

# Family & Consumer Sciences Newsletter



## *Happy Holidays!*

December is widely celebrated as the holiday season, a time filled with joy, family gatherings, and, of course, an abundance of delicious food. From festive feasts to sweet treats, it's a month where the kitchen becomes a place for gathering and sharing traditions. However, with all the excitement of holiday cooking and entertaining, it's essential to keep food safety in mind to ensure that everyone stays healthy and enjoys the celebrations. In this issue, check out the holiday food safety factsheets to keep your table safe during the holiday season. Let the festivities begin with peace of mind!

The DIY Merry Craftmas Series continues in December. This month's workshops include "Make & Take Dry Mixes and Candles! To start the New Year, next month's workshop will focus on creating a cozy, chunky blanket through finger-knitting. Check the "Community Events" section for more details. If you want to stay updated on the Family & Consumer Sciences program in the upcoming months, please send your email or mailing address to [cpjohns5@ncsu.edu](mailto:cpjohns5@ncsu.edu) to join our mailing list.

### **In this Issue**

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**In the Kitchen**

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# BASIC HOLIDAY FOOD SAFETY

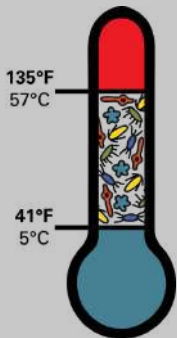
During the holidays, many people plan and prepare meals to feed more than just their own family. Feeding a crowd can raise the risk of foodborne illness from pathogens that you can't see, smell or taste. Consider these tips on how to safely prepare, cook and serve meals to keep those at your table safe from foodborne illness.

## Temperature Danger Zone

*Harmful bacteria grow fastest between 41°F and 135°F. Minimizing time in this range, called the temperature danger zone, reduces growth of these harmful bacteria.*

*Foods that can support the growth of harmful bacteria should not be left in this temperature range for more than 4 hours.*

*Examples: cooked vegetables, pasta and rice; cooked and raw meat, poultry and fish; cut melons, tomatoes and leafy greens.*



## Personal Hygiene

- Wear clean clothes and aprons when cooking and serving
- Cover cuts and sores with water proof bandages
- Do not prepare or handle food if you have had diarrhea or vomited in the last 48 hours
- Wash hands thoroughly and often when preparing food

## Cleaning and Sanitizing

- Clean dishes and prep equipment by washing them in a dishwasher or hot soapy water
- To sanitize dishes, equipment and surfaces that do not go in a dishwasher dip them a bleach solution, or another sanitizer approved for food surfaces
  - To make a bleach solution mix 1 tablespoon of bleach in 1 gallon of water
- Be sure to follow all manufacturers' directions and never mix chemicals together

## Handling Leftovers

- Refrigerate perishable leftovers as soon as the meal is over.
- Throw away/compost perishable food left at room temperature for 4 hours or more.
- Place foods in shallow containers before refrigerating for quicker cooling.
- Eat leftovers within 7 days

### Hot and Cold Holding

*Hold hot foods at 135°F or higher with chafing dishes, warming trays or slow cookers. Hold cold foods at 41°F or lower by placing serving dishes in or on larger dishes filled with ice.*

## Cooking Food Safely

Check food temperatures with a calibrated digital thermometer. Measure at the thickest spot and stir liquid-based foods before checking temperature. For products that have a hold time longer than <1 second, ensure the food maintains the appropriate temperature or hotter for the entire duration.

| Food                                          | Cook Temperature and Time            |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Roast beef                                    | 130°F for 112 min., 145°F for 4 min. |
| Beef, pork, veal and lamb, fish and shellfish | 145°F for 15 sec.                    |
| Ground meat, sausage, fish sticks             | 158°F < 1 sec., 155°F for 17 sec.    |
| Stuffed pasta or casseroles                   | 165°F < 1 sec.                       |
| Poultry and wild game animals                 | 165°F < 1 sec.                       |
| Reheated food to be held hot for serving      | 165°F < 1 sec.                       |



# HOLIDAY GATHERINGS AND POTLUCKS

Bringing food to a gathering is a common practice around the holidays. Failure to handle food safely can lead to foodborne illness. Use this information when preparing, handling and serving your favorite dishes.

## Preventing Cross-Contamination

- Wash hands properly before handling or eating food
- Use a single use utensil or place food in an individual cup/container to taste test before serving
- Avoid eating from plate while in the serving line
- Use utensils, napkins, toothpicks or paper to pick up foods instead of bare hands
- Use a clean plate each time you pass through the serving line



## Hot and Cold Holding

- Hold hot foods at 135°F or higher by using chafing dishes, warming trays or slow cookers
- Hold cold at 41°F or lower by placing cold food containers in larger containers filled with ice

## Handling Leftovers

- Harmful bacteria grow fastest between 41°F and 135°F, particularly room temperatures. Minimizing time in this range, called the temperature danger zone, reduces growth of these harmful bacteria.
- Throw away or compost any perishable food left at room temperature for more than 4 hours
- Refrigerate perishable leftovers as soon as the meal is over
- Place foods like soups, stews or dips in shallow containers before refrigerating for quicker cooling
- Eat leftovers within 7 days



## Dealing with Allergens

- Label foods containing allergens such as milk, eggs, tree nuts, shellfish and mollusks, fish, soy, peanuts, wheat and sesame
- Provide separate serving utensils for each dish, as using the same utensil for different foods could result in allergen cross-contact
  - For example, a utensil used to serve breakfast casserole and then used to serve hash brown potatoes would introduce an egg allergen into the potatoes

## Christmas Eggnog Pie

Total Time

Prep: 15 min. + chilling Cook: 25 min



Recipe and photo from [tasteofhome.com](http://tasteofhome.com)

### Ingredients

- 1 sheet refrigerated pie crust
- 2 cups eggnog
- 1 cup milk
- 1 package (4.6 ounces) cook-and-serve vanilla pudding mix
- 1 tablespoon rum or 1/2 teaspoon rum extract
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- Whipped topping and additional ground nutmeg, optional

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425°. Unroll crust into a 9-in. pie plate; flute edge. Line crust with a double thickness of foil. Fill with pie weights, dried beans or uncooked rice. Bake until edge is golden brown, 20-25 minutes. Remove foil and weights; bake until bottom is golden brown, 3-6 minutes longer. Cool on a wire rack.

2. In a large saucepan, cook the eggnog, milk and pudding mix over medium heat until thickened and bubbly. Remove from the heat and cool slightly. Stir in rum and nutmeg. Pour pudding mixture into crust. Chill until set. Garnish with whipped topping and sprinkle with nutmeg if desired.

### Nutrition Facts

1 piece: 287 calories, 13g fat (6g saturated fat), 46mg cholesterol, 247mg sodium, 38g carbohydrate (20g sugars, 0 fiber), 4g protein.

# MERRY CRAFTMAS

November 21st - Homemade

Flavored Extracts - \$10

December 5th - "Make and Take"

Holiday Dry Mixes - \$15

December 12th - DIY Candles - \$15

**FROM 4 PM TO 5:30PM**

Yadkin County Agricultural Building  
2051 Agricultural Way, Yadkinville, NC 27055

Contact Chelsea Johnson to  
register at

Chelsea\_Johnson@ncsu.edu  
or 336-849-7908 or scan the  
QR code



# JOIN OUR **KNITTING** **WORKSHOP**

Participants will learn how to finger-knit a chunky throw blanket! Each person should bring 3 skeins of size 6 or 7 yarn to the class. Knitting needles not required. Class is FREE however, yarn will not be provided.

**Friday, January 23rd**

**4:00 PM to 5:30PM**

**Yadkin County Agricultural Building  
2051 Agricultural Way, Yadkinville, NC 27055**

Contact Chelsea Johnson to  
register at  
[Chelsea\\_Johnson@ncsu.edu](mailto:Chelsea_Johnson@ncsu.edu)  
or 336-849-7908 or scan the  
QR code



**NC**

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EXTENSION**

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# DECEMBER 2025

Some events require advance registration and payment. Please call 336-849-7877 or email [Chelsea\\_Johnson@ncsu.edu](mailto:Chelsea_Johnson@ncsu.edu) for inquiries.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday                                  | Wednesday        | Thursday            | Friday                                               | Saturday                       |
|--------|--------|------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|        | 1      | 2                                        | 3                | 4                   | 5 DIY Christmas Gift Series (2) Dry Mixes 4P - 5:30P | 6 Yadkinville Christmas Parade |
| 7      | 8      | 9                                        | 10               | 11                  | 12 DIY Christmas Gift Series (3) Candles 4P - 5:30P  | 13                             |
| 14     | 15     | 16 Extension At Home (Virtual) 10A - 11A | 17               | 18                  | 19                                                   | 20                             |
| 21     | 22     | 23                                       | 24 Office Closed | 25 Merry Christmas! | 26 Office Closed                                     | 27                             |
| 28     | 29     | 30                                       | 31 New Years Eve |                     |                                                      |                                |



## Extension At Home

Helping You Improve Your Life!



**Every Third Tuesday of The Month 10:00 am ET**



Find us at [go.ncsu.edu/extensionathome](https://go.ncsu.edu/extensionathome)

**July 15** - Freezer Meals Ready When You Are

**August 19** - Inside Food Recalls

**September 16** - Clean Your Home: The Green Way!

**October 21** - Holiday Budgeting Magic

**November 18** - Caregiving During the Holidays

**December 16** - Be Winter Ready



NC Cooperative Extension is an equal opportunity provider.

## Yadkin County Cooperative Extension

**2051 Agricultural Way, Suite 201  
Yadkinville, NC 27055**

**336-849-7908**

**Monday - Friday ~ 8AM - 5PM**

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