



Food Safety and Inspection Service

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News Release

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FSIS Recognizes September as Food Safety Education Month

WASHINGTON, Aug. 31, 2020 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is reminding the public to think about health and safety in the kitchen for National Food Safety Education Month this September. Consumers are encouraged to practice behaviors that will continue to help keep them and their loved ones safe from foodborne illness.

“My vision for food safety includes enhancing and emphasizing consumer education,” said Under Secretary for Food Safety Mindy Brashears. “Consumers play a vital role in reducing foodborne illness – and by providing scientifically accurate and effective food safety information, we can help empower them to adopt and practice safe food handling behaviors in their own homes.”

Foodborne illness is a preventable public health challenge that results in millions of illnesses each year in the United States. To combat this public health challenge, FSIS engages with the public about food safety in a variety of ways including the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline, media interviews, and seasonal campaigns. FSIS also conducts comprehensive research to better understand how the public prepares food, to ensure consumer education efforts address emerging gaps and opportunities. Additionally, FSIS collaborates with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on the website FoodSafety.gov, which serves as the federal government’s “gateway to food safety information,” and provides information on how consumers can easily adopt common food safe behaviors like handwashing, reducing cross-contamination, and safely cooking meat and poultry products.

Consumers should follow four simple steps for food safety – [Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill](#). “Our agency research has shown that handwashing and preventing cross-contamination are two food safety steps that consumers sometimes struggle with,” said FSIS Administrator Paul Kiecker. “FSIS is committed to increasing consumer knowledge on the importance of these food safety steps through our many modes of consumer education.”

FSIS’ resources can teach consumers how to practice the four steps of food safety and overall reduce their risk of foodborne illness. Families interested in learning about food safety together can find age appropriate food safety lessons on FSIS’ webpage, [Food Safety Education Resources for Families](#), by following [@USDAFoodSafety](#) on Twitter and by liking [Facebook.com/FoodSafety.gov](https://www.facebook.com/FoodSafety.gov). Consumers with questions about food safety can call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday, in English or Spanish, or email to mph hotline@usda.gov. Consumers can also chat live at <https://ask.usda.gov/>.

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