



# NEWS

www.pueblohealthdept.org  
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## Chile Roasters Go the Extra Mile to Promote Food Safety

It's green chile season in Pueblo! Local farms are harvesting Pueblo chile, firing up their roasters and the smell of roasting chiles is in the air. The Pueblo Chile Growers Association has gone the extra mile to help promote food safety by printing safety tips on chile roasting bags.

“As more Pueblo chiles are sold, the safe handling of roasted chiles at home increases in importance. I thank the Pueblo Chile Growers Association for including food safety tips on the roasting bags to prevent illness when chiles are enjoyed,” stated Sylvia Proud, public health director at the Pueblo City-County Health Department. Proud added, “The Pueblo Chile Growers Association worked with the Pueblo City-County Health Department for the safe chile handling information, which is now placed on the bags.”



The idea is to help prevent foodborne illness from improper handling of roasted chiles. Since numerous people make green chile and use it throughout the year, it's likely you will purchase bushels of chile and prepare them for frozen storage. Once roasted, chiles become a potentially hazardous food and will be hot upon purchase. It is essential you follow rapid cooling steps to prepare roasted green chiles for storage. Roasted green chiles must be processed and cooled right away. Once rapid cooling has been accomplished you can **refrigerate** chiles or freeze them for long-term storage to enjoy all year.



Chile safety information now printed on bags.

- more -

**PREVENT • PROMOTE • PROTECT**

**Chile Roasters Go the Extra Mile to Promote Food Safety**

Whether you prefer mild or hot, you can select and process chiles safely to add spice to your meals. For safety and quality, follow these tips:

- Roasted chiles should be put in a food-grade plastic bag (not a trash bag), or other food-safe container.
- Take chiles home in a chilled ice chest within 2 hours of roasting.
- **Within 2 hours of roasting, peppers should be cooled in an ice bath or refrigerator to less than 40°F. (Divide into small batches for quick cooling).** To freeze, pack chiles in plastic bags, heavy aluminum foil or freezer wrap. Remove excess air.
- Freeze chiles to 0°F immediately after packing. Leave a little space between packages for air circulation.
  - Label and date packages.
  - Bacteria can live during freezer storage. Thaw chiles in a refrigerator. Bacteria can revive, grow and cause an illness.

The Pueblo Chile Growers Association will be acknowledged for this at the Wednesday, October 26, 2016 Board of Health meeting.

For additional information visit [TheDishPueblo.com](http://TheDishPueblo.com) or call the Pueblo City-County Health Department at (719) 583-4307.

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