

Food and Nutrition

Tip of the Month

Tips for Using Venison

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Venison can be substituted for beef in most of your favorite recipes. You can cut it into roasts, steaks, and stew meat. As a ground meat, it can be used in chili, spaghetti, meat loaf, tacos, sloppy joes, casseroles, and most recipes that require ground beef.

Venison is usually leaner than beef, but the fat has a stronger flavor. To prevent a gamy flavor, trim all visible fat from the meat before cooking. Venison roasts and steaks also tend to be drier than beef cuts, so a moist cooking method is recommended.

You can usually get good results with a crockpot. But, these slow cookers don't heat up quickly enough at the *Low* setting to kill all the bacteria. To keep the meat safe, always set the crockpot on *High* for one hour, before turning to the *Medium* or *Low* setting.

Another way to make venison tender is to soak it in a marinade before cooking. Make sure you keep the meat in the refrigerator while it marinates.

Wild game has a greater chance for bacterial contamination, so proper cooking is essential. A food thermometer can help ensure that the meat is cooked to a safe temperature. Venison needs to be cooked to an internal temperature of 165°F.

For more information and recipes, pick up a copy of the booklet, *From Field to Table*, from your county U of I Extension office. This \$5 booklet includes 42 wild game recipes, a section on marinades, and safety information.

