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## Q & A about GMO's



**USDA geneticist researching wheat plants that resist *Fusarium*. USDA/ARS**

### Why is GMO technology used?

To allow farmers to use less pesticides and fertilizers on their crops. GMOs also give higher quality and crop yields. The result is less damage to the environment and lower food prices.

### How are GMO crops made?

In corn, for example, a select section of DNA is inserted into the plant. The plant

converts it as its own DNA into protein. That protein and DNA only affects pests and herbicides, not people or animals. When we eat them, the DNA and protein are broken down just like all the other DNA and protein in the plant.

### Are GMOs safe to eat?

We eat DNA and protein every day! They are a part of every plant, animal and bacteria. The practice of improving crops has been ongoing since the beginning of agriculture. Today's science speeds up these improvements. Foods from GMO plants have been declared safe by the Food and Drug Administration and other major health organizations. Rigorous testing verifies the safety and nutrition.

### Are GMOs labeled?

Currently, labeling is voluntary and not required.

Source: <http://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/wellness/>

## County Health Rankings

The county health rankings envision a national culture of health for generations to come.

The annual county health rankings measure several health factors including high school graduation

rates, obesity, smoking, unemployment, access to healthy foods, air and water quality, income, and teen births.

See how counties within Kansas rank in how long people live and how

healthy they live. Data also includes health influences such as clinical care, health behaviors, and environmental factors.

Learn more at [www.countyhealthrankings.org/](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/)

## Zapping *Salmonella* in Eggs

Eating raw eggs has a high risk of consuming *Salmonella* bacteria. Cooking eggs properly can eliminate this risk.

Some grocery stores sell pasteurized shell eggs. These eggs are pasteurized by a hot-water-immersion process. This method can change raw egg qualities making them unsatisfactory for some cooking uses.

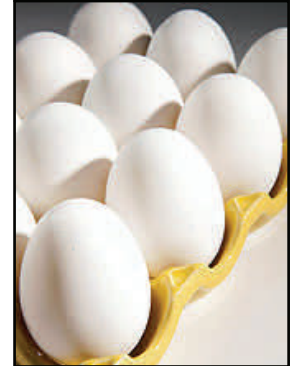
The Agricultural Research Service has developed a new two-phase pasteurization process using radio frequency (RF) waves and a hot water bath.

The RF process sends radio waves through the rotating egg while being sprayed with cool water to prevent over-heating. The RF heating warms the egg from inside out

to heat the yolk more than the white.

A hot-water bath maintains the yolk heat while heating the white to complete the pasteurization without overheating.

The process takes 20 minutes, which is three times faster than current methods. It kills 99.999 percent of *Salmonella*.



USDA/ARS  
[www.ars.usda.gov/is/AR/archive/mar14/eggs0314.htm](http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/AR/archive/mar14/eggs0314.htm)

## Storing and Using Rhubarb

**Rhubarb leaves look pretty, but they are not edible. They contain oxalic acid, a toxin, and should not be ingested.**

Rhubarb season is almost here! Here's some tips on storing rhubarb.

- Remove and discard the leaves.
- Stored unwashed in plastic bags in the

refrigerator. Use within one week.

- To use, wash, remove blemishes, and trim the ends. Slice stalks into pieces. If needed, peel the out-

er layer if it is tough and stringy.

- Freeze cleaned and cut pieces for up to 6 months.

Source: Fine Cooking, Apr/May 2014

## Food Allergy Week—May 11-17

Of all food recalls, food allergens are the leading cause of a food recall. The primary cause is mislabeled foods.

The Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act of 2004 requires the declaration of eight common food allergens on package labels. From September 2009 to September 2012, bakery products were the leading food category of food allergen recalls followed by chocolate/confections/candy and dairy foods. This is according to the FDA Reportable Food Registry. Undeclared milk was the primary allergen of concern in the third year.

For those with food allergies, reading labels on food packaging is the best way to avoid offending foods.



**Peanuts are one of the leading causes of food allergies.**  
 USDA/ARS



**Make your own Greek yogurt by placing traditional yogurt in a fine mesh strainer over a bowl. Cover, refrigerate and allow whey to drain until yogurt is thick.**



## What Makes Yogurt “Greek”?

Sales of Greek yogurt have grown from 4 percent in 2008 to 44 percent today. But what is Greek yogurt?

There is no standard of identity defined by the Food and Drug Administration. Simply put, it is standard yogurt made with the cultures *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and *Streptococcus thermophiles* and then thickened either by straining off the liquid whey or by adding other ingredients.

These manufacturing differences result in nutritional differences in sugars, fat, sodium and total calories. Some Greek yogurt brands are likened to liquid candy.

Greek yogurt is thick and can be used as a substitute for mayonnaise, cream or sour cream. The high acid content makes it a good substitute for buttermilk. It also works well in marinades and dips as well as a leavening boost to quick breads or muffins.

Source: Tufts Health & Nutrition Letter, April 2014

## Greek Frozen Yogurt

Frozen yogurt has a healthy halo with the live and active cultures and lower fat content.

Frozen Greek Yogurt is now available in the freezer as bars and in

cartons. Some flavors include fruits but also indulgent Greek-style flavors such as baklava.

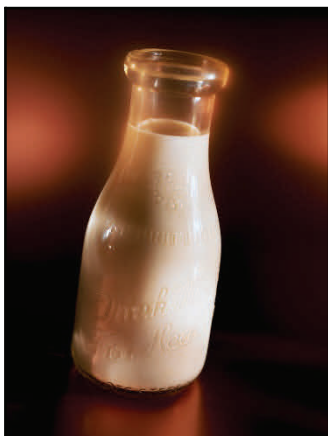
Frozen Greek yogurt is higher in protein than traditional frozen yogurt

and ice cream, giving consumers a bit healthier choice.

Frozen yogurt sales have increased 74.2 percent from 2011-2013.

Source: Food Technology, March 2014

**Based on retail sales of frozen novelties and ice cream, frozen yogurt makes of 4 percent of all sales.**



**Caption describing picture or graphic.**

## Drink Milk to Save Your Knees

Consuming milk has always been linked to better bone health. Now there’s more evidence showing how milk can possibly slow osteoarthritis in women’s knees.

Researchers at Brigham & Women’s Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts found that drinking low-fat or fat-free milk an eight-ounce glass of milk per day can minimize the progression of joint space width loss. The joint space width is between the medial femur and tibia of the knee. Other factors adjusted for in this research included baseline disease severity, body mass index, dietary intake and other possible factors.

It is estimated that 27 million people in the United States have osteoarthritis.

Source: <http://bit.ly/1eryBfl>

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## Fire Up the Grill!



Use a thermometer to check doneness of meat. [www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/mintemp.html](http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/mintemp.html)

Summer is almost here, but many grills are already getting a work out! Here are some tips for successful grilling.

- Keep meat refrigerated until ready to cook.
- Remove visible fat from meat

to reduce flare-ups and charring.

- Marinate raw meats in the refrigerator. Discard marinade if not using for sauce.
- Use a medium heat for even cooking and juicy meat. Charcoal should be covered in gray ash.
- Use tongs instead of forks to keep meat juicy.
- Check meat doneness with a thermometer, not color.
- Keep raw meats away from ready-to-eat foods to prevent cross contamination.

Sources: [www.beefretail.org](http://www.beefretail.org)  
<http://1.usa.gov/1oJW1qa>



Karen Blakeslee, M.S.



On the Web at  
[www.rrc.ksu.edu](http://www.rrc.ksu.edu)



## Pre-sterilizing Canning Jars

Whether brand new or re-used many times over, you should always *clean* jars just

prior to filling them when canning. Wash jars in a dishwasher or by hand, using detergent and rinsing well. Clean jars

should then be kept warm

prior to filling. You can leave them in the closed dishwasher after the cycle, or use your canner as it is preheating, or create a separate water bath that will keep the jars both clean and warm.

Washing is also a good time to inspect jars for any cracks or chips, discarding or repurposing those jars for non-canning uses if any imperfections are found.



<http://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/nchfp/factsheets/sterilizing.html>