

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

Issue No. 2 | August



Packing a Safe & Healthy School Lunch

Don't get bugged by Your Lunch!

- Wash hands with soap and warm water before preparing and eating lunch.
- Clean all food preparation areas including countertops.
- Keep perishable foods out of the temperature danger zone (40 - 140 degrees Fahrenheit) until lunchtime.

What is safe at Room Temperature?

Foods like nuts and peanut butter, unopened containers of pudding, juice boxes, unopened canned meat, dried and canned fruit, chips, and whole fruits.

Keep cold foods cold & hot foods hot

Keep cold foods like meat, eggs, lunch meat, cheese, milk, cut fruit, cooked pasta, vegetables, and rice cold. Use ice packs, freezer gels, or frozen juice boxes to keep food cold until lunch.

Keep foods like soup and chili hot with a wide mouth insulated bottle. Pour boiling water into the bottle to heat the inside. Then heat the food to 165 degrees Fahrenheit. Drain the boiling water from the bottle and replace with the hot food.

Other Tips

Keep Lunch boxes lean.

Use paper bags only once.

Do not reuse plastic bags or wrap.

Keep lunches out of direct sunlight or other heat sources.

If you bring leftovers from lunch, throw away what is not eaten.

Remind your kids: Do not put food directly on lunch table.

BACK
TO
SCHOOL

Bagging a Lunch that Makes the Grade

Get Creative

Try to include the food groups:

- Grains (bread, tortilla, crackers, pita)
- Fruits (fresh, dried, canned, 100% juice)
- Vegetables (veggie sticks with dressing)
- Protein (meat & beans)
- Dairy (milk)



Get kids involved.

Make your own Lunchable

Whole grain crackers or pita bread
Sliced or cubed cheese
Lean lunchmeat
Fruit and / or vegetables
Pudding Cup

Produce can contain harmful pathogens that can make kids sick, such as Salmonella, E.coli, and Listeria.



Wash Your Veggies!

Wash fruits and vegetables before eating, unless the package says the contents have been washed.

- Wash or scrub under running water.
- Germs on the peel or skin can contaminate fruits and vegetables when you cut them.
- Cut away damaged or bruised areas.
- Dry fruit or vegetables with a clean paper towel.

What's your Bag?

Insulated soft-sided lunch bags are the best at keeping foods cold.

Clean plastic, cloth, and metal lunch boxes or bags daily.

Remember packing a lunch is a fun way to teach food preparation and nutrition to a child.
