

Expert Provides Tips On Packing Healthy, Safe Sack Lunch

(KAIR)--Whether it's for convenience, to save money or to eat healthier, millions of Americans carry their lunch to work or school every day. However, it's important to remember that if it is not prepared correctly, a sack lunch can make you sick.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service, food brought from home can be kept safe if it is first handled and cooked properly and either kept below 40 degrees or above 140 degrees Fahrenheit. K-State Research and Extension food scientist Karen Blakeslee says that most sandwiches, especially those with meats or cheeses, should be kept cold at all times. Though a peanut butter and jelly sandwich is most likely alright to eat if not kept cool.

To ensure that you are getting a healthy lunch, Blakeslee suggests adding smaller protein portions, and more fruits and vegetables. She says that when you make a sandwich, use a whole grain product . It does not have to be 100% whole wheat, but at least start to introduce wheat products in this way.

Blakeslee also suggests discarding any food that does not get eaten at lunch, since there is a chance that leftovers could become contaminated if left inside a lunch bag for too long.

More information on food safety, health, and nutrition is available at your local county and district extension office, or by going to ksre.ksu.edu.

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