

Fenceline
by Jody G. Holthaus
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Livestock-Natural Resources

When I was in high school, I was fortunate to take Biology II as a Senior. This was a special class, that everyone wanted to get into to, because of all the field trips. Our teacher was Mr Toland, I don't even know what his first name was, that was when all teachers were referred to as Mr or Miss, or Mrs. Mr Toland was in his 70's, and was a bit quirky. His class was college level, his tests and quizzes were impossible. If you happen to see a bird fly over, while on a field trip, the next test would ask you the genus species of such bird. My grades suffered in that class. At semester, the valedictorian wanted to be transferred out. The guidance counselor's advice was "play the game". I soon caught on that his test and quizzes, which were multiple choice, often spelled out things. So I endured the relentless homework, some of which was quirky. Your assignment is to bring in an animal brain, the next day!!

We trapped pocket gophers on the golf course and tanned their little hides, boiled their skeletons and made museum worthy displays of them. Which I guess, might explain why I enjoy the dairy schools when we're dissecting feet, repro tracts or udders!

The greatest reward for sticking to it, was the end of the year field trip to Oklahoma to the sand dunes and to hunt rattle snakes. Thank goodness, it was a chilly April and we didn't see any snakes, I don't do snakes.

Sorry I've drug you along on memory lane, but I think Mr Toland taught me to respect the earth and leave a little footprint. I've always been a recycler, can't stand people that litter the roads or highways. I'm a nag about that!

I was once boating with some people, that would empty their cans, fill them with lake water and let them sink. I just about came unglued. They didn't understand the big deal, I told them, if everyone did this, the lake will fill up, then where are you going to spend your weekends. I'm not sure if they ever stopped this disposal method, maybe just that one day.

My true motivation for recycling, is driving by the trash mountain, north of Topeka. If the smell doesn't get you then the sheer height of the hill should get your attention!

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MEADOWLARK EXTENSION DISTRICT AGENT NEWS

David G. Hallauer
Meadowlark Extension District Agent
Crops & Soils/Horticulture

Will send later

Cindy Williams
Meadowlark Extension District Agent
Food & Nutrition, FNP

September is National Food Safety Month.

Did you know that September is National Food Safety month? Really every month should be food safety month and always using good food safety practices. Here are a few of the top 10 food safety myths.

Myth #1: Cross contamination doesn't happen in the refrigerator. FACT: Some bacteria can survive and grow in cool, moist environments. Clean your refrigerator with hot water and soap.

Myth #2: I don't need to clean the refrigerator produce bin because I only put fruits and vegetables in there. FACT: Naturally occurring bacteria in fresh fruits and vegetables can cause cross contamination in your refrigerator.

Myth #3: I don't need to rinse this melon as the part that I eat is on the inside. FACT: A knife or peeler passing through the rind can carry pathogens from the outside into the flesh of the melon. Play it safe and rinse your melon with cool water and a scrub brush.

Myth #4: I eat a vegetarian diet, so I don't have to worry about food poisoning. FACT: Fruits and vegetables may carry a risk of foodborne illness. Always rinse produce under running tap water.

Myth #5: Leftovers are safe to eat until they smell bad. FACT: Smell is not an indication of whether food is safe to eat! Freeze or toss refrigerated leftovers within 3-4 days.

Myth #6: Freezing food kills harmful bacteria that can cause food poisoning. FACT: Bacteria can survive freezing temperatures. Cooking food to the proper internal temperatures is the best way to kill harmful bacteria.

Myth #7: Putting chicken in a colander and rinsing it with water will remove bacteria like Salmonella. FACT: Bacteria in raw meat and poultry can only be killed when cooked to a safe minimum internal temperature, which for poultry is 165°F.

Myth #8: Only kids eat raw cookie dough and cake batter. FACT: Just a lick can make you sick! No one of any ages should eat raw dough contain raw eggs.

Myth #9: Once a hamburger turns brown in the middle, it is cooked to a safe internal temperature. FACT: The ONLY way to know that food has been cooked to a safe temperature is to use a food thermometer which is 160° F for ground beef.

Myth #10: If I microwave food, the microwaves kill the bacteria, so it's safe. FACT: It's the heat generated by microwaves that kills bacteria in foods and it must be completely heated to a safe internal temperature.

Nancy C. Nelson
Meadowlark District Agent
Family Life

Homework Help

How much help with homework should parents give? Children need to feel pride in what they have done and to be able to learn from their efforts. That means that sometimes they will make mistakes.

Parents' responsibilities in helping their children with homework include providing an environment that is conducive to doing the work:

- Clean off the kitchen table or set up a study space in the child's room.

- Turn off the radio, television, music or other electronics.

- Be available, but allow the child to do the homework.

Take advantage of parent-teacher conferences by listening carefully and asking for suggestions as to how parents can help to support the education process.

Participate in parent organizations and school activities to meet other parents and students, and to learn more about the school environment.

- Celebrate your child's effort, rather than grades.