

## Grilling Tips

Cooking outdoors over an open fire has always had special appeal. The unique taste of food prepared on the backyard grill should be enjoyed all year long! Don't wait for summer. Here are some tips that help us enjoy our meals with family & friends:

- Clean the grilling surface thoroughly before cooking. Pre-heat the grill to kill bacteria before placing food on the cooking grates.
- If you are using charcoal, let the excess starter fluid burn off before putting food on the grill. (Or, even better, don't use lighter fluid, use a charcoal chimney to start your coals.) Coals should be grayish-white in color. Never squirt starter fluid on smoldering charcoal. It can cause an explosion.
- Defrost meat before grilling. The outside of frozen meat chars while the interior remains cold. After grilling, always remove blackened material from the food's surface.
- We recommend that you par-cook foods such as poultry or ribs by micro waving, baking, or boiling. Then use the grill to complete the cooking & provide that special "outdoors" flavor. A word of caution, however, pre-cooked foods must immediately be taken to the grill. Do not allow pre-cooked foods to remain uncooked.
- Do not let juices from uncooked meats contaminate ready-to-eat food or vegetables. For example, when removing food from the grill, do not put it on the same plate that held raw meat.
- Avoid fire flare-ups by using lean meats & trimming away visible fat, raising the rack to the highest position away from the heat (or adjusting the flame to low on a gas grill), & keeping food on one side of the grill & coals or other heat source on the other side. Use a squirt bottle of water to stop flare-ups.
- Cook fish in foil packets to retain natural flavors & protect it from smoke & fire
- For a new twist, try grilling vegetables & fruits:
  - ❖ eggplant, summer squash, bell peppers, sweet onions, Roma or cherry tomatoes, mushrooms, mangoes, pineapple, or peaches. Cut vegetables into 1/2-inch slices or large chunks. Brush with warmed oil (seasoned with garlic or other herbs). Grill until tender. Turn only once.
  - ❖ halve fruits with pits removed. Grill, as is (no oil needed), pulp side down.