



# Virginia Cooperative Extension

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## Safe Brown Bag Lunches\*

Renee Boyer, Ph.D. Extension specialist, Virginia Tech Food Science & Technology Department

Foods That ...	Must Be Kept Cold	Are Safe At Room Temperature
Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs & Nut Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, cooked beans or sandwiches; salads or other dishes made with these foods</li> <li>• Processed meats (bologna, hot dogs, etc.)</li> <li>• Tofu, other soy products or other meat substitutes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nuts and nut butters</li> <li>• Dry soup mixes</li> </ul>
Milk, Yogurt and Cheese Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk and milk drinks</li> <li>• Custards and pudding</li> <li>• All foods containing cheese (pizza and casseroles)</li> <li>• Yogurt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unopened shelf-stable milk and unopened shelf-stable pudding</li> </ul>
Vegetable Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All cooked vegetables</li> <li>• Sprouts</li> </ul> <p>Foods containing cut vegetables (ie. leafy greens, tomatoes, cucumbers)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raw vegetables</li> <li>• Unopened vegetable juices</li> </ul>
Fruit Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food containing fresh cut fruits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole Fruits</li> <li>• Canned fruits</li> <li>• Unopened fruit juices</li> </ul>
Bread, Cereal, Rice and Pasta Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooked pasta, rice and other cooked grains or cereals</li> <li>• Any salads, soups or dishes made with cooked grains</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bread and crackers</li> <li>-Cookies</li> <li>• Dry cereals</li> </ul>
Fats, Oils and Sweets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gravy and sauces</li> <li>• Mayonnaise</li> <li>• Butter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candy</li> <li>• Ketchup and mustard</li> <li>• Margarine, oil</li> <li>• Fruit pies</li> </ul>



**Keep your brown bag lunch safe** by using this information to see which foods in your lunch should be kept cold.

**Keep foods cold so germs won't grow.** Refrigerate foods as soon as you get to school or work. If there is no refrigerator, use an insulated lunch bag with an ice pack or frozen juice box. Place foods that must be kept cold next to the cold pack. Keep foods in the coolest place possible.

**Keep everything clean** when you make your lunch. Wash your hands before handling food. Wash your fruits and vegetables. Wash utensils and containers with soap and warm water, and rinse after each use.

**Reheat food thoroughly** if you use leftovers, make sure that you pack and keep them cold. Cook foods leftovers to an internal temperature of 165°F. If you pack frozen meals, be sure to follow the directions on the package when heating. If you use a microwave, use microwave-safe containers.

**For more information contact:** Renee Boyer, PhD, Extension Specialist, Virginia Tech [rrboyer@vt.edu](mailto:rrboyer@vt.edu)

*\*Adapted from the University of Massachusetts Extension publication "Safe Bag Lunches".*