

Column Name - The Heartland Minute

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*“Eating Frozen Canned Foods. Good Idea or Not?”*

It obviously wasn't the goal, but power outages with the extreme cold weather we faced recently may have allowed canned or jarred food to freeze and become unsafe to consume. Let's look at some tips to keep those foods safe to eat. If you have canned foods, either home canned or commercially canned, in a storage location that froze, first check for broken seals or seams in metal cans or broken glass in home canned foods due to the expansion of food and liquids inside those containers.

If all the preservation containers are intact, then they can be saved. Thaw the canned food gradually and store it at room temperature. It is recommended to discard commercially canned foods with broken seams or home canned foods with broken glass, as they can lead to contamination. This includes home canned foods that came unsealed and thawed.

If a glass jar became unsealed but is still frozen, this can be safely used immediately or transferred to a new container and stored in the refrigerator or freezer. You may find yourself asking how you can prevent this problem in the future. We are in false spring after all; from what I hear at least. Well, one helpful tip is to wrap jars or cans in paper and cover them with blankets to insulate your preserved foods. Another option for vulnerable storage locations is to prop open the pantry or cupboard doors to allow warm air inside. We are hopefully done with the extreme cold temperatures this year, but if it comes again, then hopefully these tips will help you weather the storm.

Information comes from Kansas State University food scientist, Karen Blakeslee.

If you are looking for Family and Consumer Sciences programming through Extension, please consider liking our Greenwood County Extension Facebook page to follow along and learn more about upcoming programs. On April 12 in Eureka, we will be having a Food Preservation Workshop presented by K-State Food Safety Scientist, Karen Blakeslee. Please watch for registration information to be released in early March!

For more information regarding upcoming programs, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 4-H Youth Development, or K-State Research and Extension call the office at 620-583-7455, email me, Ben Sims, at benjam63@ksu.edu, or stop by the office which is located inside the courthouse. Be sure to follow K-State Research and Extension- Greenwood County on Facebook for the most up-to-date information on Extension education programs and the Greenwood County 4-H program.