



Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Are you celebrating the Chinese New Year?

NEWMARKET- February 18th marks Chinese New Year and as the preparation for this exciting celebration fast approaches, York Region Health Services would like to remind residents to take the proper precautions when preparing food for their families and guests. Below are some food safety tips to keep in mind:

- Ensure all meat and poultry come from an approved and inspected source. Check for labels and tags on the packaging. Ask your butcher regarding the source of the meats and look for the following meat stamps:



- For poultry, look for tags from a federally or provincially inspected plant (on the whole carcass)
- Check for stamps on large carcasses and labels on pre-packaged items
- Shop for refrigerated items last before proceeding to the supermarket cashier. Store these items in the refrigerator or freezer as soon as you get home
- Purchased hot foods should be eaten as quickly as possible or hot held at a temperature of 60°C (140°F)
- Cook food thoroughly and keep food out of the *Danger Zone*. The *Danger Zone* temperatures are between 4°C (40°F) and 60°C (140°F)
- Promptly refrigerate leftovers after eating and do not consume leftovers that are more than 2 days old
- Avoid cross-contamination of raw products on cooked products during storage and preparation
- Use a separate cutting board for raw meats and do not use it for other items
- Wash hands frequently using liquid soap and water
- Keep your work area clean and sanitized. Use a sanitizing solution of 2.5 ml (½ teaspoon) of household bleach per 1 litre (4 cups) of water

By following these food safety tips you can reduce the risk of family members and guests contracting a food-borne illness. For a food safety brochure or for more information on this and other health-related questions, contact York Region Health Services *Health Connection* at 1-800-361-5653 (toll free) or visit www.york.ca

- 30 -

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Media Contact: Jennifer Mitchell-Emmerson, York Region Health Services
905-830-4444 Ext. 4016 or after-hours Cell (905) 716-2717
Email: jennifer.mitchellemmerson@york.ca