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Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department Holiday Weekend Food Safety Tips!

September is National Food Safety Education Month, and we all play a role in keeping food safe for family, friends, and yourself.

“With Labor Day weekend fast approaching, we want to highlight some important food safety tips to help prevent foodborne illnesses,” shared Nick Dow, Food Sanitarian. “According to the CDC, 1 in 6 Americans get sick from food poisoning each year and by taking a few simple steps such as proper hand washing, raw meat storage, and taking care of leftovers can significantly reduce the risk.”

Food is an important source of nourishment and comfort. Consuming healthy foods helps us stay well, but an important part of healthy eating is keeping food safe. National Food Safety Month – is a perfect opportunity to review safe food handling practices.

Each of us plays a role in keeping food safe, wholesome, and nutritious. This means:

- Paying close attention to personal hygiene like hand washing.
- Keeping food preparation and storage areas clean and sanitized.
- Maintaining temperature control for safety; and,
- Properly discarding food that is no longer wholesome or past its expiration date.

Whether you grow your own food, shop at a grocery store, or if you have groceries or meals delivered, it is important to follow safe food handling practices using these four steps:

1. Clean: Wash hands, utensils, and surfaces often.
2. Separate: Don’t cross-contaminate. Use separate cutting boards and plates for produce, meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs.
3. Cook to the right temperature. Food is safely cooked when the internal temperature is high enough to kill germs that can make you sick.
4. Chill: Refrigerate and freeze food properly.

For more information, visit www.FoodSafety.gov. Let’s all do our part to keep food safe, during Food Safety Month

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