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## Food Safety Education Month



September is designated as Food Safety Education Month. How do you communicate food safety education to diverse audiences? The population in the United States is more racially and ethnically diverse today than in the past.

One step in education is using inclusive messages. The [Partnership for Food Safety Education is sponsoring a webinar](#), on August 17, 2023, to discuss incorporating inclusive messaging and

positive messaging in food safety education. This webinar will be presented by Dr. Barbara Chamberlin of New Mexico State University, Dr. Kelsey Schwarz and Sara Bresee, MPH of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Dr. James Rogers of Consumer Reports.

The Partnership for Food Safety Education has regular webinars on many food safety topics. [Recordings of those webinars](#) can be found on their website.

For general information about Food Safety Education Month, see these resources:

- [Food and Drug Administration](#)
- [Partnership for Food Safety Education](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [K-State Research and Extension Food Safety](#)

## Kansas Local Food Community Roundtables

Are you interested in improving local food resources in your community? Join us!

The Kansas Local Foods program is planning 10+ roundtable sessions around Kansas to share

experiences and provide feedback on the goals you have for your community and the needs. The first session is planned for November 1, 2023.

So if you are involved with local grocery stores,

restaurants, food distribution, school food service, etc. please join the conversation. Check our [Kansas Local Food website](#) for complete information.



## Vacuum and Reduced Oxygen Packaging

Whether you want to sell vacuum packed foods, or vacuum package foods at home, vacuum packaging can offer some benefits to storing food. But there are also some food safety concerns to know about when using this type of packaging.

A new publication from K-State Research and Extension called [Vacuum and Reduced Oxygen Packaging](#) is now availa-

ble to inform you about the benefits and food safety concerns.

Removal of oxygen can reduce growth of some spoilage microorganisms, reduce rancidity and color changes, and extend shelf life of cold-stored foods.

But, just as in canning, vacuum packaging produces an anaerobic environment because air is

removed from the package. This can allow *Clostridium botulinum* to form spores that can develop a deadly toxin if proper storage conditions are not met. Therefore, refrigeration and freezing, among others, are two key barriers to prevent *C. botulinum* growth.

Learn more in [Vacuum and Reduced Oxygen Packaging-MF3639](#).



Listen to more information at <https://youtu.be/YPZM2PYqWg>  
Photo: Canva.com

## Kansas Local Foods Fellow Program

▼  
**This program is funded by a Regional Food Systems Partnership Grant through the Agricultural Marketing Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.**

K-State Research and Extension Local Food Systems is now launching the Kansas Local Food Fellows Program. Food system partners across the state of Kansas can apply to host a fellow to work on a site-specific local food system project. The purpose of

the Fellows Program is to increase capacity for local food system projects. This may jumpstart a local food policy coalition or other partner to increase outreach, engagement, and growth of organization goals. Projects may be related to, but are not restricted to re-

search, education, marketing, or community engagement of local food system participants including producers, processors, distributors, retailers, and/or consumers.

[Learn more at Kansas Local Foods.](#)

## Sunscald on Vegetables-Safe for Canning?

Despite best efforts, garden produce may develop a physiological disorder called sunscald. Is this produce safe for food preservation? It depends.

When light-colored areas appear on produce surfaces exposed to direct sunlight, these areas can change colors, turn dry, papery, and wrinkled. This damage can cause fungi to invade the food and cause rot.

When choosing produce to preserve, it is strongly recommended to use the best produce possible for the safest results. Damage such as sunscald could change the acidity of the food. Simply cutting away the damage may not remove the contamination. Fungi can grow deep into the food.

If light damage is present, no contamination has developed, the damaged areas could be removed. Freezing the remainder may be the best option.



**Sunscald on onions**  
Photo: Michigan State University ANR Communications Flickr

## Make Time for Food Preservation

Gardens are bursting with fresh produce and many gardeners are also rushing to preserve the bounty to enjoy later. But rushing the steps of food preservation can lead to problems in the end. Keep these tips in mind:



Photo: K-State Research and Extension

- Avoid starting food preservation if you cannot finish it in the same timeframe, especially in the evening. This can lead to quality and safety problems.
- Get others to help! This can make food preservation more enjoyable and less stressful. Assign tasks appropriate for children. This can also encourage them to eat what they help preserve.
- Make sure you have all the tools, equipment, and ingredients needed for the recipe you intend to preserve.
- Set up the work flow to help with efficiency. This will also help you discover missing ingredients or equipment.
- Clean as you go!



## Center for Rural Enterprise Engagement

Are you a small business owner? No matter what your business is, from a local farm-to-table business or main street shop, the Center for Rural Enterprise Engagement (CREE) is here to help your business grow!

Sign up now for the 2023 Insight Summit virtual conference. The Summit will focus on improving social media strategies and online sales.

The investment price of attending is \$199. But

you receive hands-on experiences through interactive settings from your home.

Learn more and register now at <https://ruraleengagement.org/events/insight-summit-2023/>.

**CREE is an issue-focused transdisciplinary center that serves as a generator and source of knowledge about new-media marketing.**



Photo: USDA Flickr

## Kansas Agriculture Producer Survey

You can help agriculture in the state of Kansas! Researchers in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Kansas State University are looking at the value producers seek with agricultural input and service providers within the state. The results of this survey will be used to help inform the agriculture industry in general and input providers specifically on how to deliver better value to serve their customers.

This survey should only take 5-10 minutes, you can enter a lottery to win \$500, \$200, or \$50 gift cards (17 chances to win). Your responses will be confidential. All data will be reported in the aggregate and as anonymous.

To complete the survey, please visit: [https://kstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_56H9D8XW2yr1QP0](https://kstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_56H9D8XW2yr1QP0)

If you have any questions or comments regarding this survey, please feel free to contact **Dr. Aaron Johnson: [ajjohnson@ksu.edu](mailto:ajjohnson@ksu.edu)**. Further questions may be directed to the KSU IRB Chair: **Lisa Ruben: [rubin@ksu.edu](mailto:rubin@ksu.edu)**

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Ernie Minton, Director.

**A FALL FREEZE IS COMING!**

Still have tomatoes on the vine?  
Pick them before a frost or freeze to finish ripening.

After a frost or freeze, the **acidity** of tomatoes still on the vine **decreases**. This **increases** the risk for **botulism** if these tomatoes are canned.

Learn more at  
[www.rrc.ksu.edu/preservation](http://www.rrc.ksu.edu/preservation)

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## Canning Previously Frozen Tomatoes

So you saved your tomato crop in the freezer. Can those frozen tomatoes be canned?

It is not recommended to can tomatoes that froze on the vine. This is because the acid content changes too much, while on the vine, making them unsafe for canning.

But tomatoes harvested prior to a fall freeze, then frozen, do not change in acidity. What does change is their texture and how they measure.

The best choice for canning previously frozen tomatoes is to make a

well cooked product such as a stewed or crushed tomato product, or made into tomato juice or sauce.

It is not recommended to can them whole or quartered. They will pack into the jars differently, absorb moisture differently, and the heat transfers through the jars differently. This could lead to under processing and spoilage. Tomato canning recipes are based on fresh tomatoes.

Source: University of Georgia

