



Grill Safely This Month

As we head into July, we want everyone to stay safe this summer while grilling some delicious meals. Grilling is a wonderful way to cook food and you can cook just about anything on it. Most people just use it to cook their meats but it does an outstanding job for vegetables, fruits and breads.

When cooking meats, we are always concerned about the temperature of our food in order to prevent foodborne illness. In order to do that, we must purchase a food thermometer and cook the food until it has reached that temperature. You cannot tell if you food is fully cooked or “done” unless you check the temperature. It is not based on the color of the meat or the juices. Beef, pork, and lamb are cooked to 145 degrees, ground meats to 155 degrees and all poultry products are cooked to 165 degrees.

There are a variety of methods to prepare vegetables and fruit on the grill. The biggest thing to consider is to find a way for it to sit on the grate without falling through, or you can use skewers, aluminum foil, or a grilling basket.

Whether you are canning or grilling, you want to choose food that is fresh and of high quality. What you put on the grill is what you are going to take away. There is no magical process that will make your old food fresh again.

One of the biggest food safety concerns is leaving your food out and uncovered especially during those outside summer months. Never let food sit outside of the refrigerator for more than 2 hours. In the hot summer months, it should only be 1 hour. Flies are a big food safety hazard as well so be sure to plan ahead!!

If you are interested in learning how to plan and prepare meals easily for your family or yourself, our monthly Lunch N’ Learn workshop on Wednesday, July 18th from 12pm–1pm at the Person County Office will help you. This month’s topic is “Meal Planning” We will provide a lot of information on how you can plan your meals, use a slow cooker, make freezer meals, and reduce the cost of your food budget. Cost to attend is \$5 and is due by Friday, July 13th to the Extension Office.



Grilled Vegetable Kabobs

Ingredients

- 2 red or green bell peppers, seeded
- 2 medium zucchini
- 2 medium red onions
- 8 ounces fresh mushrooms
- 2 medium ears sweet corn
- 8 6-inch wooden or metal skewers
- Nonstick vegetable oil spray
- Sauce
- 1/2 cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 Tablespoons mustard
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon thyme
- 2 medium yellow squash
- 16 cherry tomatoes

Directions

Cut zucchini, squash, and bell peppers into 2-inch chunks. Cut red onions into wedges. Combine the vegetables with the tomatoes and mushrooms in a bowl. Cut the corn into 1-inch pieces and cook in boiling water for about 10 minutes. Add the cooked corn to the other vegetables. Mix the vinegar, mustard, garlic, and thyme for the sauce. Toss vegetables in the sauce and thread vegetables into skewers. **If you use wooden skewers, soak them in water for 30 minutes before using.* Before starting the grill, spray it with vegetable oil spray. Place the skewers on the grill over medium heat. Baste occasionally with extra sauce. Grill 20 minutes or until tender. You can cook them in aluminum foil instead. Divide them in half and wrap them in foil and grill for 30 minutes.

Source - National Heart, Lung & Blood Institute <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov>

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