

NEWSLETTER STORY TEMPLATE

For additional MYTHBUSTER materials, including graphics psd files, jpgs, pdfs please refer to <http://www.fightbac.org/members>
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FOOD SAFETY MYTHBUSTERS

*[Name of Organization] Joins Partnership for Food Safety Education
To Debunk Common Myths During National Food Safety Education Month*

Washington, DC – It's a question more than a few of us have faced. We snag a forgotten container of leftovers from the back of the refrigerator, stick our faces into it, and inhale deeply.

“This smells fine, so is it safe to eat?”

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.

Storing leftovers is the basis for one of this year's four featured myths. The myths are presented with the facts consumers need to know to help reduce their risk of foodborne illness:

Myth: Leftovers are safe to eat until they smell bad.

***Fact:** Most people would not choose to eat spoiled, smelly food. However, if they did, they would not necessarily get sick. This is because there are different types of bacteria, some of which cause illness in people and others that don't. The types of bacteria that do cause illness do not affect the taste, smell, or appearance of food. For this reason it is important to freeze or toss refrigerated leftovers within 3-4 days. If you are unsure of how long your leftovers have been sitting in the refrigerator, don't take the risk - when in doubt, throw it out!*

- **Myth: I use bleach and water to sanitize my countertops and the more bleach I use the more bacteria I kill.**

Fact: *There is no advantage to using more bleach. In fact, overuse of bleach can be harmful because it is not safe to consume. To create a sanitizing solution it is recommended that you use 1 tablespoon of unscented liquid bleach per gallon of water. Flood the countertop with the solution, allow it to sit for a few minutes, then pat with clean, dry paper towels or allow to air dry. Any leftover sanitizing solution can be stored, tightly covered, for up to one week. After that, the bleach has lost its effectiveness.*

- **Myth: I don't need to wash my produce if I am going to peel it.**

Fact: *You should wash fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water just before eating, cutting or cooking. Harmful bacteria could be on the outside of the produce. If you peel or cut it without first washing it the bacteria could be transferred to the part you eat. Wash delicate produce such as grapes or lettuce under cool running water. Blot dry with a clean cloth towel or paper towel. Rub firm-skin fruits and vegetables under running tap water or scrub with a clean produce brush. Never use detergent or bleach to wash fresh fruits or vegetables. These products are not intended for consumption.*

- **Myth: The stand time recommended for microwaveable foods is optional, it's just so you don't burn yourself.**

Fact: *Stand time is not about cooling the microwaved food, but rather is an important part of the cooking process. Stand times are usually just a few minutes and the time is necessary to bring the food to a safe internal temperature as measured with a food thermometer. To ensure safety with microwave cooking, always read and follow package instructions, know your microwave's wattage, and use a food thermometer to ensure food has reached a safe internal temperature.*

“Consumers are interested in learning more about safe food handling,” said Shelley Feist, PFSE’s Executive Director. “This year’s myths – and the facts behind them – offer families practical tips for dealing with everyday home food safety challenges.”

[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.”

Mythbusters educational materials including a PowerPoint presentation, Educator’s kit, and other consumer-friendly tools are available for free download at 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. PFSE 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. For information on the Partnership, contact info@fightbac.org or 202-220-0651.