

# Sherman County Health Department

## Labor Day Food Safety

Summer is quickly coming to an end and Labor Day is here! That means one more chance to celebrate with family and friends. With celebration comes food, and with food comes the chance of food poisoning. Nothing dampens a celebration quicker than food poisoning. Here are a few tips on how to safely have a cook out or picnic.

- Try to plan just the right amount of foods to take. That way, you won't have to worry about the storage or safety of leftovers.
- Foods cooked ahead need to be cooked in plenty time to thoroughly chill in the refrigerator. Use an insulated cooler with sufficient ice or ice packs to keep the food at 40°F. Pack food from the refrigerator right into the cooler.
- Don't put the cooler in the trunk; carry it inside the air-conditioned car. At the picnic, keep the cooler in the shade. Keep the lid closed and avoid repeated openings. Replenish the ice if it melts.
- Use a separate cooler for drinks so the one containing perishable food won't be constantly opened and closed.
- Place salads on the table with a bowl or tray of ice underneath.
- Place leftover foods in the cooler soon after grilling or serving. Any left outside for more than an hour should be discarded. If there is

still ice in the cooler when you get home, the leftovers are okay to eat.

- Meat requires special care: When handling raw meat, remove from the cooler only the amount that will fit on the grill.
- When taking foods off the grill, put them on a clean plate. Don't put cooked food on a platter that held raw meat. Remember, bacteria can be present in most any food as well as on people's hands. Safe food handling is essential for safe picnics.

