

'Beef Made Easy' Recipes

MIDDLETOWN (Dauphin Co.) Last week you may have read about the new meat case setup which is based on cooking method. Each section of the case includes color-coded labels for steaks for grilling, marinating, sauteing, braising, stewing, and stir frying, besides

Currently, Pennsylvania retailers are working on having labels customized for a particular store. The labels include a peel-off A.1. Steak Sauce recipe that corresponds with the cut, as A.1. is partnering in the program. Consumers will find extensive

over medium heat 14 to 15 minutes until medium rare to medium doneness, turning occasionally. Or, broil 3-4 inch from heat for 15-20 minutes for medium rare to medium doneness, turning once. Serve with mushroom mixture.

Zesty Italian Steak

• Use for: Chuck, Flank, Top Round
1 (1 1/2 lb.) top round steak
1 (6 oz) package zesty Italian salad dressing mix
1/2 cup A.1. Steak Sauce
Sprinkle salad dressing mix onto both sides of steak, pressing firmly into steak. Place steak in nonmetal dish or plastic bag; add steak sauce, turning to coat both sides. Cover, refrigerate for 6-8 hours (or overnight if desired). Remove steak from marinade, discard marinade. Grill uncovered over medium heat 8-9 minutes until medium rare, turning occasionally. Or broil 2-3 inches from heat, 12-13 minutes for medium rare doneness, turning once.

Braised Beef and Onions

• Use for: Chuck Pot Roast, Brisket
1 (2 1/2 lb) roast or brisket
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 cup A.1. Steak Sauce
2 large sweet onions, sliced 1/4 inch thick
Slowly brown beef in hot oil in 8-quart pot or heavy pan, drain. Add steak sauce and water to pot, heat to a boil. Add onion. Cover tightly and reduce heat. Simmer gently over low heat on stovetop or in 325-degree oven 2-3 hours or until fork-tender.

Quick Beef and Vegetable Stir-Fry

1 pound beef round tip steaks, cut 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick
1/2 cup A.1. Steak Sauce
2 cup soy sauce
1 1/2 tablespoons cornstarch
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 (16 oz) bag frozen mixed vegetables
1/4 cup beef broth

Stack beef steaks, cut lengthwise in half, then crosswise into 1 inch strips. Mix beef, steak sauce, soy sauce and cornstarch until well coated. Drain beef, reserving steak sauce mixture. Stir-fry beef strips (1/2 at a time) 1-2 minutes or until outside surface is no longer pink. Remove from skillet. Add vegetables, reserved steak sauce mixture and beef broth, heat to a boil. Reduce heat, simmer 1 minute. Return beef to skillet; heat through.



Case dividers, pictures, rail strips and color-coordinated pictures lend color besides convenience to the meat case. These features help consumers such as Mick Chronister and his son, of Carlisle.

Your favorite beef recipe may be a winner. The Pennsylvania Beef Council and Lancaster Farming are co-sponsoring a beef recipe contest. Look in next week's issue for contest rules and prizes which will be awarded.

pot roasts, oven roasts, and ground beef. Corresponding rail strips, case dividers, and color-coded pictures help to separate the cuts.

Research indicates that consumers do not think about cuts of meat when they shop, but rather meal solutions... in other words, answering the question, "What's for dinner?!"

The program is meant to help to build the category of convenience beef, said Carrie Bomgardner, Pa. Beef Council director of promotions. Bomgardner has introduced the program to 260 grocery store meat cases across Pennsylvania and Maryland, beginning in June 1999. Weis, Giant, and 30 independent stores now have the program.

information on the labels. The peel-off label includes instructions for cooking, provides a time chart for cooking time, and features an easy, minimal-ingredient recipe. If you've been wondering what to do with a few of the cuts in your freezer, here are a few ideas from the labels to get you started.

Steak House T-Bone

• Use for: Ribeyes, Tip Sirloin, Tenderloin, T-bone or Porterhouse
2 (1 lb.) beef T-Bone steaks, 1 inch thick
2 cups sliced fresh mushrooms
1 tablespoon olive oil
1/4 cup A.1. Steak Sauce
Cook and stir mushrooms in oil in skillet until tender. Stir in steak sauce; heat through. Grill uncovered

Summer Heat, Humidity Provide Bacteria-Friendly Conditions That Backyard Grillers Should Know

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Summer is the season for backyard grilling, but the same heat and humidity that drives you from the kitchen and out to the patio grill can promote food-borne illness, said a food safety expert in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

"Illnesses from undercooked foods and improper food handling skyrocket during the summer months," said Dana McElroy, food safety specialist in the department of food science.

McElroy cites recent research by the Food Safety and Inspection Service, which tracked re-

ported incidences of food-borne illness from 1996 to 1998 because of seven pathogens: Campylobacter, E. coli 0157:H7, Listeria monocytogenes, Salmonella, Shigella, Vibrio and Yersinia. The report noted outbreaks of E. coli, Campylobacter and Salmonella increase from June through August.

"Bacteria, including those responsible for food-borne illness, are present throughout the environment in air, soil, water and the bodies of animals and humans," McElroy said. "These bacteria grow faster in warm summer months."

McElroy says food-borne pathogens grow fastest in temperatures between 90 and 110 degrees Fahrenheit. Bacteria also need moisture to flourish — a requirement supplied by the humid weather of summer.

"Another reason for the increase is that the safety controls a kitchen provides are not available when you move outdoors," she said. "Thermostat-controlled cooking, refrigeration and washing facilities are missing from most campgrounds, picnic areas, and backyards."

Symptoms from food-borne illnesses may include stomach

pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headaches, and fever. Healthy adults often weather the sickness in a day or two. However, young

children, senior citizens, pregnant women, and people with impaired immune systems can become very sick or even die from these illnesses.

McElroy suggests a few simple guidelines to make sure your cook-out doesn't include a trip to the emergency room.

• Wash hands and surfaces with hot, soapy water before handling food and after using the bathroom.

• Pack disposable washcloths and paper towels for cleaning hands and surfaces.

• Wrap raw meats securely and separate them from ready-to-eat foods within a cooler.

• Wash plates, utensils, and cutting boards that have contacted raw meat before using again for cooked food.

• Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. "Leave meats and other foods in the refrigerator or cooler until you are ready to grill them," said Catherine Cutter, assistant professor of food science and an expert on meat products.

• Check the internal temperature of meats with a thermometer. "Meat and poultry cooked on a grill can brown very quickly on the outside," Cutter said. "But foods are cooked properly only when heated long enough at a temperature high enough to kill

harmful pathogens."

• Ground beef should reach at least 160 degrees Fahrenheit. Whole steaks and roasts should reach 145 degrees F for medium-rare. Other roasts should be cooked to 160 degrees F for medium and 170 degrees F for well-done. Whole poultry should reach 180 degrees F for safety and quality.

• Do not let partially cooked meat sit on the counter. Precooking meat in the microwave or range is a time-saver, but make sure the meat goes directly from the oven or microwave onto the grill. "Partial cooking ahead of time allows bacteria to survive and multiply to the point where additional cooking may not destroy them," Cutter said.

• Marinate raw fish, meat, or poultry in a glass dish in the refrigerator. Do not use the marinade as a basting sauce or dip if raw meat has been placed in it.

• Throw away any leftover food, hot or cold, that has been left out for more than an hour. "When in doubt, throw it out," McElroy said.

• Charcoal should burn for 30 minutes before cooking. The coals should have a light ash coating for best results.

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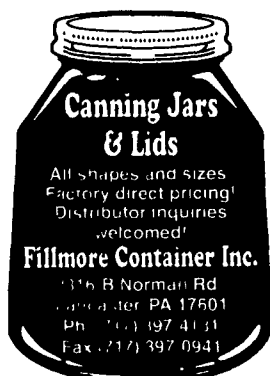
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Are You A Chocoholic?

Some studies reveal that chocolate cravings may occur if the body's magnesium levels are low.

Stress, which can cause the body to get rid of magnesium through urine, may contribute to chocolate cravings. This may be one of the reasons women crave chocolate prior to their menstrual cycle. The problem with this theory is the fact that nuts contain high levels of magnesium and women experiencing premenstrual syndrome (PMS) generally don't crave nuts.

Several studies have shown people with negative moods have

a greater tendency to be cravers and "emotional" eaters. This lends support to the idea that eating chocolate may be a way to regulate chemicals in brain and bodies to regulate appetite, hunger, mood, and addictive behaviors.

Hormones may influence chocolate cravings. Prior to the menstrual cycle, there is an increased blood level of progesterone, a hormone that reduces fat levels in the blood. This decreased blood fat may trigger the body to crave high-fat foods. Again, chocolate fits the bill.