

South Dakota State University
**Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional
Repository and Information Exchange**

SDSU Extension Special Series

SDSU Extension

6-1-2010

Safe Food Storage

Cooperative Extension Service
South Dakota State University

Follow this and additional works at: http://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_ss

Recommended Citation

Extension Service, Cooperative, "Safe Food Storage" (2010). *SDSU Extension Special Series*. Paper 34.
http://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_ss/34

This Other is brought to you for free and open access by the SDSU Extension at Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in SDSU Extension Special Series by an authorized administrator of Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. For more information, please contact michael.biondo@sdstate.edu.

SAFE FOOD STORAGE

WAS IT REALLY THE LASAGNA?

Al, the morning cook at a local restaurant, needed to cook chicken for lunch the next day. Knowing the chicken had to be thawed in the refrigerator overnight, he took it out of the freezer and placed it on the only available shelf in the refrigerator above a pan of uncovered lasagna. He thought about throwing the lasagna away, since he thought it had been in the cooler for a while, but he didn't know for sure.

FOOD PROTECTION:

Leaving food uncovered at any time, whether in dry or cooler storage, leaves the food vulnerable to contamination through the air (e.g., saliva from cough or sneezes, flying insects, or drips from above).

REFRIGERATION STORAGE:

Verify temperature in cold food storage unit (refrigerators and coolers):

- Set to maintain the temperature of food at 40°F or below. Therefore, units are often set at 36°F to 38°F to keep food at 40°F or lower.
- If there is not built in thermometer to measure the cold storage unit, use an appliance thermometer in the refrigerator/cooler to monitor the temperature.
- Power outage – Foods held at temperatures above 40°F for more than 2 hours should not be consumed. When the power goes back on, if the refrigerator is still 40°F, the food is safe.

Be sure refrigerator/freezer doors are closed tightly at all times. Don't open refrigerator/freezer doors more often than necessary, and close them as soon as possible.

Cover and label with date to consume.

Allow for adequate air circulation—do not stack containers.

Always store ready-to-eat (RTE) food above raw food.

DRY STORAGE:

- Store foods in a clean, dry location at least 6 inches off the floor.
- Food in packages and working containers may be stored at less than 6 inches above the floor if the food is stored on dollies, racks, or pallets.
- Working containers holding food or food ingredients that are removed from their original packages, such as cooking oils, flour, or sugar, must be identified with the common name of the food. The labeling must be on the container or a non-detachable lid. Food that is easily identified, such as dry pasta, does not need a label.
- DO NOT store food in locker rooms, toilet rooms, dressing rooms, garbage rooms, mechanical rooms, under sewer lines that are not shielded to intercept potential drips, under leaking water lines (including leaking automatic fire-sprinkler heads), under lines on which water has condensed, under open stairwells, or under other sources of contamination.

TRANSFERRING FOOD FROM ORIGINAL CONTAINERS

- Store food removed from its original container or package in a clean, sanitized, and covered food container.
- Label and date the product with the original expiration or use-by date.

NOTE: Some products will have an extended shelf life or expiration date UNTIL the product is opened or the seal is broken. When opening a product for the first time, be sure to label it with the use-by date.

DIGGING DEEPER—FOOD STORAGE:

- 1) Refer to the scenario with the fact sheet “Was it really the lasagna?” What were some errors that occurred?
 - a) Raw chicken was stored above a RTE item.
 - b) Lasagna was not covered.
 - c) Lasagna was not labeled and dated.
 - d) All of the above.
- 2) Food to be stored in dry storage should be...
 - a) At least 6 inches off the floor or on pallets.
 - b) Next to the chemicals to utilize space.
 - c) In a dry, clean container that is properly labeled.
 - d) a and c
- 3) Why should food be covered in storage?
 - a) To keep it fresh.
 - b) To make more work for food service workers.
 - c) To prevent airborne contamination from getting in.
 - d) All of the above.
- 4) A local restaurant serves a variety of pastas. They did not want to keep the pasta in the original containers. What method below would be best for storage?
 - a) Put each type of pasta in a separate food-grade container.
 - b) Put each type of pasta in a separate food-grade container and identify with a label on the lid of the container.
 - c) Put each type of pasta in a separate food-grade container and identify with a label on the container (not on the lid).
 - d) The pasta has to stay in the original container.
- 5) The manager is not in and several cases of canned foods are delivered. Since the storage room shelves are full, what procedure below would be best to follow?
 - a) Place food in the middle of the storage room on a pallet until the following day when the manager returns.
 - b) Place in the furnace room out of the way of food preparation.
 - c) Place in the employee bathroom
 - d) Place in the trunk of your car.

Sources: USDA publication—Refrigeration and Food Storage (Revised May 2010) and South Dakota Food Service Code 44:02:07:28(1).

Contact: Joan Hegerfeld-Baker, Extension food safety specialist, joan.hegerfeld-baker@sdstate.edu.



South Dakota
Cooperative Extension Service

South Dakota State University, South Dakota counties, and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. South Dakota State University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and offers all benefits, services, education, and employment opportunities without regard for race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or Vietnam Era veteran status.

ESS1531 Access at <http://agbiopubs.sdstate.edu/articles/ESS1531.pdf>.