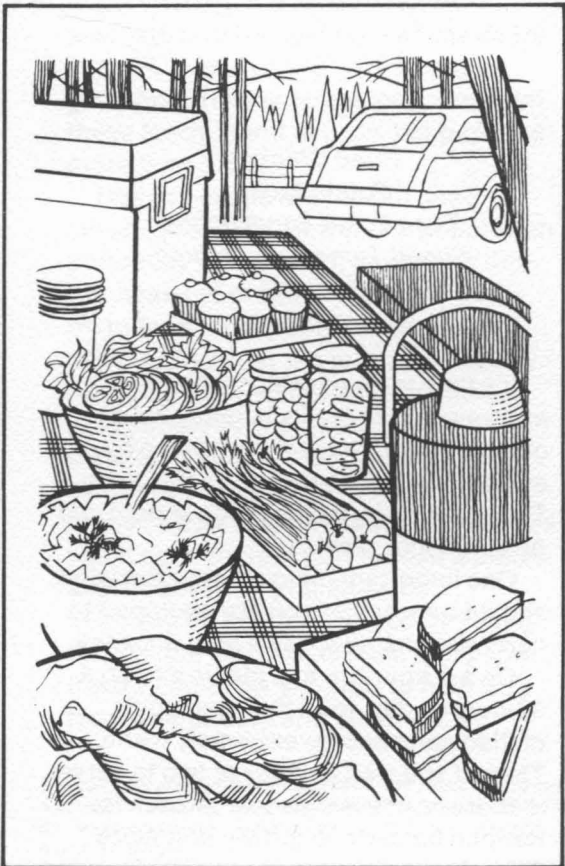


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FOURTH OF JULY Picnic

Serve It Safely



TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
Daniel C. Pfannstiel, Director • College Station

Holiday Meals— Things To Consider

Fried Chicken
Potato Salad
Tuna Salad Sandwiches
Sliced Tomatoes, Lettuce
Relishes
Cupcakes

It's time to celebrate the 4th of July and your whole family is ready for an outing. There's a local park close by, and a State park a half day's trip away. The question is, which place should you go to for your picnic?

One important factor in your decision should be whether you are equipped to carry perishable foods a long distance.

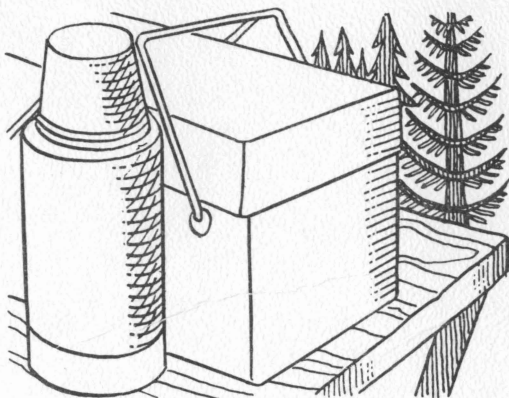
On a 4-hour trip to a picnic site on a 90-degree day, food that starts out chilled can become extremely warm. Then, if you wait an hour or two to serve it, there is an even greater chance for harmful bacteria to grow—and more chance of foodborne illness. For long

distance trips, plan meals with less perishable foods.

In preparing food for picnics, don't handle raw chicken and then other foods without washing your hands between. Bacteria can be spread from one food to another by handling. Clean the cutting board with soap and hot water after each use.

Don't spoil a happy holiday by making people sick! Carry the fried chicken, potato salad, tuna salad sandwiches, and cupcakes in insulated bags or chests. Be sure to use ice, dry ice, or reusable cold packs. Don't depend on cold food's staying cold just because it's in an insulated bag—especially on a warm summer day.





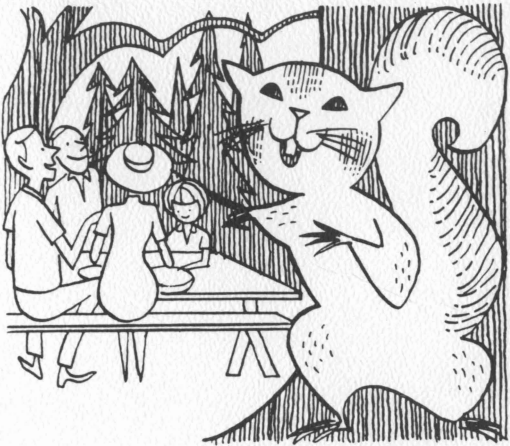
Where will the meal be prepared—at home, in the backyard, or away from home at some outdoor picnic site?

Where will the meal be eaten?

Can you prepare and serve the food to avoid foodborne illness? Your family may enjoy meals every day without problems, but on holidays when large groups get together, meals are sometimes transported without adequate refrigeration. Bacteria can cause food poisoning. All they need to grow is the right combination of time, temperature, and moisture.

Foodborne illness can cause diarrhea, vomiting, stomach cramps, and other unpleasant symptoms which can last for several hours or even days. With young children and elderly people, the results can be more severe. Often, people mistake foodborne illness for a simple “bug” or virus. The real cause may be food that was not properly handled, prepared, or served. This can be prevented.

Can perishable foods such as cream pies, seafoods, and dishes made with eggs, fish, meat, and poultry be kept COLD (below 40° F)? Do not let these foods stand at room temperature more than 2 hours.



Can perishable foods such as seafood, poultry, and cooked meats be kept HOT (above 140° F)? Bacteria grow best in lukewarm foods. Never let these foods stand at room temperature more than 2 hours.

Holiday meals are fun but need careful planning. How many people can you *safely* serve? And, how much time will it take to prepare the food? Don't try to feed more people than you can handle. Consider the size and quantity of the cooking equipment you have, your supply of eating utensils and dishes. Figure out how much refrigerator space you'll need to store foods *or* how many insulated containers you'll need to transport food to a picnic site. Will washing facilities be available? If not, plan ahead by taking disposable utensils, dishes, and paper towels and other supplies to help with food preparation and clean-up.

Educational programs conducted by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service serve people of all ages regardless of socio-economic levels, race, color, sex, religion or national origin.

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Holiday Meals Are Fun

Make Them Safe

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