

MAKING LIFE MORE FUN

Making Your Picnic Better

(NAPSA)—Backyards nationwide will play host to fun, family picnics. You can make your picnic a Better-Than-A-Picnic Picnic by following a few simple tips from Cooper Munroe, blogger and co-founder of TheMotherhood.com.

- Plan lots of fun, simple activities—sack races, bubbles, tug-of-war, sidewalk chalk and kicking soccer balls—but allow plenty of time for free play, too.

- Give back—choose a charity that's meaningful to your family. Call the organization to say you'd like to do a service project or fundraiser for it at your picnic and ask what the charity needs. Bring a big box to your picnic to hold the donations or get to work on planting flowers, painting shelves or the like.

- Let everyone in on the pleasures of picnic prep. Ask your guests to each bring a side dish such as fruit, baked beans or potato salad, or a menu staple such as hot dog buns or ketchup.

- Great condiments can put a fresh spin on traditional barbecue fare. Set out ramekins of colorful condiments such as jalapeños, cherry tomatoes, mild and spicy mustards, grilled and raw onions, barbecue sauce and relish.

- Bring drinks that are both fun and refreshing: lots of lemonade and iced tea, garnished with a full slice of lemon, a sprig of mint and a colorful straw.

- Don't forget the ice; keep all foods covered and be sure you have enough plastic tablecloths, utensils, napkins and paper towels. Also pack a wet washcloth in a plastic bag and a first-aid kit, calamine lotion and sunscreen. Bring a camera and ask someone to take lots of pictures.



There are many ways to make your picnics better than ever.

- Create a simple menu stocked with traditional grill items, including hot dogs. The only national, all-beef, kosher hot dog with no fillers, by-products, artificial flavors or colors, Hebrew National considers its franks to be “Better-Than-A-Hot-Dog Hot Dog.” Said Munroe, “With Hebrew National hot dogs, moms can know they are feeding their family something that's better than just a hot dog. It's premium beef.”

To make those hot dogs exquisitely caramelized on the outside and done on the inside, control the heat. Cook them on medium to medium-low heat and always use an instant-read thermometer to test for doneness.

- Grill the sides—veggies of all kinds—along with the meat. Grilling gives vegetables a fragrant, smoky flavor. Try carrots, eggplants, squash, bell peppers, sweet potatoes, leeks and more. You can toast or warm bread or rolls on the grill, too.

- End the day with an interactive dessert—decorate cupcakes or have a sundae bar.

Get more tips and recipes at www.hebrewnational.com.