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## Washing Poultry Not Worth the Risk



The practice of washing or rinsing raw poultry can actually put you and others at a higher risk of foodborne illness. Quite simply, there's no need to do this.

Participants in an observational study were observed in handling and preparation practices to see how bacteria moves from raw foods to other foods or surfaces. They were divided into a control group and a treatment group. Food safety messages were sent via email prior to observation sessions to learn how effective those messages were in preparing chicken.

Some reasons consumers feel rinsing raw poultry is necessary is to remove blood/slime, because a family member said to do so, or it washes off the germs or bacteria. Most do this under the faucet with water running without any other container. Because of this, water splashes onto other items or food causing cross contamination. Then, many improperly washed their hands by not using water or soap, or did not rub their hands with soap at least 20 seconds. They also were ineffective at cleaning and sanitizing equipment and countertops.

Bottom line. There is no need to wash poultry or meat prior to cooking. Cooking to safe temperatures is the best and safest defense against foodborne illness. All poultry should reach 165°F; ground meat should reach 160°F; and roasts, steak and chops should reach 145°F.

The final report of this study can be found at <https://bit.ly/30qbG3h>.

## Preserving Fall Tomatoes

Fall is almost here and gardeners may still have tomatoes to harvest. But once a frost or freeze occurs, those tomatoes should not be used for canning.

When tomato vines die,

the acid level changes resulting in less acidic tomatoes. Even if recommended canning methods are used, these tomatoes will still be unsafe. The tomatoes can still be eaten fresh or frozen for later use.

Green tomatoes can be canned as a relish, salsa, or as regular tomatoes. Learn more at [www.ksre.ksu.edu/bookstore/pubs/MF1185.PDF](http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/bookstore/pubs/MF1185.PDF).

## Sesame Allergy: A Growing Concern

Those little seeds on top of hamburger buns look good, but to some people they are a health hazard. An estimated 1.5 million Americans have a sesame allergy. Should it be the ninth most common food allergy?

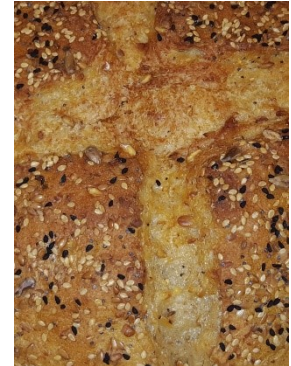
Sesame is found not only on top of buns but in many Asian dishes and in hummus made with tahini paste. Allergic symptoms include mild

skin irritations and hives to anaphylactic reactions. Currently, the FDA does not require it on food labels. One state, Illinois, has made it a requirement. Other countries such as Canada, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Japan require sesame allergen labeling. It may be in the near future for the U.S.

If you suspect you are allergic to sesame, take

steps to find out for sure. See a board-certified allergist for diagnosis. Read food labels, all of them! Keep a food log to track what you eat. This is very helpful when seeing a doctor.

For more information and list of foods that may contain sesame, see <https://foodinsight.org/sesame-food-allergen/>.



Sesame seeds range in color from white to black. This bread has white and black sesame seeds.



Have some fun with pumpkins! Learn how at <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/pumpkins/fun.cfm>

## Are Pumpkin Leaves Edible?

Fall is almost here! And pumpkins are starting to dot landscapes and yards.

Pumpkin flesh is typically what most people eat. But the young leaves are also edible. While plants are likely mature now, according to [University of](#)

[California-Davis](#), "You don't have to wait for the pumpkin to mature before enjoying the plant. The leaves are edible and can be cooked like spinach. Choose young, tender leaves for that purpose. Of course, the seeds are edible, too. Enjoy them roasted and

salted to increase the food value of your crop, particularly if you have limited space."

For information roasting pumpkin seeds, see [www.ksuhortnewsletter.org/newsletters/roasting-pumpkin-seeds](http://www.ksuhortnewsletter.org/newsletters/roasting-pumpkin-seeds)

## Do Tomatoes Need to be Peeled Before Canning?

Yes, and it takes extra time. But it is important and time well spent for safely canned tomatoes.

According to the [National Center for Home Food Preservation](#), "Most bacteria, yeasts, and molds are difficult to remove from food surfaces. Washing fresh food reduces their numbers only slightly. Peeling root crops, underground stem crops, and tomatoes reduces their numbers greatly. Blanching also helps, but the vital controls are the method of canning and making sure the recommended research-based process times found in the USDA's Complete Guide to Home Canning are used."

Easily peel tomatoes by dipping them in boiling water for 30-60 seconds or just until the skins split. Then dip in ice water, slip off the skins and remove cores. See how at <https://youtu.be/diZGx8RZA0>.



## Preserving Venison Safely



For canning, all types of meat must be pressure canned.

Fall hunting season is quickly approaching! Venison offers variety and an unusual flavor to the fall and winter table. When handled properly it can make an excellent meat. It can be refrigerated or frozen as meat cuts or sausage. It can also be preserved by canning, curing, or drying.

The following resources can help you get your supplies ready and help you decide which method is best for your family.

- Dry Meat Safely at Home  
[www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF3173.pdf](http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF3173.pdf)
- Resources for Home Preserving Venison  
<http://nchfp.uga.edu/tips/fall/venison.html>
- How-to Videos for Canning Meat—Pressure Canning  
[www.rrc.k-state.edu/preservation/videos.html](http://www.rrc.k-state.edu/preservation/videos.html)



## Canning Mixed Vegetables

Canning mixed vegetables is a great way to use end of garden vegetables and have a colorful side dish or easy addition to soup.

A variety of vegetables can be used except for

leafy greens, dried beans, cream-style corn, winter squash and sweet potatoes.

Mixed vegetables can be canned in pints or quarts. No matter the combination of vegeta-

bles, the processing is 75 minutes for pints or 90 minutes or quarts, adjusting for altitude.

Learn how at [https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can\\_04/mixed\\_vegetables.html](https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can_04/mixed_vegetables.html).

**Do not include any vegetable that does NOT already have pressure canning procedures. Examples include celery, eggplant, and cauliflower.**



Learn more about this study and on food waste at <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/foodsafety/topics/food-waste.html>

## What's in Your Refrigerator?

What triggers your decision to toss a food in the refrigerator? Or how do you decide to keep a certain food? Little research has been done to learn about the contents and management of home refrigerators. This appliance is key in managing food waste.

**Research** was conducted by The Ohio State University and Louisiana State University. Consumers were asked about how they decide to discard or keep food. A majority used odor, looks safe to eat, or passed date on package as deciding factors. Those who cleaned their refrigerator regularly often wasted more food, and in many cases could keep some of those foods.

There continues to be a lot of confusion about what date labels mean in reference to 'use by', 'best by' and others. There is a proposal in U.S. Congress to simplify labels to "best if used by" which translates to "follow your nose" and "use by" which would mean "toss it."



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## Knowledge for Life

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## Choose the Right Jar



Photo: USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning

A variety of jar sizes are available to use in canning. Reliable recipes sources will indicate what size of jars are to be used for that recipe. But can you use a jar not listed for that recipe? Yes and no.

Standard jar sizes include half pint (8-oz.), pint (16-oz.), and quart (32-oz.). There are also in-between sizes such as 4-oz., 12-oz., 24-oz., and 28 oz.

When a recipe lists half pint only, you cannot use a larger jar. This is because the larger jar may require a longer processing time which must be tested and verified to ensure safety. Guessing, by the home food preserver, can lead to spoiled food. If a recipe indicates half-pint AND pint, you can use a 12-oz. jar, but you cannot use any jar larger than a pint. For jams and jellies, 4-oz. jars are a good option. Use 4 oz. jars like half-pints; 12-oz. jars like pints; and 24-oz. and 28-oz. jars like quarts.

Just because your family uses a certain food in larger quantities, does not mean you can preserve in larger jars. Be smart, be safe!

A guide to what foods a best preserved in the various sizes of jars, see the Jar Guide at [www.freshpreserving.com/choosing-the-right-jars.html](http://www.freshpreserving.com/choosing-the-right-jars.html).



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



## Kansas Healthy Food Initiative Grants

The Kansas Healthy Food Initiative has funds (grants/loans) available to produce growers, farmers markets, grocery stores, etc. who are selling produce and other healthy foods in an under-served and low resource area of Kansas. For example, one farmer has received funds to pay for building/equipping a packing shed that will be used to sell produce in one of these target areas (and will also be used to sell produce to other areas).



Eligible food retail projects must expand healthy food offerings in low-resource, underserved neighborhoods and fit local community needs. Grocery chains, neighborhood food and grocery stores, co-ops, farmers markets, production and distribution operations, and other food projects are eligible. Applicant eligibility for underserved and low-resource areas is determined during the eligibility review.

Learn more at <http://kansashealthyfood.org/> or contact the Center for Engagement and Community Development at 785-532-6868 or [khfi@k-state.edu](mailto:khfi@k-state.edu).