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What to Expect When Processing Meat



If you are new to taking your own animals to be processed, you may be surprised what you get after processing is done.

Changes occur when converting the live animal to a carcass. Even more changes occur to convert the carcass to a package of meat.

The dressing percentage, or yield, varies between animal species. Pork has the highest average dressing percentage of 70-75%. Beef averages 60-64% and lamb averages 54-59%. Loss factors include the animal blood, hide, internal organs, food in the animal stomach, and other factors.

To help guide you on what to expect before you take your animal to be processed, see these K-State Research and Extension publications:

- [How Much Meat to Expect from Your Animal](#)—MF3394
- [Pork Processing Options for Consumers](#)—MF3396
- [Beef Processing Options for Consumers](#)—MF3395
- [Lamb Processing Options for Consumers](#)—MF3397

Fresh Ground Beef Color: A Consumer Guide

Consumers expect fresh ground beef to be bright red, but at times it may appear brown, mottled red and brown, or even purplish. Color variations can be confusing and may lead to the rejection of acceptable ground beef.

This publication helps explain where meat color comes from; if brown ground beef safe; and if packaging makes a difference. It also shows external and internal color changes over time.

Vacuum packaged meat excludes oxygen and the meat will appear purplish-red.

Learn more at: www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF2957.pdf

Heat Processing of Food

There is a lot of science that goes into a home preserved jar of food. Home canners must respect that science by using reliable recipes to make the safest product.

Heat penetration experiments are conducted to determine how heat goes through a jar of food.

The “cold spot” or the slowest-heating location is key in knowing the time it takes to achieve a certain level of

“lethality”, or how well the heat process destroys pathogens or spoilage microorganisms. These heat penetration studies are done for each food. It is affected by the acidity (pH), consistency, texture, distribution of solid food particles and liquids, and more.

These experiments are lengthy, expensive, and time-consuming. Therefore, the variety of recipes available are some-

what limited. There is no easy formula to apply to a new recipe without doing experiments for safety.

Making up your own recipe and canning it can be dangerous because of these reasons and more. Learn more about the science at <https://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/nchfp/factsheets/heatprocessingbackgrounder.html>



For more on home food preservation, see www.rrc.k-state.edu/preservation/index.html



This event focuses on making good food choices, develop sound eating habits, and encouraging physical activity.

March is National Nutrition Month®

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics has designated March as National Nutrition Month®. The theme this year is **Eat Right Bite by Bite**.

Each week, key messages are suggested to help

encourage nutritious eating. The four weekly themes are:

- Vary your diet
- Meal planning
- Cook and prep

- Visit an RDN

A toolkit is available handouts, press releases, activities and more. Learn more at <https://www.eatright.org/food/resources/national-nutrition-month>.

No Canning Recipes for “One Jar Meals”

We all like the convenience of great-tasting “one jar meals”. But, any additions or deletions made to an approved canning recipe would need a new process time calculated for it. It is not safe to change the recipe and use the same process time for canning. One-dish meals often include thickening ingredients or are cooked down to a thicker consistency than expected for the process time for an individual ingredient. These situations are likely to result in hazardous foods. You may add your special ingredients after you open up a safely canned jar of food, to make a dish. Also keep in mind that after canning and storage, your special recipe may no longer taste exactly the same as when it is made fresh. Sometimes special recipes are best enjoyed as freshly made dishes.

Learn more at <https://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/nchfp/factsheets/heatprocessingbackgrounder.html>



Safely canned vegetables, such as carrots and green beans, can be used in a variety of meals.

See Clearer with Green Foods!



Basil
Photo: USDA Flickr

March brings us closer to spring colors, such as fresh green foods! Some of those green foods contain lutein which helps keep our eyes healthier and could reduce the eye disease age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Lutein is a xanthophyll found in foods such as basil, parsley, kale, spinach, broccoli, peas and lettuce.

Some risk factors for AMD are out of our control such as advancing age, being female, having light skin and/or blue eyes, and having a close relative with the disease. Other factors include smoking, being sedentary, not consuming enough fruits and vegetables, and too much sun exposure.

But, eating eye-healthy foods can reduce the chances of getting AMD. So how can you incorporate these green foods into your diet? Add bright green vegetables to a party tray. Add a green salad as a side dish to lunch or dinner. Make the color pop in broccoli and green peas by blanching them briefly in boiling water, then put them into ice water to stop the cooking process. This enhances the green color to make those vegetables more appetizing.



Source: www.ag.ndsu.edu/mercercountyextension/news/around-the-home/get-the-benefits-of-green-on-st-patricks-day and <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3705341/>

Kansas Nutrition Council Conference

The annual Kansas Nutrition Council Conference will be held April 23, 2020 at the K-State Alumni Center, Manhattan, KS.

Topics included in the conference include

What's Your Carb IQ?; Digestive Health; Intermittent Fasting; Trending Fad or Future Goals and many more.

Early bird registration is \$130 by February 29. After that, the cost goes

up to \$150. Learn more about the day and how to register at <https://www.facebook.com/events/2276398999323624/>.

The Kansas Nutrition Council strives to provide structure and leadership for linking Kansas professionals in nutrition and related fields.



Agriculture is not just about farming and ranching. Some aspect of agriculture touches us every day!

National Ag Day

The theme for [National Ag Day](http://www.agday.org) 2020 is "Food Brings Everyone to the Table" to be held on March 24, 2020. This event promotes the vital role agriculture has in our daily lives.

At the core, the mission of this day is to help consumers understand food and fiber production; appreciate the safe and abundant products from agriculture production; how agriculture contributes to the economy; and learn about career opportunities.

How can you participate? Plan an event or activity in your community. Ideas to help your planning can be found at <https://www.agday.org/planning-an-event>.

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Stock Your Pantry the MED Way



Photo: USDA Flickr

The Mediterranean way of eating emphasizes a lot of fruits and vegetables. There are a variety of options to achieve this goal.

Fresh fruits and vegetables choices change throughout the year based on growing season. But, many of these same foods are available in frozen, canned, or dried forms year around. Look for plain frozen fruits and vegetables without added flavors or sauces. Choose canned products without added salt for vegetables or canned in

their own juice for fruit. Dried fruits can be eaten as is or can be rehydrated.

Fresh or frozen fish options are few in some locations. But canned tuna or salmon, packed in water or olive oil, are good choices.

Don't have fresh herbs? There are many dried herbs available to use instead. A general substitution is 1/4 teaspoon dried ground = 1 teaspoon dried whole/crumbled = 1 tablespoon fresh chopped.

If certain foods are not available in your local grocery store, ask the manager to order the item. You may not be the only person looking for it and it could become a regular item on the shelf.

Learn more at <https://medinsteadofmeds.com/tips-and-tools/med-way-kitchen-staples/>.



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On the Web at
www.rrc.ksu.edu



Bitter Taste Could Be in Your Genes

While we encourage consumers to eat healthy vegetables, such as broccoli, cabbage, and brussels sprouts, to some, the bitterness will turn up their nose.



Photo: USDA Flickr

Turns out, this could be genetic. Researchers at the University of Kentucky School of Medicine discovered that we all in-

herit two copies of the TAS2R38 taste gene. There are two variants of this gene, the AVI and PAV variants. If you have two copies of the AVI variant, you are not as sensitive to bitter flavors those foods. If you have one of each variant, you perceive bitter flavors in the same foods. If you have two PAV variants, you are a "super-taster" and those foods will be very bitter and inedible.

Source: Food Technology, January 2020