

# How safe is your food?

By Azfar Kahn

Most of us eat three to four times a day, but we really have no way of knowing whether the food we're consuming is safe and free from food-related dangers.

The need for food safety was recognized in the late 1950s when

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astronauts first went into space. They had to have food that was 100 percent safe. To that end, the Pillsbury Company was contracted to produce hazard-free foods for the astronauts.

Stringent safety requirements were placed on the company, and as a result Pillsbury developed processes to prevent the occurrence of food safety hazards while laying a basis for food safety standards.

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Imported foods, which can be a source of food-borne diseases, should be thoroughly tested before they are allowed to be consumed by the general public. Testing should be carried out by a laboratory that's accredited in accordance with the requirements of the

International Laboratory Management System.

Many countries export food items yet have no unified food standard of their own. While countries can adopt the already existing international food safety standard through HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points), due to the huge cost involved it is difficult to carry out a thorough check of all food items.

In the United States for example, only 5 percent of food is checked by Food and Drug Administration (FDA) inspectors.

When salmonella was found in contaminated peanut butter products recently, President Barack Obama showed concern about America's decades-old food safety system, calling it a "hazard to public health" and in need of an overhaul. Since 2008, nine deaths have occurred and 700 people have fallen ill from consuming contaminated food in the U.S.

Food must go through various

stages before reaching your dinner plate: growing, cutting, storing, washing, preserving, chilling, cooking, and serving. Pathogens can enter the food at any of these stages. HACCP focuses on the prevention of contamination rather than end-product testing by building food safety measures into the manufacturing processes.

One of the easiest ways to control infection is good old hand washing, a simple function that requires only soap and water. Throughout the day we accumulate germs on our hands from a variety of sources like direct contact with people (hand-shaking), foods, surfaces contaminated with bacteria, etc. If you don't wash your hands frequently, you can infect yourself with these germs by touching your eyes, mouth, or nose.

In food safety, there are four principles to follow when handling, cooking, and storing food:

- **Clean** – wash hands and surfaces.



**SAFETY FIRST: After buying food, take it home and refrigerate straight away to prevent bacteria from multiplying.** PHOTOS.COM

- **Separate** – prevent cross-contamination of foods.
- **Cook** – heat foods to proper temperatures.
- **Chill** – promptly refrigerate.

Bacteria aren't visible to the naked eye, and we may not be able to smell or taste them either. So we

must be careful in every step of the food preparation process to keep our food safe.

To avoid food-borne diseases, use the following precautions.

- Always check the expiry date on the food item before buying.
- Do not keep raw food alongside cooked food.
- Before buying packages of poultry or other meat, ensure that they aren't torn or leaking.
- When purchasing eggs, buy only those that are stored in the refrigerator.
- After buying food, take it home and refrigerate straight away to prevent bacteria from multiplying.
- When storing meat or poultry, ensure that it is wrapped properly.
- Wash your hands before and after handling food.
- Don't use food that was left at room temperature for more than two hours.
- After washing the dishes, never dry them with a tea towel.
- Cook food thoroughly at the required temperature.

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Debra Wheatman

## Top five resume mistakes you can't afford to make

By DEBRA WHEATMAN

Your resume is one of the most important tools when preparing for, and launching a job search. Many candidates make critical errors on this important document, resulting in diminished impact, and worse, no responses from hiring managers. Do you want to stand out from the crowd—especially in a difficult economy? Below are five common mistakes that are completely avoidable, and will facilitate a productive job search.

**Typos are no-no's:** Grammatical and spelling errors are a sure way to prevent your resume from getting the attention it deserves. Why?

**Avoid referencing hobbies and interests on your resume unless it links to skills or traits applicable to a professional environment.**

Typographical errors indicate a lack of attention to detail and an inability to carefully review your own work. It is assumed that when applying for a position, you are putting your best foot forward. Sending out a resume with errors is an indication that it has not been checked, and proper time and care has not been taken to deliver a document that is as relevant and correct, as it should be. It also causes hiring managers to consider whether or not you will prepare daily work in the same haphazard manner. Have someone else review the document for you just to be absolutely sure your resume is perfect.

**Presentation is everything:** There is language that is considered resume appropriate. When drafting the document, use action-oriented words to convey information. The S-A-R method (Situation, Action, Result) will allow you to remain focused and deliver targeted details about what you did and the results of those efforts. Any positions that have occurred in the past should be written in the past tense. Use verbs or adverbs to engage the reader and deliver impactful information. Your writing should always have an active tone throughout your entire resume. Avoid passive language as it weakens your resume's impact. If you increased revenues for an employer, get the message on the document in a clear manner; for

example: "Successfully increased revenues by 50 percent through the development of a new printing process." This also demonstrates the S-A-R formula referenced above.

**TMI (Too Much Information):** Avoid referencing hobbies and interests on your resume unless it links to skills or traits applicable to a professional environment. An employer will find out about you in due course. I saw one resume that listed hobbies as: Baseball! Baseball! Baseball! While this is an extreme example, it is highly unprofessional and might cause a hiring manager to question your commitment to the job. Things that would be worthy of mention on a resume include work with volunteer organizations like Habitat for Humanity, or a hobby like rock climbing. This is a bit unusual and will serve as an icebreaker, not to mention that the personal perseverance and dedication needed for such a sport speaks volumes about you.

**Inappropriate email address:** All resumes contain an email address. In many instances, a human resource representative or hiring manager will reach out to you via email as initial contact. It is important that your email address be written in as a professional manner as the rest of your career documents. I once saw the following email address on a resume: Ilovekumkuats@xxx.com. While cute for a teenager emailing with school pals, this same email address does not have a place in the professional world. A first and last name is appropriate, or initials of some kind also work. The email address should not draw unnecessary attention. In a competitive job market, all of your efforts should be completely professional.

**Formatting:** Make sure that spacing, alignment, tabs, bold, italics, underline and all other formatting are consistent. You don't want the resume to look too busy with overly complex formatting. Keep the resume formatting fairly simple so that the reader is not distracted. Keep formatting clean for ease of readability. Many of the bells and whistles should come from the content.

Take out your resume, review it, spruce it up, and make sure that it is error free and ready to go to support a productive search.

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## Korean hotcakes

By JOANNA CONWAY  
Epoch Times Staff

Korea's answer to a pancake is very different from the English variety. Hoddeok are squat dumplings filled with a mixture of brown sugar and cinnamon, then squashed flat into cakes on a griddle or frying pan.

Korea's street food is mainly dominated by savoury snacks and pancakes are often filled with seafood or vegetables. Hoddeok are one of the few sweet snacks and are sometimes described as an "inside-out doughnut."

Along with a cup of freshly brewed coffee, Hoddeok are the perfect start to the weekend—solid, sweet and sustaining. To make six of these beauties (enough for two) you'll need to start the dough early—three hours ahead. Fortunately, dough preparation is minimal, especially if you have the ingredients weighed out beforehand. Even if you don't it's so easy you can practically do it with your eyes closed. Ten minutes later, you can be back in bed.

One word of warning: the filling is HOT, dangerously so. Provide all expectant parties with a kitchen paper napkin, and avoid arms of sofas, dressing gowns etc. By necessity any leftovers can be heated in the microwave.

**Korean sweet pancakes (Hoddeok)**

300 ml (1 1/4 cup) plain flour  
1 ml (1/4 tsp) salt  
75 ml (6 tbsp) full fat milk



**INSIDE-OUT-DOUGHNUT:** A traditional sweet pancake served by street vendors in Korea. EDWARD STEPHEN/THE EPOCH TIMES

**Fermented yeast water**  
40 ml (3 tbsp) warm water  
1 ml (1/4 tsp) white sugar  
1 ml (1/4 tsp) easy-action, dried yeast

**Filling: (mix well in a bowl)**  
40 ml (3 tbsp) dark brown sugar  
40 ml (3 tbsp) light brown sugar  
1 ml (1/4 tsp) cinnamon powder  
25 ml (2 tbsp) peanuts or walnuts, unsalted and crushed (optional)  
8 ml (1/2 tsp) sunflower oil  
Knob of butter

Mix the ingredients for the yeast water in a small bowl and leave in a warm place for ten minutes.

Sift the flour into a large bowl and add the salt and milk. Mix with a spoon, then your hands, gradually forming a soft dough (you may need a bit more milk). Knead lightly, adding more milk if needed until you have a soft and malleable dough. Leave covered with a cling wrap or a slightly damp tea towel in a warm place for three hours until doubled in size.

When the dough is ready, separate into six equal-sized balls (a bit larger than a golf ball), and place on a plate. Widen the dough into a flattened round on the palm of your hand and place a tablespoon of the filling in the middle. Carefully gather the corners up, like a Chinese dumpling and seal well

and tightly. Place the filled cakes, seam side down on a plate.

Heat sunflower oil and butter in a frying pan over medium heat. When hot, place the cakes, three at a time, sealed side down in the pan. Using a spatula press the cakes out flat, turning after about four minutes when the cakes are golden brown. Cook the cakes on the other side until golden brown (about three or four minutes). You will have one side with ridges on and one side flat. Remove and drain on kitchen paper. Eat hot.

*This recipe was kindly donated by Sue Pressey, a Korean living in Australia. Her blog www.mykorean-kitchen.com contains other simple yet delicious Korean recipes.*

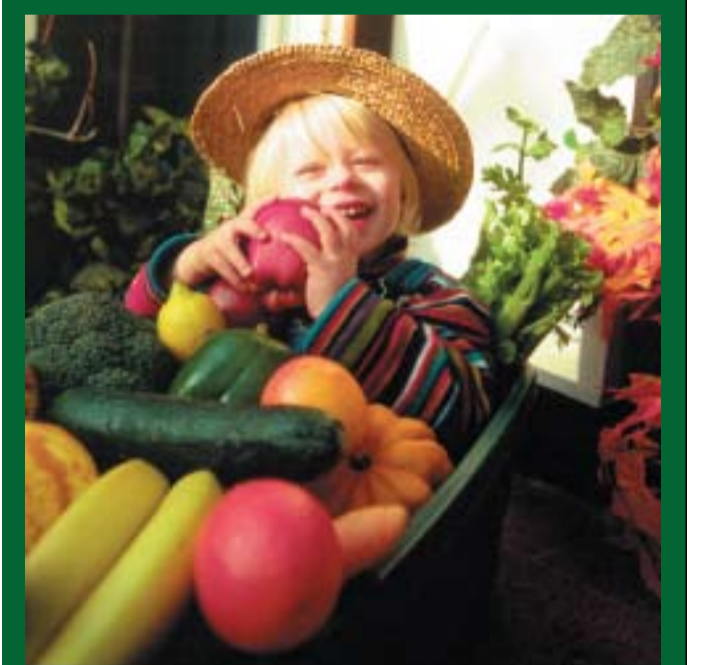


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### Less Nutrition in Modern (Conventional) Veggies

"If you're still not buying the whole "organic-is-better" argument, this study might convince you otherwise. As Davis points out, more than three billion people around the world suffer from malnourishment and yet, ironically, efforts to increase food production have actually produced food that is less nourishing. Fruits seem to be less affected by genetic and environmental dilution, but one can't help but wonder how nutritionally bankrupt veggies can be avoided."

*From The Skimmer, Time magazine*



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