

Consuming Thoughts

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Home Economist
For Berks Co.



Independence Day.... July 4th — no matter what you call it, this holiday is in the midst of the picnic season.

Do yourself and your family a favor; make sure your picnics are safe, as well as fun.

Don't make your family sick by serving food that has spoiled in hot weather. It's easy to forget about food safety when you're having fun.

Picnics are leisurely affairs — you may decide on a game or a family walk before eating. So be sure to pack your food to keep it fresh for hours. Remember, the

longer the time between kitchen and feast, the more important your precautions will be. Here are some tips on keeping your picnic safe for family and friends.

- Choose foods that don't spoil easily. Sandwich spreads and salads mixed ahead of time spoil quickly in hot weather. If you choose to take these foods, refrigerate all ingredients before assembling (including shelf table items), then combine ingredients and refrigerate finished dish. Pack the salad or spread in a container surrounded with ice or frozen commercial gel pack.

- Make sandwiches ahead and freeze them — place frozen sandwiches in the cooler or bag, sandwiches will thaw by lunchtime. (Pack lettuce, tomato, and mayonnaise in separate containers; add them to sandwiches just before eating).

- Freeze small cans of boxes of juice, yogurt, or applesauce — they will thaw by lunchtime.

- Pack cold infant formula in an insulated cooler with a source to keep it cold.

- Keep hot foods hot with a thermos or insulated dish.

- Have all foods cold or frozen when you leave the house. The colder they are, the longer they'll stay safe — this is especially important for meat.

- If you take food that will spoil easily, pack it in insulated containers with ice and have the food cold before you pack it.

- Always place your picnic basket in the shade. Never leave food in the car — temperatures can rise to nearly cooking levels in unshaded parking lots.

- Only take what you can eat. Perishable leftovers should be thrown away — they could make

you very sick.

- If you are traveling a long distance to a picnic it probably would be better to take the basic ingredients and mix them up on the spot. They'll taste fresher and be safer for you. If you want egg salad, take hard-cooked eggs in their shells and open and mix them there. The same goes for tuna or potato salad — leave them sealed in their jackets or cans until you're ready to eat.

- Spreading out the food and getting it ready to eat is part of the fun on a picnic. Make chopping, mixing, and preparing are part of the ritual. There's always a little extra time for it while the meat is cooking or the game is finishing. So use those extra few minutes for safety.

- One last word of advice, when in doubt, throw it out. Keep your friends and family free from spoiled food.

4H HAPPENINGS

District VI Horse Judging Results

The District VI 4-H Horse Judging Contest was held Saturday, June 4, at Long Acres, Maynard and Sandy Long's, Sulphur Spring Road, Carlisle.

The Cumberland County 4-H Team made up of Lori Fogle, Carlisle, Chandra Yohe and Jason Staver, both of Shippensburg, placed first in the senior division. The Perry County Novice Team placed first in the junior group. The Perry County Team members included Joie Rehkamp, Jory Bitting, and Jon Clay.

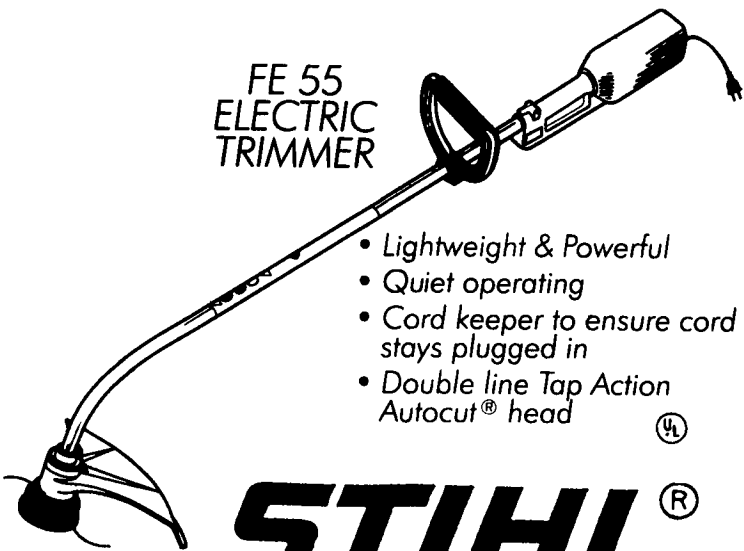
Becky Myers, Perry County,

placed first individual in the senior overall contest. Lori Fogle, Cumberland County, placed second followed by Chandra Yohe and Becky Haw, both of Cumberland County, and Jen Kyser, Perry County, placing third, fourth, and fifth respectively.

High novice individuals include first, Alison Longenecker, Lancaster County; second, Kristen Shuman; and third, Beth Diehl, both of Franklin County. Joie Rehkamp and Jory Bitting, both of Perry County, placed fourth and fifth, respectively.

The contest was held at Long's Show Ring. 4-H Leaders from Cumberland and Perry County, under the direction of Barb Rebert and Linda Bolen, hosted the event.

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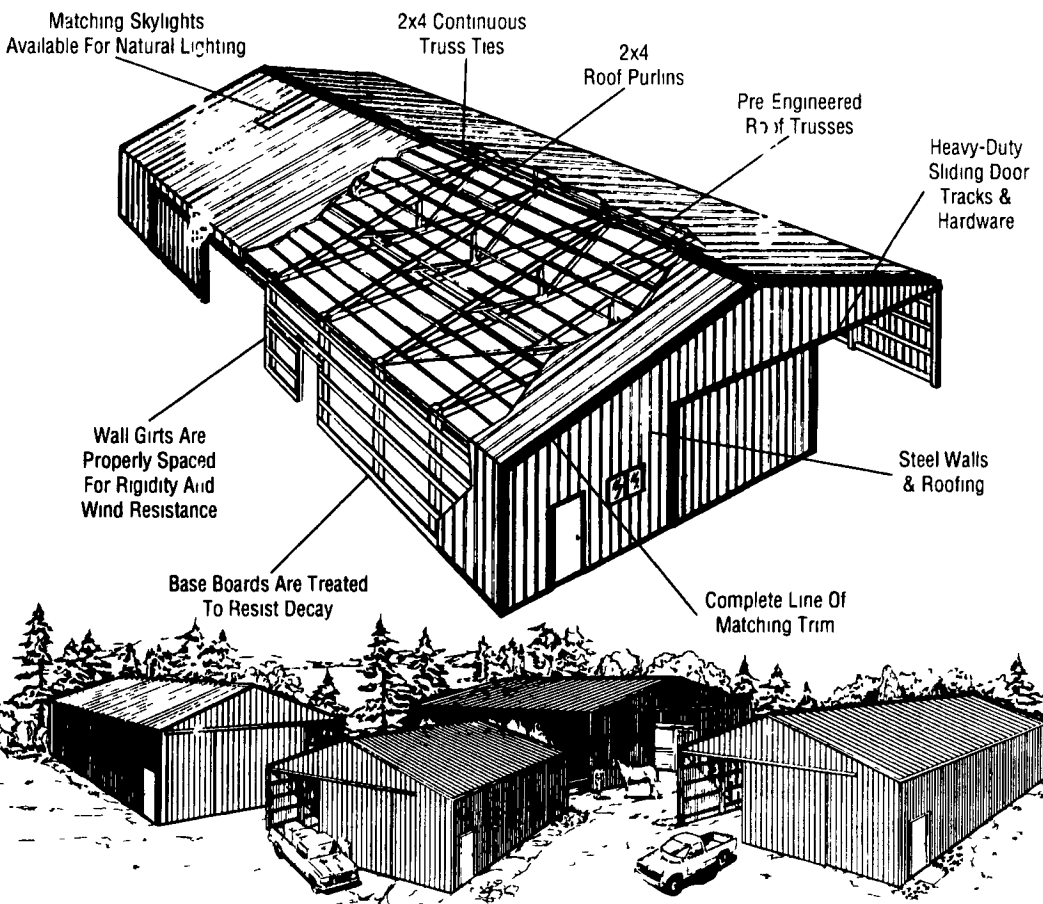
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