

Make it Safe

Chefval (aka Valerie Renzoni, El Dorado County Master Food Preserver)

Master Food Preservers are trained and equipped to be Food Safety Advisors. As a Chef in the Food Service Industry, I have been taught that cleanliness and sanitation are imperative - **essential, crucial, obligatory!** I would like to help the home cook maintain a healthy kitchen and keep food safe. Many points you will already know and this will just be a friendly reminder. Hopefully the tips and pointers will be an inspiration.

Cutting Boards:

Restaurant Prep cooks do a lot of slicing and dicing. If a cutting board slips, the results could be food contamination or worse; career ending or fatal. Previously a damp towel under a board was acceptable. Now the industry has rubber anti-slip mats that are dish washer safe. All the Polyethylene Cutting Boards are all dish-washer safe, too.

At home a silicon baking sheet is perfect under the cutting board as an anti-slip tool. They come in varying sizes just like your cutting boards. They are also dish-washer safe.

In food service kitchens colored boards are used to prevent cross contamination, especially between raw and cooked foods: red - beef; yellow - chicken; blue - seafood, white cheese and deli meats; green - greens, vegetables, and fruits.



Silicon "baking mat" used under a cutting board as anti-slip tool.

At home I use a yellow board for **ONLY** raw chicken and a red board for **ONLY** raw beef; these two meats require the most caution. I wash them in hot soapy water immediately after use and then run them through the dishwasher for extra sanitation.

It is very important to properly clean and sanitize your cutting boards regularly. Cutting boards can harbor many harmful organisms, including E. Coli and Salmonella.



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Got a Food Preservation Question?

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CUTTING BOARD SELECTOR CHART AND SAFETY GUIDE			
MEAT	FISH		
POULTRY	FRUITS & VEGETABLES		
COOKED FOODS	DAIRY		
STEPS TO SANITARY FOOD PREP: 1. Wash and sanitize hands before handling food 2. Wash and sanitize cutting boards before each use 3. Wash and sanitize cutting utensils before each use 4. Place cut foods in washed and sanitized containers and store properly			

Make it Safe *(Continued from page 1)*

Sanitizing Solution:

A question came up last month during a food safety lecture about sanitizing solutions. The Master Food Preserver training manual recommends using ½ tsp bleach to 1 quart water in a sprayer bottle. *But how long is it effective?*

The Clorox Beach Company recommends: When mixing the Clorox Bleach with water this solution is only good for 24 hours. For a disinfecting solution you would want to use 3 tablespoons per quart of water. At the end of the day you would want to rinse both the bottle and the spraying mechanism out and allow them to air dry.

The WHO (World Health Organization) regarding disinfection of reusable supplies and equipment (in situations of viral outbreak) states:

"Household bleach preparations can lose some of their chlorine over time. Use newly manufactured bleach if possible. If the bleach does not smell strongly of chlorine it may not be satisfactory for the purpose and should not be used. When preparing chlorine solutions for use note that:

- chlorine solutions gradually lose strength, and freshly diluted solutions must therefore be prepared daily;
- clear water should be used because organic matter destroys chlorine;
- use plastic containers for mixing and storing bleach solutions as metal containers are corroded rapidly and also affect the bleach."

The best answer to the question is another question- how clean do you really need to be? If you are working with potential biohazards, make your 10% solution fresh at LEAST every 24 hours, according to CDC infection control guidelines - if it does not smell like bleach, discard the solution and make it fresh.

For general use, the best bet is to follow the rule of your nose, "If you cannot smell chlorine in the bleach solution, the concentration is no longer strong enough for disinfection. Replace the solution with a fresh supply."

A further note, "NaOCl" or Sodium hypochlorite is bleach, and the active disinfection mechanism is free radical generation that destroys DNA. The longer a solution sits around, the more it reacts and the less free radicals it can generate, so the less disinfecting power it has.

Remember, the surface must be CLEAN before you sanitize or the sanitizer will not work.

Safe Cooking! Chefval

Plan Now for County Fair Entries!

The El Dorado County Fair will be here next month! Fair dates are June 14-17 and this year's theme is "The Grapest Show on Earth." [Download your entry forms today!](#) Show off your preserved food from last year's garden and turn in your **preserved food entry forms by May 11.**

Fruits, herbs, and vegetable entry forms are due June 10 and floriculture entry forms are due June 12. Did you know there's a Monstrosities category, with a \$20 Judges Choice award? Sounds fun!



Glossary of Canning Terms from Ball



When using products to help preserve foods, the first rule of thumb is to follow the manufacturer's directions. Ball has long been a brand associated with quality jars, lids and other canning equipment. Here is a link to a glossary of canning terms used in the instructions for Ball products:

<http://www.freshpreserving.com/tools/reference/glossary.aspx>.

The Curious Canner

Question: Can you provide me with a recipe for canning chocolate sauce?

Answer: We don't recommend canning chocolate sauces in boiling water. The National Center For Home Food Preservation states:

"Numerous recipes for chocolate sauces circulate on the internet and in newsgroups. Chocolate sauces are low acid recipes and are a risk for botulism food poisoning. Therefore any recipes that use the boiling water canning process are especially at risk. Furthermore, there are no science-based, tested recipes for chocolate sauces utilizing the pressure canning process in either the "USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning" (1994), the University of Georgia's "So Easy to Preserve" (1999), or in publications from land grant University partners in the Cooperative Extension System." (Brian A. Nummer, Ph.D. National Center for Home Food Preservation)

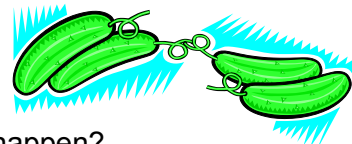
Instead of a canned sauce they offer a freezer chocolate sauce recipe:

Freezer Chocolate Fudge Sauce

½ cup margarine or butter
3 squares (3 ounces) unsweetened chocolate
2 ½ cups sugar
pinch of salt (optional)
12 oz. can evaporated milk
1 teaspoon vanilla

Melt margarine in the top of a double boiler. Add chocolate and melt, while constantly stirring. Add sugar gradually, ¼ cup at a time, while stirring. Then add salt, if desired. Next, stir milk in gradually and finally add the vanilla. Cook until desired thickness – approximately 1 hour, stirring occasionally. Pour sauce into a clean, warm, wide-mouth quart jar or similar freezer-safe container(s). Allow the sauce to cool at room temperature for 1 to 2 hours. Seal and freeze.

The sauce should remain soft enough to spoon out portions while frozen.



Question: I canned some pickles and they turned out bright green. Why did this happen?

Answer: The possible causes could be the use of green food coloring or a copper utensil during the preparation. If the abnormal green color was caused by copper and not food coloring, discard the pickles as excess copper is toxic.

CDC's Fruit of the Month: Lime



Limes may be most famous for their historical benefits to sailors. Limes are packed with Vitamin C and were eaten on ships to prevent scurvy, a disease caused by that vitamin deficiency. In the eighteenth century, all British naval ships assigned to long journeys were required to carry limes. The nickname 'limeys' for British sailors has continued to this day.

Limes were originally grown on the Indian subcontinent and were popularized in Europe about the time of the Crusades. In the United States, limes were established in what is now named Florida by the sixteenth century. Today limes are grown in Florida, the Southwest, and California.

Selection

Select limes that are glossy and light to deep green in color. Limes should have a thin, smooth skin and be heavy for their size. Small brown areas on the skin should not affect flavor, but large blemishes or soft spots indicate a damaged lime. Ripe limes are firm, but not hard. Avoid limes that have a yellowish skin or are too small. A hard shriveled skin is a sign of dryness, as is a coarse thick skin. Limes are available year round in most supermarkets.

Storage

Limes may be stored at room temperature or in the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks. Limes store better in a plastic bag if placed in the refrigerator and those stored at room temperature will yield more juice. Take care to keep limes out of direct sunlight as they will shrivel and become discolored.

Varieties

The majority of limes are part of the Tahitian strain, believed to have originated in Tahiti. There are two common varieties of that strain: Persian and Bearss. The Persian is egg-shaped and contains seeds. The Bearss is smaller and seedless. Key limes are smaller and rounder than the Tahitian strain and have a higher acid content. These limes are mostly used in baking.

Preparation

Wash well before using, even if you are only using the juice. Limes are usually eaten raw, but may be included in baked or grilled dishes. Many recipes call for fresh lime juice. To juice by hand, roll the lime on a firm surface before squeezing out the juice.

Limes are also often used as garnish. Simply slice the lime in half and slice into several sections. Limes or lime juice are a great salt substitute and add a tangy flavor.



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Fruit of the Month: Lime *(Continued from page 4)*

Lime Shrimp Kebabs

Makes 2 servings

Each serving equals 1 cup of fruit or vegetables

Ingredients

16 large shrimp, uncooked, deveined

3 large limes

2 cloves garlic, crushed and peeled

¼ tsp black pepper

2 tsp olive oil

2 Tbsp fresh cilantro, cleaned and chopped

10 medium cherry tomatoes, rinsed and dried

10 small white-button mushrooms, wiped clean and stems removed

Directions

In a glass measuring cup, squeeze limes, yielding 1/4 cup of juice. Add the garlic, pepper, olive oil, and cilantro and stir. Place the shrimp in a medium bowl and pour the cilantro lime marinade over the shrimp. Let the shrimp marinate for 10 to 15 minutes in the refrigerator. (Do not let them marinate for more than 30 minutes as the acid of the juice will alter the texture of the shrimp.)

Alternate cherry tomatoes, mushrooms, and shrimp on four skewers. Grill the skewers over a medium heat for 3 to 4 minutes on each side until the shrimp are just cooked through.



Pantry Pests

The following excerpts are from a University of Davis Publication titled *Pantry Pests: Integrated Pest Management in the Home*.

Stored-product pests are usually brought into the home in an infested package of food. Initially, infestations are easy to overlook because the insects involved are quite small, especially in the egg and larval stages. Often the first indication of the infestation is the appearance of small moths flying about or the presence of beetles in or near the food package.

Management

Getting rid of food-infesting moths or beetles takes continuous, persistent effort if the infestation has been present for a while. Some pests are capable of living for many weeks without food, thus the threat of re-infestation exists until they die off or are killed. Follow the guidelines for removing and cleaning up an infestation. It is best, at least for several months after eliminating the infested products, to store any susceptible food in airtight containers or in a refrigerator or freezer. Also, as a general practice, storing infrequently used food items (e.g., pancake flour,



Adult Indianmeal moth

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Pantry Pests *(Continued from page 5)*

grains, spices, etc.) in the freezer prevents infestations from developing. Pheromone traps are available in many retail stores to monitor and trap Indianmeal moths. Insecticides are not recommended.

Detection



Indianmeal moth larvae

If you find small moths or beetles crawling or flying around your kitchen, look for the food source of these pests and remove it immediately. If you locate the infestation before it spreads to other packages, control may be relatively easy. The source is commonly a package damaged at the store or an opened one that is little used or forgotten. The best thing to do with the package is seal it up and dispose of it, removing it from the house immediately.

Cleaning Up an Infestation

Most commonly, by the time the insects are noticed they have already spread to other food packages. Carefully inspect all packages, especially those that have been opened or are exposed. Destroy any that give the slightest indication of infestation. Other than the insects themselves, telltale signs include webbing in tight places of a package or tiny holes in the container. Insects are less likely to invade packages that have their original seal, but more commonly infest those that have been opened or that have been on the shelf for a long time. Before replacing non-infested packages, wash shelves with soap and water, and scrub corners and crevices or vacuum them with a crevice attachment to remove eggs and pupae.



Silken webbing, Indianmeal moth larvae

Pheromone Traps

Of the major pantry pests, pheromone traps are only readily available in retail stores for the Indianmeal moth. Pheromone traps for the Indianmeal moth will not attract beetles. Use pheromone traps after the source of the infestation has been removed to detect moths that remain in the house. Pheromones are chemicals (in this case a sex attractant) produced by an organism to affect the behavior of other members of the same species. The sex pheromone attracts adult male moths into the trap where they get stuck on the sticky sides; these traps will not attract the female moths, but may reduce their ability to produce eggs if they catch males before they can mate. Place the traps in the area of a previous infestation and check them weekly. Most traps remain effective for about 3 months. Whenever you catch a new batch of moths in traps, it is time to inspect packages again.

Prevention and Sanitation

Most home infestations of pantry pests maintain themselves on spills in the crevices of cupboards and drawers or in opened packages of food stored for long periods of time. Following a few general guidelines when storing food products will help you avoid many potential problems.

- Do not put exposed food on shelves.
- Place it in containers with tight fitting lids (plastic bags are not adequate).
- Regularly clean shelves, bins, and all other locations where there is any possibility of flour or other food particles accumulating. Certain pests need only small amounts of food to live and breed. Soap and water is great for cleaning flat areas, and vacuuming with a crevice attachment will help clean cracks, edges, and corners.
- Do not mix old and new lots of foodstuffs. If the old material is infested, the pest will quickly invade the new.

[Click here](http://ipm.ucdavis.edu) to read the full Pest Note at the IPM website at <http://ipm.ucdavis.edu>.

Master Gardener Classes & Events: May and June

Join our fellow educators at a free Master Gardener class. Unless otherwise noted, all El Dorado classes are at the Veterans Memorial Building in Placerville and all Amador classes are at the GS Building in Jackson. For full class descriptions and directions, visit [http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.org/Master Gardeners](http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.org/Master_Gardeners).



El Dorado County

May

- 12: Container Gardening
- 19: Herbs & Lavender, Too!

June

- 2: From Garden to Vase: Annuals & Perennials
- 9: Hanging Baskets
- 23: Pets-Pesticides & Poisonous Plants
- 30: Attracting Beneficial Insects

Amador County

May

- 12: Herbs in the Garden
- 19: Master Gardener Tomato Sale

June

- 9: Good Bugs, Bad Bugs
- 14: Composting and Vermiculture

MFP Winter/Spring Services:

During the winter and spring, Master Food Preservers provide the following services for our community:

- Food preservation hotline
- Free pressure canner testing
- Speakers for custom training for your organization
- Weekly articles in the Mt. Democrat newspaper

To get information throughout the year, visit our website at: [http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.org/Master Food Preservers/](http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.org/Master_Food_Preservers/).

Preserving Times is published by the El Dorado County Master Food Preservers.

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Know someone who would like to receive our newsletters and notifications on classes and events?

Sign up at <http://ucanr.org/mfpenews>.

2012 MFP Classes!

Mark your calendars for July 7 when we kick off our free public classes for 2012!

We're repeating several very popular classes from last year: Basic Cheese Making, Meat Preserving—Deli Meats, and Low Sugar. Of course we still offer a wide variety of core classes to help you preserve the bounty from your garden, or your local farmers' market!

Know what is in your food, safely preserve it for your family, and enjoy the garden all year.

Download the full schedule from our website at http://ucanr.org/edmfpm_classes.



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