



Food Safety & Nutrition

Gifts that Promote Food Safety



Sandra Brown

Food Safety and Nutrition Faculty

Gifts that help your loved ones avoid foodborne illness may be the best gift you can give. These gifts will encourage your family and friends to consider keeping their food safe and prevent food borne illnesses. Below are some suggestions:

Food Thermometers

A food thermometer is a perfect stocking stuffer. The use of a food thermometer is the only way to be sure that food reaches the safe temperature to destroy harmful bacterial. Food thermometers don't have to be difficult to use – actually many of them are very user friendly. Instant-read thermometers come in dial and digital. They are used after removing food from the oven. Disposable temperature indicators are for one-time use and are handy for grilling and checking food s cooked away from home. Large dial thermometers are often oven safe and can remain in the meat while cooking. Digital thermometers are great for those people who love electronic gadgets.

Insulated Carrying cases

These cases will hold the food at a temperature that the food is put into them for up to 1 hour if left closed. They are not intended to heat or cool food.

Slow Cookers

Slow cookers heat food slowly at a low temperature – usually between 170° F and 280° F. The low moist heat helps less expensive, leaner cuts of meat become tender. The programmable slow cookers are a new addition that will vary the temperature levels and cooking times to allow you to cook your meal and then keep it warm without overcooking the food when you are running late.

Color coded cutting boards

Cutting boards that are assigned to cutting different foods helps prevent cross-contamination. When using different colors one can dedicate one color for cutting meat and poultry, and another for cutting breads and another for cutting raw fruits and vegetables. The polyethylene plastic boards can be put into the dishwasher for sanitizing.

Chafing dishes or food warmers

These are great gifts for party givers. Perishable foods left out at room temperature can become unsafe after more than 2 hours; and 1 hour in temperatures above 90° F. Keeping hot food hot (140° F or higher) in a dish with a heat source can prevent guests from getting foodborne illness.

Kitchen timers

Not only can the timer remind cooks to check if something is done, but it can also remind cooks to put food away. Many of the calls that WSU Extension and the USDA Meat and Poultry hotline gets is about food that is left out to cool or on the buffet table too long and then want to know how to make it safe to eat again.

For help with your baking and holiday food preparation contact Sandy Brown at the WSU Extension office (360-397-6060) or call the USDA Meat and Poultry hotline at 1-888-674-6854.
