

Make sure mail order foods pass safety tests

...it won't for cat...
...could be...
...Does that sound like you? ...
...shopping is big busin...
...purchasing clothing and home furn...
...shings, Americans order food...
...through the mail to the tune of about...
...one billion dollars a year...
...It's not only shopping...
...roasts, succulent baked meats and

turkeys, gorgeous planked salmon or...
...perfect cheesecakes seen in cata...
...logues tempt customers. They're...
...great for putting together easy holi...
...day meals and as gifts for those hard...
...to buy for.
...Still, the food safety question re...
...ins. How can you be sure these...
...foods will stay safe and arrive look...
...ing wonderful during shipment?
...It's important to understand that

just because a meat has been...
...smoked, which often is just exposure...
...to a commercial smoke source, this...
...doesn't necessarily mean the meat...
...has been cooked. While a vacuum...
...pack does extend shelf life some...
...what and delays some taste change...
...problems, most vacuum-packed...
...foods still need a cold source.

WHAT IS AN adequate cold
...source? Some companies use a box...
...consisting of a plastic foam cooler...
...packed with dry ice. Other reliable...
...companies freeze food solid so that...
...overnight delivery in cold weather...
...guarantees it will arrive still firm...
...and cold to the touch.

When you order a gift, find out...
...answers to ensure that it ar...
...rives in a safe eating condition.
...Check on the cold source. Ask...
...what kinds of cold source will be...
...used with perishable food and how...
...long the package will be in transit.
...The cold source must last long...
...enough so that food arrives frozen or...
...firm and cold. Canned or processed...
...foods labeled "keep refrigerated"...
...should also be shipped with a cold...
...source.

• Check to see that the package...
...will be labeled as perishable on the...
...outside wrapping. Perishables have...
...a much better chance of surviving if...
...those receiving the food item can see...
...the label.

• Set a workable delivery date.
...Once you know how long the mailing...
...takes, call your friends to find a date...
...someone can be home to receive the...
...gift. It's surprising how much food...
...can spoil because it's stuck in the...
...post office. Mention that this...
...surprise should go straight into the...
...refrigerator. Then call the mail-or...
...der house back and set up a date. It's...
...the shippers responsibility to deliver...
...on time, the customers responsibility...
...to have someone at home to receive...
...the goods.

• It's safer to send food directly...
...to the home rather than the office, a...
...people forget to take the gift home...
...and leave it unrefrigerated.

If you receive a gift of perishable...
...foods, what should you check for...
...safety?

• Fresh or cooked meat, poultry...
...or fish should arrive frozen or still...
...hard in the middle. If never frozen it...
...should be cold to the touch.

• Ham, with the exception of dry-...
...cured country hams, baked hams...
...and most canned hams need refriger...
...ation and should arrive cold.

• Sausage, some hard, dry sau...
...sages, pepperoni, and hard salami...
...don't need refrigeration. Other types...
...summer sausage, Lebanon bologna...
...Thuringer) do. If the label says "re-

frigerate," the sausage should arrive...
...cold.

• Cheese. There should be no...
...mold on cheese except what is part...
...of its nature — blue mold in blue...
...cheese, for example.

• Cheesecake is perishable be...
...cause of its ingredients and should...
...arrive fully frozen.

• First-class live lobster should...
...come packed in seaweed in an insu...
...lated box. Lobsters should still be...
...lively before cooking. Check that the...
...tail is tightly coiled. Do not eat lob...
...ster with a limp tail. This may indi...
...cate the presence of disease or that...
...the lobster is near death.

Make sure you are dealing with a...
...reputable company and ask ques...
...tions about delivery policies.

Delicious duo offers tasty treat

AP — Because two are often tastier than one, be on the lookout for new vegetable duos.

1/2 teaspoon dried basil, crushed
1/2 teaspoon salt

In a 1-quart microwave-safe casserole combine cauliflower, onions and water. Cook, covered, on 100 percent power (high) for 5 to 7 minutes or until cauliflower is crisp-tender. Drain well.

Meanwhile, in a mixing bowl stir together tomato, bacon, basil and salt. Toss tomato mixture with cauliflower mixture. Makes four servings.

MICROWAVE CAULIFLOWER AND TOMATOES
2 cups cauliflower flowerets
2 green onions, sliced
2 tablespoons water
1 medium tomato, seeded and chopped
1 slice bacon, cooked, drained and crumbled

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