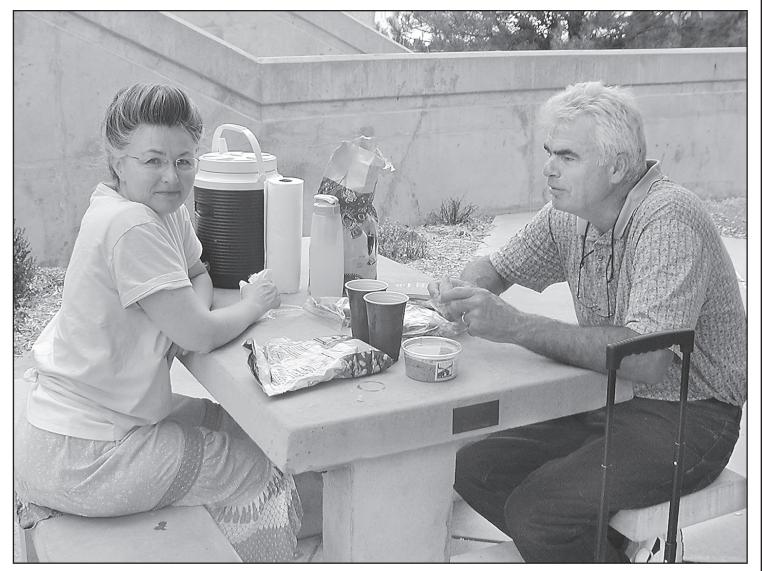


Taking a break from the road



Dennis and Lori Link and their daughter Ameran took advan- Springfield, Mo., family was on their way to Colorado for a tage of the shade trees (off camera) at the Prairie Museum of mountain vacation, and said they would plan to stop in Colby Art and History to have a picnic lunch last Wednesday. The on their way back to their home in Missouri.

VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Watch food temps for a safe picnic

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Not feeling well after eating an not full. egg, chicken, tuna or ham salad sandwich at the picnic?

Many people may think first of mayonnaise as the offending food, but the creamy sandwich/salad dressing is typically made with vinegar or lemon juice, which are both acidic ingredients that deter bacterial growth, said Karen and platters for raw foods and Blakeslee, Kansas State University Research and Extension food scientist.

The more likely culprit in hot weather, is the meat, poultry, eggs or fish in a salad that has been left unrefrigerated, she said.

Food safety specialists generally suggest a two-hour rule before discarding, rather than eating, perishable foods allowed to stand at room temperature. On hot days -90 degrees F or above – perishable food should be discarded after one hour without refrigeration.

Summer heat and humidity encourage bacterial growth on food, said Blakeslee, who offered tips to keep food safe:

• Wash hands before and after handling raw or cooked foods. If no water is available, use towelettes or a hand sanitizer.

• Plan quantities to minimize leftovers that could spoil.

• Use separate coolers for raw and cooked foods. • Use plenty of ice or freezer

packs. A full cooler will hold its temperature better than one that is

• Pack perishable foods shortly

before leaving for the picnic. • Transport coolers in the airconditioned passenger area, rather than the trunk or truck bed.

• Keep coolers out of direct sunlight, covered with a blanket.

• Use separate utensils, plates cooked foods.

• Pack a food thermometer, and test meats and poultry for doneness: hamburgers should be cooked to 160 degrees F; steaks or roasts to 145 degrees for medium rare or 160 degrees F for medium; 165 degrees is recommended for poultry, and fish should flake with a fork.

• Wash fresh fruits and vegetables under cool running water before eating them.

 Wash melon skins under cool running water before slicing it so as not to transfer naturally-occurring bacteria from the soil that may be on a melon grown on a vine and touching the ground.

 Keep children and pets away from a hot grill. Place the grill away from flammable materials, including buildings or a tent.

Tips on food safety and health are available at county and district K-State Research and Extension offices and online at: www.ksre. ksu.edu/foodsafety/ and www.rrc. ksu.edu.

Emergency fund can be key to financial security, says money specialist

Saving for a specific purpose – a home, challenge enough, yet a specialist recommends building an emergency fund first.

"Having money in the bank to pay unfinancial management specialist.

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An accident, injury or illness can hapcar, education or vacation - might seem pen any time, said Young, who noted that stress from unexpected events increases when there isn't money to cover costs.

In the current economy, a possible job expected expenses is a must," said Carol loss or layoff is another incentive to save,

at least six months of living expenses. If not in the habit of saving, however, make sure savings go into the account. she encourages saving one month's ex-

penses as an initial goal.

• Start saving and save regularly.

• Pay yourself first. Deposit \$10, \$20 or Young, K-State Research and Extension said Young, noting that money managers more from each paycheck in an interest-

• If available, choose direct deposit to mark funds to meet needs first.

• Save all or part of a raise.

• Shop with coupons and add money saved to a savings account. A \$10 per week savings 52 weeks a year will add up to \$520 plus interest.

• Save to pay cash or use layaway, rather than add to a credit card balance during an emergency.

Information on money management is available at www.ksre.ksu.edu and at www.ksre.ksu.edu/financialmanagement/

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