

### Inside this issue:

Honey as a Sugar Substitute	2
Preserving Garlic	2
Food Safety Education Month	2
Back to School Field Trips	3
Shoppers Cards Track Foodborne Illness	3
Citric Acid vs. Ascorbic Acid	3
Liquid vs. Dry Pectin	4
Food Recall Basics	4

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## Food Tampering is No Joke



**Food tampering is punishable by law. Be a smart shopper and report any issues.**

If you see something, say something. That statement holds true for many situations, including food tampering. We live in a world that causes us to be more cautious in our daily routines.

In this buyer beware world, here are some tips when grocery shopping.

- Carefully examine all food product packaging. Be aware of the normal appearance of food containers. That way you'll be more likely to notice if

an outer seal or wrapper is missing. Compare a suspect container with others on the shelf.

- Check any anti-tampering devices on packaging. Make sure the plastic seal around the outside of a container is intact or that the safety button on the lid of a jar is down.
- Don't purchase products if the packaging is open, torn, or damaged. This includes products on the shelf or in the refrigerator or freezer sections of the grocery store.
- Don't buy products that are damaged or that look unusual. For example, never purchase canned goods that are leaking or that bulge at the ends. Likewise for products that appear to have been thawed and then refrozen.

In Kansas, report any food problems at [www.foodsafetykansas.org/](http://www.foodsafetykansas.org/).

Source: <https://bit.ly/2MARw2f>

## 2020 Urban Food Systems Symposium

Save the date for the 2020 Urban Food System Symposium! This event will be June 4-6, 2020 at the Marriott Country Club Plaza, Kansas City, MO.

The symposium brings together researchers, not-for-profit administrators, community organizers, extension professionals,

students, and others, to share and gain knowledge on urban food systems and agriculture and their role in global food security. The focus is on climate change; nutrition and human health; food production and distribution in cities; urban planning and development; food securi-

ty; food policy and advocacy; international perspectives; community engagement; and urban planning and economic development.

Learn more about this event at [www.urbanfoodsystemssymposium.org/](http://www.urbanfoodsystemssymposium.org/).

## Honey as a Sugar Substitute

Honey is a sweet treasure from Mother Nature. To use it in cooking and baking in place of sugar can take some practice. Here are some tips to achieve success.

- For baking, start with recipes written specifically for honey instead of sugar.
- For each cup of honey used to replace sugar, decrease the other recipe liquids by  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a cup.
- To make measuring and the pouring of honey easier, coat the inside of a measuring cup with a thin layer of cooking oil or water.
- Honey is acidic (pH 3.70-4.20) and sugar is neutral (pH 7.0). To counteract the acidity of honey, add

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of baking soda for each cup of honey used in the recipe.

- When substituting sugar with honey in baked foods, decrease the oven temperature by 25 degrees. Honey tends to make the product brown (burn) at higher temperatures.



Sources: <http://ucfoodsafety.ucdavis.edu/files/279185.pdf> and <https://bit.ly/2E17NVb>

▼  
Try roasting garlic to use in vegetables or on bread.

**Leave the garlic head whole, cut off the tip to expose the cloves. Place in a dish or on foil, add olive oil and seasoning. Cover and bake at 350°F about 45-60 minutes. Squeeze out the roasted cloves and enjoy!**

## Preserving Garlic

Garlic is a favorite flavor addition to many recipes. There are several options to preserve garlic, but canning is NOT an option.

Garlic is a low acid vegetable and requires pres-

sure canning. This high heat treatment, however, causes garlic to lose most of its flavor. Therefore, no processing times have been developed for safe canning.

Other safe preservation

methods include freezing, drying, refrigerator storage in wine or vinegar, or properly stored in oil. Follow these recommendations from <http://ucfoodsafety.ucdavis.edu/files/250352.pdf>.

## September is Food Safety Education Month

Food safety is important every day. But in September, the focus on food safety is brought to the forefront to help all consumers prepare, serve and eat food safely.

Current resources for this promotion are typically found at the links below. Look for updates in the coming days.

- [Partnership for Food Safety Education—Food Safety Education Month](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [National Restaurant Association—Servsafe](#)



## Back to School Field Trips



Field trips are an exciting way to show students real world education. If food is transported on the bus for lunch or snacks, temperature control is important to keep food safe. Research shows the importance of this risk.

The study looked at sack lunches in coolers with either no ice or one layer of ice in four different locations. The food used included turkey sandwiches, sliced apples, and baby carrots. Then the coolers were exposed to simulated temperatures on the bus. The lunches were inoculated with bacteria and tested for growth at different time periods and in different areas of the cooler. The results showed that foodborne illness is low risk when lunches are held under temperature abused conditions on a bus up to four hours.

The best practice is to use plenty of ice in coolers to keep food cold. Plan the field trip so that food is eaten within four hours to reduce temperature abuse and bacterial risks. Always wash your hands before handling food and before eating. Always pack food properly whether it need to be cold or hot.



Source: Food Protection Trends, Jan/Feb 2019

## Shopper Cards Help Solve Foodborne Illness

Many grocery stores offer loyalty program cards to give shoppers discounts on many items and other benefits. Another benefit is in helping solve foodborne illness outbreaks.

Shopper card or loyalty

programs track your purchases and can provide information on foods, brands, and other details that can help investigations. But, they cannot do this without your permission.

Other ways you can help investigations is keeping food labels with repackaged foods you store in your freezer, refrigerator, or cupboard. This helps you determine if your food is included in a recall.

Learn more at  
[www.cdc.gov/features/solvingoutbreaks/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/features/solvingoutbreaks/index.html)



## Citric Acid vs. Ascorbic Acid

In food preservation, citric acid and ascorbic acid are two types of acid used for two different functions. While both are acids, they are not the same. Scientifically, their chemical structures are slightly different, which leads to different functionality.

Citric acid is more acidic than ascorbic acid. Therefore, citric acid is recommended when canning tomatoes to lower the pH or increase acidity. It is a small amount that works effectively. It would take a lot more ascorbic acid to equal the power of citric acid to acidify tomatoes properly. Then flavor would be compromised.

Ascorbic acid is not as acidic as citric acid. Ascorbic acid is better at protecting color changes in certain foods like apples, peaches, and pears.

Source: <https://extension.psu.edu/lets-preserve-ingredients-used-in-home-food-preservation>

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## Liquid vs. Dry Pectin



When making jellied fruit products, pectin is a key ingredient so the product will gel. Some fruits do not need added pectin, but some do. Recipes are made using dry or liquid pectin. These types of pectin are not interchangeable.

Pectins are a group of pectic polysaccharides, or long-chain carbohydrate molecules. They contain

chains of esterified galcturonic chains that have different binding sites in a liquid form versus the dry form of pectin. Therefore, how the gelling process works when using liquid versus dry pectin is very different. Liquid pectin is not rehydrated dry pectin. The acid content of liquid and dry pectin is also different which changes gelling properties.

Again, one cannot be substituted for the other. Use the pectin the recipe requires for best results.

Source: Dr. Elizabeth Andress, Univ. of Georgia Extension



## Food Recall Basics



Karen Blakeslee, M.S.



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



Most consumers say they pay attention to food recall notices, and they tell others about them. Yet, fewer than 60% actually look in their cabinets, refrigerators, or freezers for the recalled food. They have a "not in my house" attitude.

The Partnership for Food Safety Education has information to help educate all consumers about what they should know and what to look for if there's a recall. Learn more at [www.fightbac.org/food-safety-education/recall-basics/](http://www.fightbac.org/food-safety-education/recall-basics/).



RECALLED FOOD	LOOK FOR
FRESH, FROZEN, & CANNED <b>Meat &amp; Poultry Products</b> <small>(including deli in store products)</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Product name</li> <li>Product brand</li> <li>Establishment number</li> <li>Est. number may appear within inspection seal or elsewhere on packaging</li> <li>Product weight/size</li> <li>Lot code</li> <li>Date code</li> </ul> 
FRESH PRODUCE <b>Fruits &amp; Vegetables</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is recall of whole fresh produce or of produce in a packaged form?</li> <li>For bulk produce without a label, check with the store where you bought the product</li> <li>Packaged produce check for brand, best if used by date (BUD) and production code</li> </ul>
<b>Frozen Products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Product name</li> <li>Product brand/manufacturer</li> <li>Product weight/size</li> <li>Product code</li> <li>Best if used by date</li> </ul>
<b>Canned Products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Product name</li> <li>Product brand/manufacturer</li> <li>Product size (ounces)</li> <li>UPC Code</li> </ul>
<b>Other Processed Food Products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Product name</li> <li>Product brand/manufacturer</li> <li>Product weight/size</li> <li>Product code</li> <li>Best if used by date</li> </ul>
<b>In-store Prepared or Deli Products</b> <small>(pre-made sandwiches, salads, etc.)</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Product type (salad, sandwich, etc)</li> <li>Product and/or store brand</li> <li>Look for label information as listed in recall notice</li> <li>Check with the store where you bought the product</li> </ul>

The non-profit Partnership for Food Safety Education saves lives and improves public health through research-based, actionable consumer food safety initiatives that reduce food-borne illness. www.fightbac.org