

TAKING TIME

by Rebecca Wolf

Extension Home Economist



Safe Summer For Our Children

Youth 5 to 14 years of age have the highest rate of farm work injury of all age groups. The 5- to 14-year-old age group is almost two-thirds more likely to suffer a work accident than the 45 to 64 year-old group.

These statistics remind us of the hazards of farming for our children. Most of these injuries are related to tractor use, but our children are also exposed to other hazards.

Our school-age children have been supervised in a classroom setting for the last nine months. Soon they will be home with us. That may mean that because of field work or a spouse's employment, they may not be supervised as carefully during the summer as they were during the rest of the year.

For tractor safety, clearly the best routine we can begin is to set a rule for "No extra riders". Other safety issues may also require new routines.

Across the state, school-age children are being expected to take care of themselves for several hours during the day. For those children, your taking the time to help them learn about safety is important.

For instance, have you discussed what your children should do when a stranger comes to the door. During the summer months, utility company workers, sales representatives, and delivery trucks may stop by your farm. You may be out in the field or on an errand in town. You may not be immediately available to handle a situation.

Here are some simple directions. They may seem overly cautious, but they will make your

home and children more protected. These are good skills that they can use wherever they go!

1. Always answer the phone or door. You do not want people to think that there is no one at home. The stranger could be a burglar. When answering, ask who it is and what they need. Do not unlock or open the door. Visitors and service persons can come back later if it is important.

2. Keep the conversation short. The more you talk, the more they know about you. Simply state that your parents cannot come to the door at the moment. "May I take your name and a phone number? I will have them call you." Do not say you are alone.

3. Set times when an adult will be back in the house, so the two of you can keep tabs on each other. Let each other know where you plan to be, doing what, for how long.

4. Review what your children should do in case they become injured. Children need to learn basic first-aid. Show them where band-aids, hydrogen peroxide, and antiseptic creams are. Talk to them about treating a burn.

Also discuss what to do for bigger emergencies — a fire, a serious injury. Do you have a 911 system in your area? Use it.

5. Set rules about using appliances, cooking, swimming, watching TV, and playing rough games.

Remember, a child may be independent enough to care for his or her own needs but may not be responsible enough to look after a younger brother or sister.

In order to avoid a child becoming bored and wanting to investigate things that may be dangerous (or wanting to "help" you with a farming operation that would be risky), give her jobs to do and build

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — When homeowners warm up the grill for outdoor cooking this summer, they could be subjecting themselves and their families to a mild case of preventable foodborne illness — if they don't observe commonsense food safety precautions.

The symptoms probably will include headache, abdominal pain, and diarrhea. These symptoms can occur anytime within two to 10 days after eating undercooked chicken or other meat, including fish. Large outbreaks occur most

often in May and October, while the number of individual cases tends to peak in midsummer — at the height of the barbecue season.

The malady being described is campylobacteriosis, probably the most common cause of summertime foodborne illness — and the major year-round cause of diarrhea — according to Dr. Mark A. Kantor, food and nutrition specialist for the Cooperative Extension Service University of Maryland System.

Contaminated food is the usual cause, since direct person-to-person transmission is very rare, Kantor said.

As with all bacteria-caused foodborne illness, campylobacteriosis is entirely preventable when proper cooking and handling procedures are followed.

Kantor recommends these steps:
• Thoroughly cook all meat, poultry, and fish. Use a meat thermometer if possible. Make sure that interior temperatures of meat reach at least 160 degrees F. Heat

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poultry to at least 180 degrees F, or until the juices run clear.

• If using a microwave oven, rotate the meat manually if there is no automatic rotation device. This will help to insure uniform heating. Use the temperature probe if you have one. For outdoor cooking, try to use a grill with a cover.

• Thoroughly clean hands, utensils, and surfaces that touch raw meats. Don't place cooked meat back on an unwashed plate. Do not eat uncooked food, such as salad greens, that may be contaminated with juices from raw meats. Never reuse marinade.

• Refrigerate or freeze cooked meat and poultry within two hours after serving — within one hour on a hot day when temperatures are above 90 degrees F. Keep your refrigerator at 40 degrees F or below. Remember that refrigeration or freezing does not kill bacteria. Only thorough cooking does that.

• Never taste-test uncooked meats.



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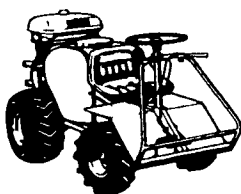
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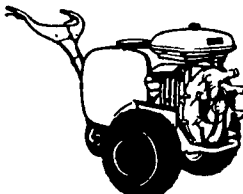
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