



Suite 600, 1901 North Moore Street  
Arlington, VA 22209 USA  
Phone: (703) 522-0086 • Fax: (703) 522-0548  
Email: hpbamail@hpba.org  
Web Site: www.hpba.org

**Media Contacts:**

Deidra Darsa  
HPBA  
703.522.0086  
darsa@hpba.org

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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**AMERICANS LIGHT- UP (GRILLS) FOR THE FOURTH OF JULY, THE MOST POPULAR GRILLING OCCASION OF THE YEAR**

*Taste of Great Grilled Food is a Must on Independence Day*

**ARLINGTON, Va. (June 21, 2007)** – The grill is at the center of the celebration on the Fourth of July, the most popular grilling holiday of the year. According to the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association (HPBA), on Independence Day, 71 percent of grill owners declare freedom from indoor stovetops and ovens, opting instead to fire-up grills in pursuit of delicious grilled food.

The pleasure of preparing a meal with no pots and pans to clean-up, coupled with the enjoyment of the outdoors, are among the top reasons consumers grill – especially on the Fourth of July. Whether you are attending a barbecue or hosting one at your house, HPBA recommends brushing up on your barbecue etiquette and grilling tips to ensure a happy holiday for yourself, friends and family.

**As the barbecue host:**

- Do have all grilled food ready at relatively the same time.
- Do offer grilled vegetarian options.
- Do think of unique and different types of food items to grill. Fruit, veggies, pizzas and even appetizers can be grilled, not just meat.

**As a barbecue guest:**

- Do feel okay bringing your own sauce.
- 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.
- Do not touch the grill! In a recent HPBA survey, respondents said only the host/hostess should ‘man’ the grill. As a guest you can look, but don’t touch.
- Do keep food at 40°F using an insulated cooler with ice or ice packs when carrying food to a barbecue.

**Food handling reminders:**

- Do thaw frozen food and marinate foods in the refrigerator and never on the counter.
- Do sanitize cutting boards and counter tops with chlorine bleach. Pour small amount on surface and let stand several minutes, rinse thoroughly and air dry with clean paper towel. *Soak sponges and dishcloths in hot soapy water to which you’ve added chlorine bleach.*

- Do boil any marinade to destroy bacteria if you plan to baste with it or serve it with the cooked meat. Never save marinades for reuse.
- Marinate meats at least 30 minutes in the refrigerator before cooking to add flavor and coat the meat.
- Do refrigerate leftover food quickly (no more than two hours) and use within a couple of days.

**When grilling:**

- Trim any excess fat from meat and poultry to help prevent grill flare-ups.
- Turn food often with tongs to prevent charring. Browning is good, but charring is not. Do not press, flatten or pierce the meat – flavorful juices will be lost and may cause flare-ups. *Helpful tip: Browning is a key flavor factor and helps impart delicious flavor and aroma to foods. Should your meat become charred, remove those areas before eating.*
- Proper cooking temperature is critical to delicious, flavorful food. Use medium heat to avoid overcooking or charring meat, poultry or seafood.
- Use a meat thermometer or an “instant read” digital thermometer inserted horizontally into the side of meat, poultry and seafood to check doneness.

Recommended Internal Temperatures:	
Poultry	165 degrees F
Ground beef	160 degrees F
Pork (chops, ground, tenderloin)	160 degrees F
Large cut pork roasts	150 degrees F
Beef roasts, steaks, seafood and lamb	145 degrees F

For more grilling tips, recipes and information, please visit [www.hpba.org](http://www.hpba.org).

**About Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association (HPBA)**

The Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association based in Arlington, VA, is the North American industry association for manufacturers, 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.

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