

Mealtime Solutions

HELPFUL IDEAS FOR TAKING ON THE MEALTIME CHALLENGE.

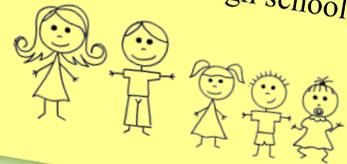
Grilling

Food on the Move

Picnic and barbecue season offers lots of opportunities for outdoor fun with family and friends, but these warm weather events also present opportunities for food-borne bacteria to thrive. Remember to keep your food safe. Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot. Never let your picnic food remain in the Danger Zone - between 40°F and 140°F - for more than 2 hours, or 1 hour if outdoor temperatures are above 90°F.

Family Connections

Busy schedules of parents and children make it more challenging, but research suggests that having dinner together at least four times a week has positive effects on child development. Family mealtime has been linked to a lower risk of obesity, substance abuse, eating disorders, and an increased chance of graduation from high school.



Question Answer:

Although barbecue used to refer to the act of gathering around a grill and cooking hot dogs and hamburgers, barbecuing and grilling may mean two different-but-related things.

Grilling means to cook food over direct heat. On a gas grill, it means to light the grill, place the food on the grill rack directly over the heat, and cook it at a high temperature.

Barbecuing means to cook food slowly over low, indirect heat often with flavorful smoke, sauces, and rubs. Bigger cuts of meat such as ribs, roasts, pork tenderloins, and whole birds are barbecued. Part of the fun of barbecue is that it tastes different in every part of the country.

Nutrition Nugget

When returning home from the grocery store, take the time to wash all your produce. Cut and trim any that you will be cooking throughout the week. This will speed up the preparation time also. Washed and trimmed fruits and vegetables are more likely to get eaten by family members.

Cooking School

Keep It Safe

There aren't many rules for using a gas grill; however, following these few common sense guidelines will help prevent accidents of any kind:

- Never grill indoors not even in the garage.
- Set up your grill on level ground far from the house, sidewalks, and places your children or pets might play. Keep it far away from any combustible materials.
- Lift the lid of the grill before turning on the gas to dilute the concentration of gas fumes, which can explode when lit. Turn off the gas before you do any kind of maintenance.
- Disconnect the gas tanks if you don't use your grill in winter, and never store gas tanks indoors.



Grilled Sweet Potatoes

- 4 medium-sized sweet potatoes (2 lbs.), peeled
- 1/3 cup honey Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh rosemary or 1 teaspoon dried rosemary
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper



Cut potatoes diagonally into 1/2-inch-thick slices. Place potatoes and 1 cup water in shallow microwavable dish. Cover with vented plastic wrap and microwave on HIGH for 6 minutes or until potatoes are crisp-tender, turning once. Drain well.

Combine mustard, oil, rosemary, salt and pepper in small bowl; brush on potato slices. Place potatoes on oiled grid. Grill over medium-high heat 5 to 8 minutes or until potatoes are fork-tender, turning and basting often with mustard mixture. (Makes 4 servings)

Barbecue Sauce

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 2 cup ketchup
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon each ground red pepper and black pepper
- 1/4 cup finely chopped onion
- 1 cup apple or red currant jelly
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce

Melt butter in medium sauce pan over medium-high heat. Add onion. Cook and stir until softened. Stir in remaining ingredients. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer 20 minutes, stirring often.

This sauce is very good on pork ribs. Can be used on most anything. Has a sweet flavor.

ASK AN AGENT

This E-Newsletter is brought to you by the MSU Extension Service in Custer, Fergus, Richland, Roosevelt and Sheridan Counties.

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What Can I Do Today?

Grill up a saucy steak, chop, or chicken piece without charring it. The trick is cooking both the meat and the barbecue sauce so they are done perfectly and at the same time. Sugar burns, and there's lots of it in most barbecue sauces. Brush sauce on about the last two minutes when the meat is just a few degrees from done. Too soon and you get a robe of char; too late, and you don't get the savory flavor from just the right amount of char.