, poultry, seafood and egg products need to be cooked to a safe minimum internal temperature. Use a food thermometer to ensure food has reached the recommended temperatures, which will kill any harmful bacteria that may be present. Chicken wings – and poultry, in general – are safe to eat when they have reached an internal temperature of 165 °F. Take the temperature of multiple wings, in the thickest part of the wing, being careful to avoid touching the bone, which can skew the reading.

Throughout the game, keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Keep hot foods above 140 °F in a slow cooker or chafing dish or keep half of the food on the table and the other in a warm oven. Keep cold foods at 40 °F or below by placing salads, dips and salsa in a tray of ice. If serving food throughout the game, keep two separate portions on hand for easy swapping. Serve one portion as the game starts and keep another portion in the refrigerator or oven to set out after halftime to prevent dangerous bacteria from growing.

Chill Out: Most bacteria grow rapidly at temperature between 40 °F and 140 °F, also known as the [Danger Zone](#), so do not leave food sitting out at room temperature for more than two hours. Before those two hours are up, place small portions of leftovers in shallow containers and refrigerate them promptly. When you're reheating leftovers, make sure they reach 165 °F.

If you have questions, contact the USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) to talk to a food safety expert or chat live at ask.usda.gov from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday.

###

NOTE: Access news releases and other information at FSIS' website at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/newsroom>.

Follow FSIS on Twitter at twitter.com/usdafoodsafety or in Spanish at: twitter.com/usdafoodsafes_es.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice), or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).