

Safe Tailgating Tips For Before And After Game

Tallahassee Democrat

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Football season is here! You may be thinking of new recipes to pack for tailgating or of easy menus to serve before the game. No matter which you are planning for, you want your food to be delicious and to be served safely.

Keeping foods safe requires keeping hot foods hot and cold foods cold. This may sound easy to do, but failure to follow this simple rule often is a factor in foodborne illness. Bacteria that cause foodborne illness multiply and grow at temperatures between 41°F and 140°F, which is known as the danger zone. Temperatures between 70°F and 120°F allow microorganisms to grow especially fast.

Perishable food should be thrown away if it has been kept at temperatures between 40°F and 140°F for more than two hours. This is known as the time/temperature danger zone. Pack perishables, including hot dogs, fried chicken, cold sandwich meats and salads in a well insulated cooler with plenty of ice. Remember to pack leftovers back in the cooler for after game snacks.

If you are planning to take the grill and cook in the parking lot, plan foods that can be stored in the cooler until time to cook. Also be sure the uncooked foods do not come in contact with the foods that are already prepared or will be served raw. For example, place the raw hamburger meat in a container so it will not drain on the cheese.

For quick meals at home before the game, start planning and preparing early in the week. Select recipes that can be prepared the night before and stored in the refrigerator. You can prepare salads and serve cold meats for sandwiches. As the weather gets cooler, consider preparing a one dish dinner the night before and warming it up before the game. Spaghetti sauce, vegetable soup, or chili served with a salad can be a fast meal with easy clean-up before the game or after the game.

Taco Soup:

2 lb. ground beef
2 tablespoon instant chopped onion
1 can whole kernel corn
1 can kidney beans
1 pkg. chili mix
1 pkg. taco mix
3 cans tomatoes cut up or mashed up
1 can rotel tomatoes

Brown hamburger meat and onions together, drain fat and put in crock pot. Add all other ingredients and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and cook for at least 15-20 minutes. Continue stirring to prevent scorching.

Have a question? Contact the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension office at (229)734-3015, weekdays 8 a.m. to noon or 1 to 5 p.m.

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