

## NEWSLETTER STORY TEMPLATE

For additional MYTHBUSTER materials, including graphics psd files, jpgs, pdfs please refer to <http://www.fightbac.org/campaigns/mythbusters>

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### GETTING TO THE ROOT OF COMMON FOOD SAFETY MYTHS

*[Name of Organization] Joins Partnership for Food Safety Education*

*To Debunk Common Myths During National Food Safety Education Month*

WASHINGTON, DC –You dig deep in your pocketbook and comb grocery stores to find foods you think are fresh and safe to eat. But all foods -- regardless of the way they were produced -- need to be handled and stored properly to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria that can cause foodborne illness, according to the non-profit Partnership for Food Safety Education.

September is National Food Safety Education Month and [name of organization] is joining with the non-profit Partnership for Food Safety Education (PFSE) to introduce “Food Safety Mythbusters” to consumers.

The four myths are presented with the facts consumers need to know to help reduce their risk of foodborne illness:

- **Myth: Freezing foods kills harmful bacteria that can cause food poisoning.**

***Fact:** Bacteria can survive freezing temperatures. Freezing is not a method for making foods safe to eat. When food is thawed, bacteria can still be present and may begin to multiply. Cooking food to the proper internal temperature is the best way to kill harmful bacteria. Use a thermometer to measure the temperature of cooked foods.*

- **Myth: I eat a vegetarian diet, so I don't have to worry about food poisoning.**

***Fact:** Fruits and vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet, but like other foods they may carry a risk of foodborne illness. Always rinse produce under running tap water, including fruits and vegetables with skins and rinds that are not eaten. Never use detergent or bleach to wash fresh fruits or vegetables as these products are not intended for consumption. Packaged fruits and vegetables labeled “ready-to-eat” or “washed” do not need to be re-washed.*

- **Myth: Plastic or glass cutting boards don't hold harmful bacteria on their surfaces like wooden cutting boards do.**

***Fact:** Any type of cutting board can hold harmful bacteria on its surface. Regardless of the type of cutting board you use, it should be washed and sanitized after each use. Solid plastic, tempered glass, sealed granite, and hardwood cutting boards are dishwasher safe. However, wood laminates don't hold up well in the dishwasher. Once cutting boards of any type become excessively worn or develop hard-to-clean grooves, they should be discarded.*

- **Myth: Locally-grown, organic foods will never give me food poisoning.**

***Fact:** Any food, whether organic or conventional, could become unsafe with illness-causing foodborne bacteria at any point during the chain from the farm to the table. Consumers in their homes can take action to keep their families safe. That is why it is important to reduce your risk of foodborne illness by practicing the four steps: Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill.*

The Partnership introduced the Home Food Safety Mythbusters series in September, 2009, as part of its outreach to consumers, food safety educators and the media on the importance of safe food handling to good health.

“The Partnership wants all consumers— regardless of their dietary choices -- to feel confident that they’re informed on the risks of foodborne illness, and prepared to protect themselves by handling and preparing food safely.” said Shelley Feist, the Partnership’s Executive Director.

\_\_\_\_\_ **[name of organization]**\_\_\_\_\_ is a contributing member of the Partnership for Food Safety Education which created the Fight BAC!® consumer food safety education campaign.

**[Note to Member: optional org representative quote follows in red]**

**“Food safety is a high priority for [organization or industry],” said [name of retailer/title/ name of executive.] “By participating with the Partnership on Mythbusters, we help remind people during Food Safety Education Month how to make food safety a priority at home.”**

Free downloads about these food safety myths, including a PowerPoint presentation, teacher materials, and other consumer-friendly tools, are available for at [www.fightbac.org](http://www.fightbac.org).

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*The Partnership for Food Safety Education works to save lives and improve public health through research-based, actionable consumer food safety initiatives that reduce foodborne illness. The Partnership unites representatives from industry associations, professional societies in food science, and nutrition and health consumer groups, the United States Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Centers for Disease Control and*

*Prevention, and the Food and Drug Administration in an important initiative to educate the public about preventing foodborne illness.*