

# food&family

## Food For Thought: Food Safety Tips For Family Reunions

(NAPSA)—When it comes to family reunions, food safety should be embraced like a member of the family. If your reunion plans include everyone sharing the cooking, be sure to follow these four helpful steps from the USDA: *Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill*, for preparing, serving, transporting, and storing food safely.

**Clean:** Wash hands, utensils, and countertops often.

**Separate:** Avoid cross-contamination. Do not let raw meat, poultry, or fish—or their juices—touch other foods that will not be cooked.

**Cook:** Cook food to a safe internal temperature. Use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature. Steaks and roasts should heat to 145°F, hamburgers to 160°F, chicken and turkey breasts to 170°F, whole chicken and turkey to 180°F.

**Chill:** Refrigerate or freeze perishable food within 2 hours, within 1 hour in temperatures above 90°F.

Whether you plan to take food across town or host the event in your own backyard, follow these additional food safety steps for a safe and successful event.

**Transporting Food:** Keep cold foods at or below 40°F. Put foods in a cooler with a cold source such as ice or a commercial freezing gel. Place an appliance thermometer in the cooler to ensure that the temperature of the food stays safe. Keep hot foods at or above 140°F. Wrap well and place in an insulated container.

**Reheating Food:** Use the



**Now You're Cooking—Use a food thermometer to check if food is cooked to a safe internal temperature.**

stove, oven, or microwave to reheat food to 165°F. Bring sauces, soups, and gravies to a rolling boil.

**Serving Food:** Similar rules follow here as with transporting foods: Keep hot foods hot—at or above 140°F, and cold foods cold—at or below 40°F.

A perfect companion for your family reunion planning is “Cooking for Groups—A Volunteer’s Guide to Food Safety.” This guide will take you through all the steps necessary to safely plan and serve food for your family reunion. The guide is available online at [www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov). To order printed copies, E-mail [fsis.outreach@usda.gov](mailto:fsis.outreach@usda.gov).

For questions about meat, poultry, or egg products, call the USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline, toll free, at 1-888-MPHotline or visit [www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov).