



TRASH TALK

SUSAN TRIPLETT

Reduce, reuse and recycle

Since I became involved with Trash Talk I have learned how involved and active the rest of the world is in waste reduction. Perhaps the scourge of single use plastics has reached a tipping point or perhaps my own increased awareness of the three Rs of garbage — Reduce, Reuse, Recycle — opened my eyes to other people, businesses and organizations that are making an impact on the trash concerns in our community.

It started in the checkout line at the grocery store. I began talking with checkers and fellow customers about how plastic bags are unnecessary. Then I started the conversation when I was at other stores and restaurants and those conversations grew into wider discussions of how to reduce waste. Other Trash Talkers were having similar conversations and we were impressed by the local businesses that are working to reduce, reuse and recycle. So I thought I would share with you some of what we have learned.

Green waste (food, yard clippings, etc.) is a big contributor to our landfill, but a few local businesses turn their food waste into animal feed. Barley Brown's mash becomes cattle feed, Sweet Wife Baking and Baker Food Co-op food waste becomes pig and chicken food. Why bury something that can become a tasty burger, right?

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DORY'S DIARY

DOROTHY SWART FLESHMAN

Changes just keep on coming

At this time of particularly great change for the La Grande Observer and the Baker City Herald, I thought I should reassess whether or not to continue my Dory's Diary column in that I had been doing it for over ten years now.

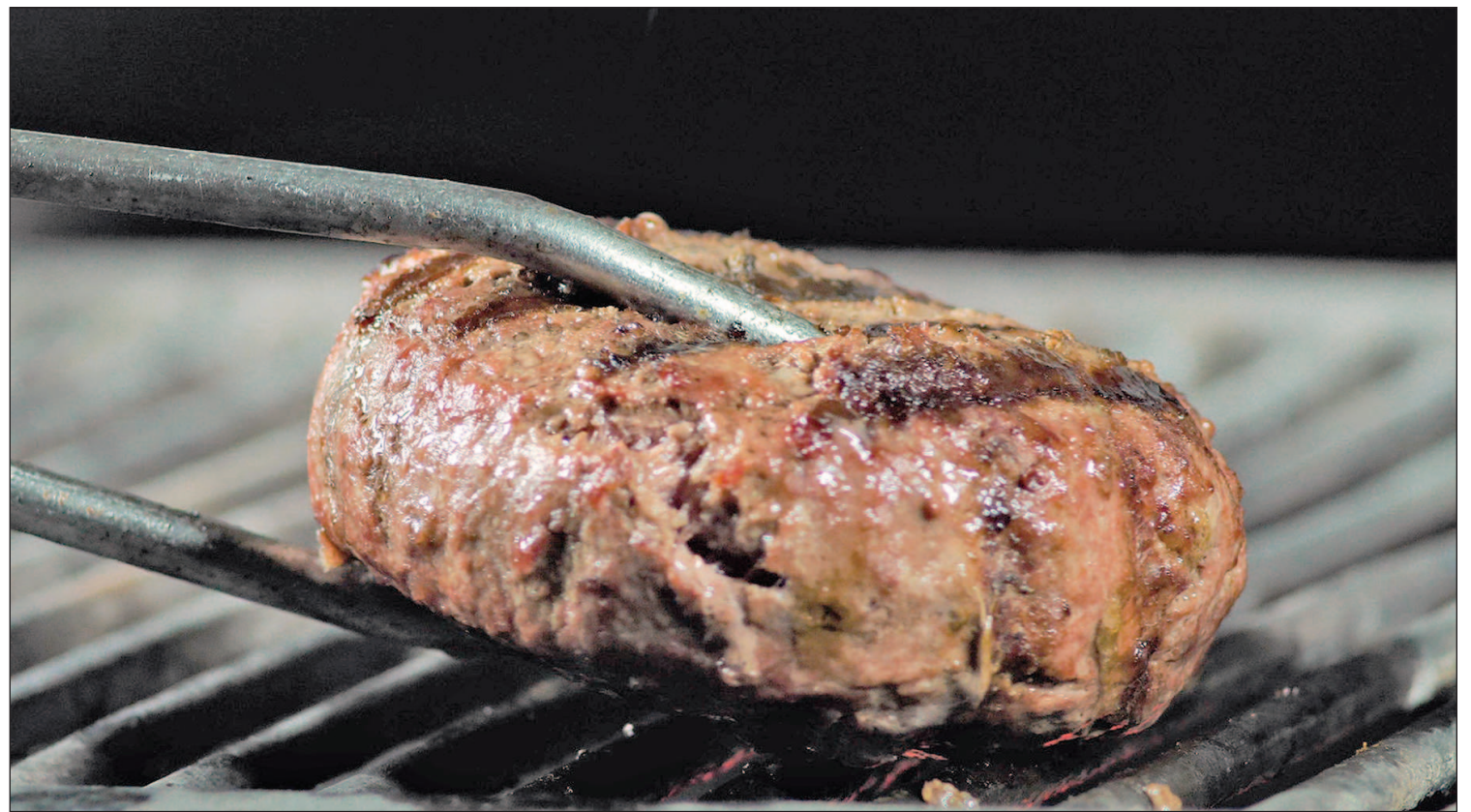
In the beginning I was asked to provide a chatty column, primarily of how it was in the old times but not totally in that it gave me room to question, to observe, to humor, to educate, to consider. I have tried to follow those guidelines, seemingly successfully at the public response.

Writing a column is a lonely venture, for there is no immediate reaction on which to base one's success or not quite hitting the mark. I cannot say that I have not received adequate encouragement or reactions to my subjects, even a few disagreements, but always in a helpful sort of way. In fact, I have been overcome more often than not at the immediate and heartwarming reactions.

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10 Tips for Better Beef Grilling



Dreamstime/TNS

People need to realize burgers need fat, says Bill Hoemke, meat manager at Royal Oak, Michigan's, Hollywood Market. That's why he and most experts strongly recommend ground chuck that's 80% lean and 20% fat. "That fat gives you the most flavorful burger," Hoemke said.

FOR BETTER BURGERS

By Susan Selasky
Detroit Free Press

Americans consume some 50 billion hamburgers a year. What's so hard about shaping some ground meat into a patty and cooking it?

Meat experts, cookbook authors and chefs say plenty.

We use the wrong grind of beef. We handle the meat and shape them wrong. We cook them wrong.

People need to realize burgers need fat, says Bill Hoemke, meat manager at Royal Oak, Mich.'s Hollywood Market. That's why he and most experts strongly recommend ground chuck that's 80% lean and 20% fat.

"That fat gives you the most flavorful burger," Hoemke said. Other leaner options, he said, are ground beef that is labeled 85% lean and 15% fat or ground sirloin, which is 90% lean and 10% fat.

"With those leaner grinds the burgers will be drier," he said.

In "Weber's Ultimate Grilling: A Step-by-Step Guide to Barbecue Genius," author Jamie Purviance writes that the ground meat shouldn't be overworked.

"Super-squashed, packed-down patties lack the minuscule air bubbles necessary for creating food burger texture and collecting the sublime melting fat and juices," he writes.

Burgers need to be meaty and mighty. We want flavorful and seasoned blends to pair with flavorful toppings.

Speaking of toppings, cheese is the most popular topping for a burger. It's followed by lettuce, tomato, onion and pickle according to nationaltoday.com.

And when it comes to cheeses, Americans love American cheese on a burger. But cheddar is a close second followed by Swiss, pepper jack and provolone.

And so, here's our guide to grilling burgers to perfection.

WHAT KIND OF BEEF SHOULD I USE?

Choose beef with fat in it. Most cookbooks and burger aficionados say the ideal choice is 80/20 beef chuck. This means it's 80% lean and has 20% fat. You can go somewhat leaner if you like with ground beef labeled 85/15. Any leaner be sure to add some moisture like Worcestershire sauce or wine to prevent the burger from drying out. And if you can, grind your beef.

HOW DO I GRIND MY OWN MEAT IF I DON'T HAVE A MEAT GRINDER?

You can come close using a food processor fitted with the metal blade. Choose the cut of meat you want — chuck, round, brisket, short rib, sirloin — and make sure it's super cold. Cut it into 1-inch pieces. Add to the bowl of the food processor and pulse a few times to get chop into smaller pieces. Don't process it too much or the meat will get mushy.

HOW SHOULD I MIX THE GROUND MEAT?

Make sure it's cold and always mix the meat gently so it just comes together. Do not over mix. If you over mix the meat (the same holds true when you make meatballs and meatloaf) the meat will be more compact and not as tender.

SHOULD I SEASON THE GROUND MEAT?

You can, but don't let the seasoned meat sit too long. According to Weber's Purviance, allow 1 teaspoon kosher salt and 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper for each 1/2 pound of ground beef. You can mix it in the meat or sprinkle on the outside of the formed patties.

If you do the latter, Purviance advises to refrigerate the patties for 30 minutes or less to allow the seasoning to distribute. If you let it sit longer the salt will draw moisture out of the meat, he writes.

WHAT'S AN IDEAL AMOUNT OF BEEF TO USE FOR EACH BURGER?

Plan on a burger that is 6-ounces before cooking. Use a scale if you have one make sure burgers are all an equal size. That 6-ounce burger is an ample size for serving as your main dish. But you can make them any size.

WHAT'S THE BEST SIZE SHAPE FOR A BURGER?

You want to match the size of the patty with the bun. Figure there will be shrinkage, so shape the patty about 1/2-inch larger than the bun. Generally, a 4-inch in diameter patty, with a dimple in the center, that is at least 1/2-inch thick will suffice.

WHY SHOULD I MAKE A DIMPLE IN THE CENTER OF THE FORMED PATTY?

If you don't do this, the burgers will end up more of a round shape and puff up like a tennis ball. The burgers won't fit the bun and you end up with a top bun that slides off. That also means that you'll be eating more bun than burger with each bite.

HOW DO YOU MAKE THE DIMPLE?

This is an easy and not to be skipped. Once the patty is formed, use the back of a soup or teaspoon or your thumb to make an indentation, about 1/3-inch deep and 1-inch wide in the center of the patty. When the burgers cook, the indentation slowly rise and you get a nice, flat even top.

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Cool off with refreshing herbal iced teas

Herbal teas have just as much a place at our table as the traditional teas of Asia, which are actual herbal tea — being made from a camellia relative. In South America the drink Yerba (herb) maté is also herbal, made from a holly relative (ilex).

I would say that herbal tea being better for you healthwise depends entirely on your opinion about caffeine. Yerba maté and Asian teas contain varying amounts of caffeine an almost so-called herbal teas are usually caffeine-free.

Many herbal teas are considered seasonal, such as sassafras and sarsaparilla (spring), lemongrass and lemon verbena (summer) when you need refreshment. Sage, dictamnus and bee balm are best when a robust tea is needed in winter.

Some herbal teas are loved



BETWEEN THE ROWS

WENDY SCHMIDT

immediately, while others are an acquired taste.

The medicinal qualities cannot be overlooked. Peppermint and spearmint help with gastrointestinal upset and also ease anxiety when elevated into juleps while watching special horse races.

The delicate flavors of aromatic teas can lift spirits after a day of drudgery and confinement working within four walls.

Anise, fennel and licorice help relieve flatulence after heavy meals.

Ginger tea is used to settle nausea, for which it works well, and is sometimes used for cramps and vertigo. Yarrow tea

is used by Swiss mountaineers; it is reputed to help with muscle cramps.

Mullein tea is a pleasant way to help coughs and chest congestion and completely clears it up.

Serving the right tea at the right time and preparing them correctly is an art in itself. The delicate elusive flavor of some tea can evaporate if left standing uncovered. It is best to serve the tea immediately.

If iced tea is preferred, pouring the tea over ice (after the tea steeps) works well. Never use chlorinated, fluoridated or chemically treated water. Use fresh water, bring to a boil, pour it over the tea leaves or herbs in a warmed teapot. Cover with lip. Steep for 3 minutes, stir, steep another minute, then pour. The amount you use is generally one teaspoon or herb per person, and one for the pot. Never make tea

in an aluminum pot.

You can use herbs such as lemon verbena, added to your traditional black or green tea, to brighten the flavor for a refreshing glass or cup of summer afternoon tea.

GARDEN CHORES

- Keep everything watered
 - Spray hollies for leaf miner control
 - Fall webworms begin building nests near the ends of branches. Prune off webs. Spray with B.T. if exfoliation becomes severe
 - Keep deadheading spent blossoms
 - Cut leggy annuals back hard and fertilize or a new flush of blooms
- If you have garden comments or questions, please write: greengardencolumn@yahoo.com. Thanks for reading!