

# **BETter Living ...**

**Bernadette Trieb**

**Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent**

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## **Food Safety Myths**

September is National Food Safety Month. When you think of food safety what comes to mind? The Partnership for Food Safety encourages the three C's and an S:

- Clean: Wash hands and surfaces often.
- Cook: Cook to proper temperatures.
- Chill: Refrigerate promptly.
- Separate: Don't cross-contaminate.

Let's test your knowledge when it comes to food safety.

**1. True or False? Rinsing ready-to-eat greens increases the potential for cross-contamination.**

**True.** Rinsing of ready-to-eat greens will not enhance safety, but could increase the potential for cross-contamination. Pathogens that may be on your hands or on kitchen surfaces could find their way onto your greens in the process of handling them.

**2. True or False? Pathogens are unable to survive and grow in cold temperatures.**

**False.** Some bacteria can survive and even grow in cool, moist environments like the refrigerator. In fact, *Listeria monocytogenes* grows at temperatures as low as 35.6°.

**3. True or False? You should never dry fresh fruits and vegetables after rinsing them.**

**False.** Research has found that using a clean cloth or paper towel to blot dry fresh fruits and vegetables further reduces the level of harmful bacteria on the surface of fresh produce. But remember – the towel must be clean!

**4. True or False? There are many ways that bacteria on the outside of a melon can get into the part you eat.**

**True.** There are many ways for pathogens on the outside of the melon to contaminate the edible portion. A knife or peeler passing through the rind can carry pathogens from the outside into the flesh of the melon. The rind also touches the edible portion when cut fruit is arranged or stacked for serving and garnish.

The next time you go into your kitchen and begin to prepare a meal or snack, please remember: Clean, Cook, Chill, and Separate.

For more information visit: <http://www.fightbac.org/>