

Food Poisoning Can be Prevented

NEWARK, Del. — In spite of advanced food processing techniques, more than two million cases of bacterial food poisoning occur each year. Many of these could be prevented with proper handling, preparation and storage of food at home, says University of Delaware Extension Home Economist Claudia Holden.

Bacteria are all around us, although they can't be seen without

a powerful microscope. Four hundred million bacteria would fit on a single grain of sugar. Some carry out useful functions. For instance, strains of bacteria turn milk into yogurt and pork into certain varieties of sausage. However, others settle unseen on our custard pies and chicken salad sandwiches and cause illness.

Bacteria growing in food may cause illness in several ways,

Holden says. Disease-producing bacteria such as salmonellae may enter the body in contaminated food and infect the digestive tract or bloodstream.

Other types — such as staphylococcus aureus, Clostridium Botulinum, and Clostridium perfringens — form toxins in food that make people sick.

Illnesses caused by con-

taminated food vary in intensity. Some cases are so mild that they've passed off as simple stomach upsets. Others, however, may result in lengthy hospitalization or even death.

Holden says foodborne illness can be prevented by taking the following precautions:

— Shop for perishable foods last; get them home and into the refrigerator or freezer promptly.

— Never buy food in severely damaged cans or jars.

— Keep refrigerator at 35° to 40°F (2° to 4°C), and freezer at 0°F (18°C), or colder. Use a thermometer to be sure these temperatures are maintained.

— Thaw raw meat and poultry in the refrigerator; for faster thawing, run cold water over a water-tight package.

— Wash hands before preparing food.

— After handling raw meat or poultry, wash hands before touching other foods, work surfaces, or utensils.

— Wash utensils, containers, and work surfaces thoroughly after they come in contact with raw meat or poultry.

— Use up-to-date home canning methods.

— Keep hot foods hot, and cold foods cold.

— Refrigerate leftovers promptly; never leave food at room temperature more than one or two hours.

Foodborne illness is unpleasant, regardless of its severity, and it can be prevented, Holden says.

Seed Physiologist Addresses AAW

EUGENE, Ore. — Oregon State University Seed Physiologist Te May Ching painted a rosy picture of Chinese communal life under the new responsibility - incentive system in a slide presentation to American Agri-Women (AAW) convention goers.

In comparing the land masses of China with the United States, there is little difference; but China is feeding five times the U.S. population using a bit more than half the tillable land available to Americans. "That China can support its people is an extraordinary accomplishment," Ching stated.

With climatic temperature and

rainfall ranging from extreme to extreme, China has three main crops: rice, soybeans and sorgum. Recently, the Chinese have ventured into cotton in a bigger way. Within the past three decades, according to Ching, China has tripled its agriculture growth and upped industrial growth 24 times.

The original point system within the collective communes has been phased out, because with the lack of incentives, "people worked like a caterpillar, then ran like dragons to lunch," Ching accounted with

amusement.

The replacement system, though not dissolving the communes, stresses responsibility and incentives. After attaining an acceptable quota, Chinese farmers can sell surpluses to the government at 15 percent over the current price. This, according to Ching, has brought supply stability.

The labor intensive agriculture system utilizes the enormous labor available in terracing, multiple cropping systems, inter-cropping of nitrogen fixing alfalfa, wind-

belting land with poplars to increase yield, and sand-dune fixation. Portable greenhouses assure vegetables in winter, dugouts against mud walls give seedlings an early start. Technology of root cloning enables the Chinese farmers to save their hybrid seeds for rice. Canals make irrigation possible.

Needless to say, nothing is wasted; all is recycled; and life is "better than in the past," because, according to Ching, "Food makes healthy, happy children."



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