Mechanically Tenderized Beef: Done at 71!

In 2012, there was an outbreak of E. coli O157:H7 in Canada associated with mechanically tenderized beef cuts. Other outbreaks have happened in the US involving tenderized beef. Health Canada is studying what this means for food safety messaging. The usual message about beef is that bacteria are on the outside of the meat, not the inside, so it’s okay to serve rare steaks after searing the surface.

But, mechanical tenderizing involves using blades or needles to physically break the meat fibres. In the process, bacteria on the surface are pushed into the meat. Therefore, cooking tenderized steak to only a rare doneness wouldn’t kill the bacteria that are now well under the surface.

Cooking Recommendations
Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada are recommending that all Canadians eat tenderized beef cooked to an internal temperature of 71°C (160°F), which is medium doneness. Use a food probe thermometer to be sure.

Food Handler Training: Always a Good Idea

Food handler training can make a big difference to your inspection results.

A 2009 study compared restaurants where mandatory food handler training was required with premises in a municipality where food handler training was not a requirement.

The rate of infractions was about twice as high in the places without mandatory training. The types of infractions were similar in both types of locations.

Although the Perth District Health Unit (and the Province of Ontario) does not require certified food handlers in food premises at this time, training is strongly encouraged for managers and food handlers.

The Health Unit offers frequent training opportunities across Perth County, including those we are offering in April and May - see the enclosed registration form.

There is an excellent online course as well at www.ingoodhands.ca.

Food handler training...good for you, your staff and your customers!