



National Food Safety Education MonthSM September 1999

A PROCLAMATION

Cook It Safely is the theme for National Food Safety Education MonthSM (NFSEM). Launched by the restaurant and foodservice industry, NFSEM is widely supported by government agencies, the food industry, universities, and consumer organizations. The National Food Safety Initiative recognizes and encourages observance of NFSEM.

This year, NFSEM is dedicated to increasing public awareness that an invisible cause of foodborne illness — bacteria — can survive in foods if they are not properly cooked. NFSEM will stress the simple step of cooking to safe temperatures as one of the most effective means of preventing foodborne illness.

Consumers and commercial food preparers should practice the four simple steps to food safety, promoted by the nationwide food safety education program called Fight BAC!TM.

1. Clean: Wash hands and surfaces often;
2. Separate: Don't cross-contaminate;
3. Cook: Cook to proper temperatures;
4. Chill: Refrigerate promptly.

Not all consumers understand the importance of cooking foods to the temperatures necessary to kill bacteria and other germs. According to a 1998 FDA-USDA consumer food survey, a significant number of people eat undercooked foods, such as raw eggs and undercooked hamburgers. A 1998 USDA study on premature browning of ground beef found that more than 25 percent of hamburgers turn brown before reaching a safe internal temperature.

Using a food thermometer is the only reliable way to ensure that hamburgers, meat, poultry, egg casseroles, and other combination dishes reach a safe internal temperature. Cook eggs until the yolk and whites are firm; fish should be opaque and flake easily with a fork when done.

NOW, THEREFORE, to express appreciation for the many dedicated educators and consumers who actively promote safe food products and the safe handling of food, we do hereby proclaim September 1999 as National Food Safety Education MonthSM and call upon public and private organizations to celebrate with appropriate activities that acknowledge these efforts.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this day _____, the two hundred and twenty-third year of the Independence of the United States of America.

Name _____

Title _____