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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Autumn Food Safety

MEMPHIS, TN – Halloween is Wednesday, October 31st, and the Shelby County Health Department has advice for families who plan to celebrate the fall season with parties, neighborhood gatherings, or trick-or-treating.

“Trick-or-treating and harvest festivals and parties are a great way to celebrate with friends and neighbors,” said Kasia Alexander, Manager of the Shelby County Health Department’s Environmental Health and Food Safety Program. “But follow food safety guidelines to make sure your guests enjoy the treats without tricks like food-borne illness.”

- Wash your hands before and after handling food, and wash all your dishes, utensils, and pots and pans before using them.
- Separate raw meat and poultry from other ingredients until ready to cook. Thoroughly wash cutting boards, plates, and utensils after using them on raw meat.
- Cook all foods thoroughly to the recommended temperatures.
- Keep food containers covered and refrigerated until ready to serve.
- Have guests use separate serving utensils to dish out helpings – never used forks or spoons.
- Discourage guests from using fingers to pick up foods – always provide serving tongs.
- Do not serve dip in large bowls. Provide guests with individual servings.
- Keep hot foods hot by using chafing dishes or crock-pots and keep cold foods cold by putting cold dishes in bowls of ice.
- Refrigerate leftovers as soon as possible and reheat them to at least 165 degrees before serving again.
- Throw out foods that have been sitting out at room temperature for two hours or more.

Trick-or-treating safety:

- A parent or adult should always accompany children while trick-or-treating.
- Take a flashlight, and attach reflective tape on children’s costumes.
- Inspect all trick-or-treat candy carefully before allowing children to eat it. Make sure candy is commercially wrapped and the wrappers have not been tampered with.
- Discard homemade candy or baked goods.
- Wash all fruit thoroughly and inspect for holes, then cut it open before allowing children to eat it.
- Have children wash their hands before eating their Halloween goodies.

For more information about food safety and the Shelby County Health Department’s Environmental Health and Food Safety Program, visit our website: <http://www.shelbytnhealth.com>.

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Mission

To promote, protect and improve the health and environment of all Shelby County residents.

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