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The Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association's Grilling Etiquette and IQ

The basics of 'how to grill' prevail as universal, but when it comes to the rights and wrongs of hosting and attending cookouts, everyone has their opinion. For instance, when asked to attend a barbecue is it always standard to bring your own meat? If you are hosting the party should you invite your neighbors? And, how important is it to supply vegetarian options for non-meat eating guests? To ensure a blunder-free outdoor cookout, follow these dos and don'ts revealed from a national poll of Americans fielded by HPBA.

When invited to a barbecue:

- DO feel okay bringing your own sauce, 49 percent of grillers says it acceptable.
- DO expect the meat to be provided by the host, but pull your weight by bringing your own sides and beverages. Go the extra mile and bring enough to share with others.
- DON'T touch the grill! Sixty-one percent of those surveyed say only the host/hostess should 'man' the grill. As a guest you can look, but don't touch.

As the host of a barbecue:

- DO have all grilled food ready at relatively the same time (83 percent stated).
- DO offer grilled vegetarian options (66 percent agreed).
- DON'T feel obligated to invite your neighbors. Two-thirds of people surveyed said there is no need to extend an invitation to neighbors, even if they can see and smell that you're having a barbecue.

In general, when grilling with others:

- DO start eating your food if your meat is finished before everyone else's – after all you don't want your freshly grilled meat to get cold.
- DO stake your claim at a community grill by laying out your grilling utensils or meat.
- DO be considerate of others – it is only appropriate to flip your own meat and the meat of others when manning a grill.

For more information, visit www.hpba.org