



Hazardous Food Preservation and Storage Advice

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Lately, some people have been advocating some very potentially hazardous food preservation and storage practices on foods meant for room temperature storage.

These include:

- Home canned butter,
- Vaseline covered eggs, and
- Wax covered cheeses

All of these foods may potentially lead to botulism or other foodborne illnesses if they are stored at room temperature.

Canning Butter. While there are several canned butter products that can be purchased in the grocery store, methods to can butter at home have not been developed. Furthermore, salt is the key to preventing botulism growth in commercially canned butter and some of the circulating methods make no mention of salt or using salted butter.

Vaseline Covered Eggs. Covering eggs in Vaseline for room temperature storage is simply dangerous. There is no sound principle of food preservation being applied here what-so-ever. In fact, this is quite the opposite—conditions are being created to favor foodborne illness microorganisms.

Wax Covered Cheese. The wax covering on cheese is used to prevent mold growth. Refrigeration is required to slow and prevent bacterial growth (including bacteria that can cause foodborne illness). Placing wax-covered cheese at room temperature will encourage rapid bacterial growth and become a dangerous hazard for foodborne illness.

When in doubt always call your Cooperative Extension office about questionable food preservation and storage practices. You can also consult the USU Food Safety Program Web site at: <http://foodsafety.usu.edu>.

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