

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Carol Kaplan
Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association
kaplan@hpba.org, 703.522.0086

Jeanette Casselano
Fleishman-Hillard
jeanette.casselano@fleishman.com, 202.828.8833

**JULY FOURTH WEEKEND:
THE NUMBER ONE GRILLING HOLIDAY OF THE YEAR**
Majority of Americans will Light Their Grills for Popular Holiday Weekend

June 14 2006 (Arlington, VA) – Sizzling with the summer’s biggest and best backyard barbecues, the Fourth of July is the most popular grilling occasion of the year according to the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association’s (HPBA) *2005 State of the Barbecue Industry Report*. As Americans spend more time in their backyards for outdoor entertaining and living, it’s no wonder grilling is one of their favorite pastimes. In fact, the HPBA report reveals that 47 percent of Americans cook out at least once or twice a week during July and August.

Of course, the main ingredients for outdoor cooking should always be common sense and safety. To help keep July Fourth fun, safe and easy when grilling, the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association provides these tips:

1. Position your grill in open areas away from buildings and high traffic areas.
2. When lighting a gas grill, always keep the lid open.
3. Check propane tank levels before the day of the barbecue.
4. When grilling, wear clothing that does not have hanging shirt tails, frills or apron strings.
5. Marinate foods ahead of time. Always marinate in the refrigerator, never on the counter.
6. Trim the excess fat from meat to avoid flare-ups.
7. Place vegetables and fruits at the outer edge of the grill to prevent burning.
8. Always use long-handled barbecue utensils to avoid burns and splatters.
9. When grilling, use tongs or spatulas to move or turn meats instead of a fork to minimize the loss of juices.
10. Use a meat or “instant read” thermometer to ensure meat is cooked thoroughly. As a guideline, poultry 180°F (breasts 170°F); beef, lamb, veal roasts/steaks 145°F to 160°F; any burgers 160°F; all pork 160°F.

Did you know? Barbecue Trivia

- **Grilling Favorites.** The most popular foods for grilling are, in order, burgers, steak, and chicken and hot dogs.
- **Veggie-time.** Corn is the most commonly prepared side dish on the barbecue grill, followed by other veggies and potatoes.
- **It's all in the Sauce.** When it comes to sauce, the most popular variety is hickory flavored, followed by, mesquite, and honey.
- **Just right temperature.** To tell the temperature of a charcoal fire, carefully hold your hand, palm side down, just above the cooking grid. If you can keep it there for five seconds, the heat is low, four seconds, the heat is medium. Three is medium-hot. Two or one is hot.
- **Side help.** Aluminum foil is the most common "utensil" used in the preparation of side dishes for the grill.

The Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association offers more information – with detailed sections on safety for gas, charcoal/wood chunk and electric grilling, as well as Food Safety Tips for Barbecuing – on the HPBA web site. Please visit www.hpba.org and click on Safety First under ConsumerInformation.

###

About Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association (HPBA)

The Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association based in Arlington, VA, is the North American industry association for manufactures, retailers, distributors, representatives, service firms and allied associates for all types of hearth, barbecue and patio appliances, fuels and accessories. The association provides professional member services and industry support in education, statistics, government relations, marketing, advertising and consumer education. There are more than 2,700 members in the HPBA.