Keep Food Safe when
Camping and Hiking

Summer is a great time to enjoy the outdoors. Whether you’re
planning a weekend camping trip or an afternoon hike, food
safety is important to prevent foodborne illness from becoming
an unwanted souvenir. Follow these tips to keep food safe while
you’re enjoying the great outdoors.

Plan Ahead!

■ To avoid leftovers, plan your menus ahead of time with
portion sizes in mind. Plan meals that contain common
ingredients and require one pot to reduce your ingredient
list and lighten your load.

■ Find out if campfires are allowed at your destination or if
you’ll have to bring a portable stove or grill.

■ When packing food for a hiking trip, it’s a good idea to
choose items that do not require refrigeration. Canned
meat, poultry and fish; peanut butter and jelly; beef jerky;
dried fruits, nuts, noodles and soups; breads; crackers;
powdered milk and fruit drinks are excellent choices.

■ Be organized. Airtight containers and re-sealable plastic
bags make useful tools that can be recycled and used for
many other campsite purposes.

Keep it Clean!

■ Find out if your camping or hiking destination has a source of
clean water. If not, pack bottled water, disposable wipes and
biodegradable camping soap.

■ Assume that stream and river water is unsafe to drink. Packing
bottled water to drink is convenient and cost-effective. Another
option is to purchase purification tablets or filtration equipment to
remove harmful micro-organisms from streams and river water.

■ Handle meat, poultry and fish carefully. Double wrap or place
the packages in plastic bags at the bottom of your cooler to prevent
juices from dripping on other foods.

■ Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water before
beginning food preparation.

■ To prevent cross-contamination, use a spatula or clean tongs for
removing meat or poultry from the grill. Place on a clean plate.
Keep Cold Foods Cold!

- Pack foods directly from the refrigerator into an insulated cooler in reverse-use order (first food packed is last to be used). A block of ice keeps longer than ice cubes. Use clean, empty milk cartons to freeze blocks of ice or use frozen gel packs.
- Transport coolers in the passenger area of your vehicle. Keep coolers in the shade or insulate the cooler with a blanket or tarp when you reach your camping or hiking destination.
- When your camping or hiking adventure has ended, discard all perishable foods if there is no ice in the cooler or if the gel packs are no longer frozen.

Keep Hot Foods Hot!

- Remember to pack a food thermometer to check the doneness of meat. Insert the thermometer in the thickest part of the food, away from bone, fat or gristle. Ground beef should reach an internal temperature of 160 F; whole poultry, poultry breasts and ground poultry, 165 F. Beef, pork, veal, lamb steaks, roast and chops should be cooked to an internal temperature of 145 F*.
- Discard any food left out for more than two hours or one hour if the temperature is above 90 F. When in doubt, throw it out! If campfires are allowed, discarded leftover food should be burned, not dumped.

*Allow three-minute rest time.