

# Outdoor Cooking (Summer Grilling) - Teacher Guide and Fact Sheet

**Objectives:** To teach how to make foods prepared outdoors economical, safe and healthy.

## Background Information with Teaching Suggestions:

Share with participants:

*"Sometimes individuals use the word barbecue (Bar-B-Q, B-B-Q or barbeque) when what they are actually doing is grilling their food. Let me give you a few definitions to start so everyone understands the different methods of cooking outdoors. "*

**Grilling** - Cooking food over **direct** heat. A grill has parallel bars on which food is cooked over charcoal, wood, or special rocks heated by gas or electricity.

**Smoking** - Cooking food **indirectly** (not directly over the coals) in the presence of a fire. Placing a pan of water beneath the meat on the grill with the hot coals around the pan can do this. The grill is covered during cooking. It takes much longer to smoke food than grill food and less tender meats are better cooked this way. Also, the natural smoke flavors the meat.

**Barbecuing** - A cooking method of spit roasting a whole animal over an open fire or pit. The word has also come to describe a flavoring or type of meat dish, which has been barbecued, or had a barbecue sauce added.

## Preparing the Grill

Ask participants: *"Who cooks food outside in the summertime?" "How do you cook your food outside?"*

There are basically two kinds of grills; the gas or electric grill and the charcoal grill.

The **gas** or **electric grill** takes little preparation. Follow manufacturer's directions for igniting or preheating a gas or electric outdoor cooker.

The **charcoal grill** takes longer to prepare for cooking than the gas or electric grill.

There are two types of cooking on the grill; the **direct-heat** method and the **indirect-heat** method.

- The **direct-heat** method implies you are cooking food over the top of the coals. Remove grill lid and cooking rack. Open all vents. Mound 40 to 50 charcoal briquettes in center of bottom rack. Use only APPROVED FIRE STARTERS--never use gasoline, for example. Burn briquettes until they are ashy gray. This takes about 20-30 minutes. Spread the coals evenly over the bottom rack. Position the CLEAN cooking rack on the grill. If the cooking rack has food and grease build-up, use a grill brush to clean the surface.
- The **indirect-heat** method implies that food is not cooked directly over the coals. Heat charcoals using directions given for **direct-heat** method except place the mound of charcoals to one side of the grill. Place a drip pan directly under where the food will cook. When coals are hot, arrange coals to one side of drip pan or for a hotter fire, place coals around the drip pan.

USE PRECAUTIONS WHENEVER USING FIRE TO COOK - Place the grill in well-lit, well-ventilated areas away from trees, shrubs and buildings. Keep children and pets away from the fire. Have a squirt bottle of water nearby to control flare-ups.

## Food Safety & Cook-Outs

It's summertime and many people will be cooking meals and eating meals outside. With the warmer temperatures and the shift of food preparation and eating outside this increases a risk of

food-borne illnesses. Have a discussion with your participants on this topic. Listed below are topics that specifically address food safety for cookouts and picnics. (Handout - "Safe Grilling Tips")

### **Temperature**

Ask participants; *"How does the summertime heat effect the safety of the foods you eat?"*

- Perishable foods (ex. dairy products, meats and poultry, dishes containing these ingredients) should be kept cold or hot.
- When the outdoor temperature is less than 90°F, perishable foods should not sit out more than two hours.
- When the outdoor temperature is 90°F or more, perishable foods should not sit out for more than one hour.

### **Food Preparation**

Ask participants; *"Give examples of food safety precautions that should be taken when preparing foods to cook on the grill."*

- Wash hands before and after preparing foods.
- Thaw foods in the refrigerator or in the microwave oven. Note: If the microwave is used for thawing, the meat must be cooked immediately after thawing.
- Do not place cooked food on plates that were used to prepare or carry raw meats.
- Marinate meat in the refrigerator, NOT at room temperature.

### **Cooking**

Ask participants; *"How can you tell if grilled meat is thoroughly cooked?"*

- Meat and poultry cooked on the grill turn brown on the outside very quickly. It is difficult to tell if the meat is thoroughly cooked by looking at it.
- USE A THERMOMETER to be sure your foods have reached a safe internal temperature. Whole poultry should reach 180°F; breasts, 170°F. Beef, veal, and lamb steaks, roasts and chops can be cooked to 145°F but should reach 160°F especially if meat has been rolled, tenderized or pierced with fork or knife. All cuts of pork should reach 160°F. Hamburgers should reach 160°F, ground poultry, 165°F. Grill fully cooked meats like hot dogs to 165°F, or until steaming hot. NEVER partially grill meat or poultry and finish grilling later. Food must be cooked completely to destroy harmful bacteria.

### **Marinating Meats** (Handout - "Marinades")

Share the following information on marinating with your participants. Ask them to share favorite marinade recipes.

- Marinade - An acidic sauce in which food is soaked to enrich its flavor or tenderize.
- Marinate - The act of soaking food in a "marinade".

Marinating meat flavors and tenderizes the meat. The acid in the marinade sauce breaks down the connective tissue in meats. Lean cuts of meat, such as "Select" grade, tend to be tougher than other cuts. It can be tenderized using a marinade.

### **Tips for marinating:**

- Always marinate food in the refrigerator.
- Reserve part of your marinade if you need it for a sauce. DO NOT reuse marinade from raw meat or poultry to use on cooked food unless it is boiled first to destroy any bacteria.
- Marinate food in a plastic bag or a glass, ceramic or stainless steel bowl.

- Follow directions for marinade for marinating time. Marinating times will depend on the ingredients of the marinade sauce. In general, most meat and poultry need to soak for one to three hours; seafood, 15 to 30 minutes.

### **Pre-Cooking Meat and Poultry**

Share with participants that it is not safe to hold partially cooked food. If you want to partially cook your food in the microwave or on the stove to reduce grilling time, it must be partially cooked immediately before grilling. Then **finish** cooking the meat on the grill until it reaches the internal temperature appropriate for that specific cut of meat or poultry.

### **Tips for Grilling Burgers**

Ask participants: *"Do you have a special grilled burger recipe?"* Burgers are a popular meat to cook on the grill in the summertime. The following are tips that will be helpful in making your burger delicious and safe to eat.

- Uncooked ground beef can be kept two days in the refrigerator in its supermarket wrap. For longer storage, rewrap the meat in freezer wrap and freeze.
- Handle the ground meat gently when preparing the burger patties for grilling. Do not over mix the meat when adding other ingredients to the meat. Do not pat down too hard when shaping the meat into patties. This can cause burgers to be hard and dry.
- Make sure the grill is hot before cooking burgers. This keeps the burgers from sticking to the grill.
- Do not salt meat until after the burgers are cooked. Salt will draw the juices out of the burger.
- While cooking, do not press down on the patties with a spatula. This pushes the juices out of the burger.
- Cook the burgers to an internal temperature of 160°F. Check the internal temperature using a meat thermometer.

**Activities:** "Summer Food Safety Bingo". Demonstrate cooking food on the grill or bring foods that were cooked on the grill. Display items needed for outdoor cooking; charcoal, charcoal lighter, grill brush, water bottle, grill mittens, etc. (Handout - "Outdoor Cooking Recipes")

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