BARBECUE (BBQ)

Although styles of BBQ vary across the country, American BBQ generally shares a common trait: slow cooking over indirect heat or smoke. The resulting food may be flavorful, but the way it's cooked and stored after cooking can make people sick. The tips below can help you stay safe when eating pork and beef BBQ.

Chicken BBQ is usually prepared like other chicken—roasted, baked, grilled—with a sauce added at the end, so if you are cooking that way, look at our guide to Poultry Safety.

Food Preparation

- Plastic bags can keep meat separated from other foods, both in the grocery cart and in the refrigerator, so that contaminated juices don't drip onto other foods.
- Wear disposable plastic gloves when handling raw meat.
 Whether or not you wear gloves, wash hands often when handling raw meat. Make sure you clean your hands and gloves thoroughly by washing with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds.
- When marinating meat at home, keep it refrigerated, taking special care not to drip marinade on kitchen surfaces. Never use the same marinade used on the raw meat as a glaze on cooked meat.

Cooking

Because BBQ is often cooked over indirect heat, such as a smoker or a roasting pit, it can be hard to check cooking times and temperatures. Always use a meat thermometer, put in the thickest part of the meat, to measure doneness. Cook pork BBQ so that an instant-read thermometer reads 145 degrees and then let it rest for several minutes so it reaches 160 degrees. Cook beef BBQ until an instant-read thermometer reads 160 degrees.

After Cooking

- Not ready to sit down to eat yet? Keep cooked meat in a warm oven so that the meat stays between 140 and 160 degrees.
- At room temperature, you should eat BBQ within 2 hours before it is refrigerated or thrown out. If it's a hot day (above 90 degrees), you have 1 hour to refrigerate or throw out the meat if it is not eaten.
- You should store leftover BBQ in shallow containers in the refrigerator so it can quickly cool to 40 degrees. Eat or freeze leftovers within 4 days.

Bacteria don't know whether they are at a 5-star restaurant, expensive grocery store, or on a local farm—so practice "defensive eating" every time, no matter where you get your food, to protect yourself and your family.

Why is safe handling so important?

Raw beef and raw pork that are destined to become BBQ begin like any other meat product—as an animal. Both cows and hogs commonly carry bacteria that are not dangerous to the animal, but can cause serious illness in a person. When those bacteria get on the meat during processing and handling, or when the meat is under-cooked, consumers can get sick.



1220 L Street N.W., Suite 300, Washington, DC 20005 Phone: 202.332.9110 Fax: 202.265.4954 www.cspinet.org

