

## Weekly Ag Report

Cheryl Lauritsen

November 26, 2014

Good Morning. This is Cheryl Lauritsen and as we get ready for all of the holiday parties and family gatherings, I would like remind everyone the Do's and Don'ts of being safe with our food preparation and serving habits.

- Do make grocery shopping your last stop.
- While at the store, pick up your beef, poultry or fish last if it will take longer than 30 minutes to get home.
- Meat will keep in its original store packaging for two weeks in the freezer.
- Be sure refrigerated products are cold to the touch and frozen foods are solid.
- Use a thermometer to ensure your refrigerator is at or below 40° Fahrenheit (F) and your freezer is at or below 0°F.
- Label and date your frozen foods and follow the "first in, first out" rule.
- Wash your hands with hot, soapy water for at least 20 seconds before preparing food as well as before and after handling raw food.
- Thaw foods in the refrigerator or microwave, **NOT AT ROOM TEMPERATURE.**
- Use an oven proof or instant read thermometer to prevent under cooking all meats and casseroles.
- When serving buffet style, keep cold foods below 40°F and hot foods above 140°F.
- Refrigerate left overs no later than 2 hours after cooking.
- Cover and reheat leftovers to 165°F throughout. Stir to make sure that all the food reaches this temperature

Now for the Don'ts

- Don't purchase packages if the "sell by" date is expired.
- Don't let raw meat, poultry and fish, and their juices come into contact with other foods.
- Don't use the same cutting board for raw meat without proper cleansing. If possible, have a special one, just for raw meat, fish and poultry.
- Don't marinate food at room temperature, **USE THE REFRIGERATOR.**
- Don't use a plate that held raw meat, poultry or fish for serving.
- Don't taste leftover food that looks or smells strange. When in doubt **THROW IT OUT!**

You can find more information on food safety at [FoodSafety.gov](http://FoodSafety.gov) and more about the benefits and safe handling practices with **BEEF** on the National Beef Council website [beef.org](http://beef.org) by clicking on the "Beef its what's for dinner" box.

The Lassen County Cattlemen & CattleWomen would like to wish everyone a safe, happy and healthy holiday season and a prosperous New Year. Don't forget, the Lassen County Cattlemen/CattleWomen Christmas party is scheduled for December 19<sup>th</sup> at the Elks. Cattlewomen, we are having a center piece contest so come prepared!