

Video Name: Video Transcript

- Host Welcome to our Midday Moment, we've all been there before...We have a question we just can't figure out the answer to. Luckily there's a service through the Iowa State and University of Minnesota Extension offices that is there to help, and here to talk to us on Midday Moment about Answer Line is Elizabeth Meiman, thank you so much. She's a coordinator for that program, welcome Elizabeth.
- Elizabeth Meiman Thank you.
- Host Thanks for being here. First, just kind of run through, what exactly is Answer Line?
- Elizabeth Answer Line is a hotline provided by the Extension Service in both Minnesota and Iowa, we're available to answer home and family questions; cooking, cleaning, sewing, laundry issues, a few insects or horticulture things, we're there Monday-Friday from 9 until noon and 1 until 4, and we can also be reached by email.
- Host Ok, now, you kind of answered a part of this, but in terms of the questions that you get, is it just a wide range of questions that you answer?
- Elizabeth It is a wide range of questions, I'd say the most common question is food safety related. Can I still eat this, it's been sitting out, or it's been in my house a long time?
We do a lot of food preservation questions in the summer. And we can walk people through canning processes or freezing processes whether they're first-timers or just a little rusty. We also get a lot of disaster related questions, so if we have a flood with all the snowmelt or ice storms and your freezer is out, we can help you know what to save.
- Host Ok, so what kind of happens? You call the number, and what can folks expect to happen?
- Elizabeth Call the number and we'll speak to you, find out what your question is, do the research available, we use research-based information, we don't just answer off the top of our head, unless it's an easy temperature or something like that. We can give you an answer while we're speaking to you, but if we can't, we will arrange to call you back or email you with information. We may need to consult specialists that are out of our area, but we do our best to get your question answered as promptly as possible.
- Host Alright, now some might say why not just get on the computer, and look it up online, put it in a Google search...I guess just what's the advantage of using Answer Line?

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Elizabeth Well, talking to a person, we can tailor the answer to your specific question, again, research-based information, not just something that's posted on the internet. When you have a second or third question about that answer we give you, we can answer that as well.

Host So there's no end to the questions or the answers that can come.

Elizabeth That's right.

Host And as we've kind of seen in the video, there is actually folks that are actually sitting there, I mean, you work there manning the phone.

Elizabeth There's three of us on the staff, and we are home economists, trained home economists, and we have some files and other information that we can consult, plus other specialists that have more knowledge in certain areas, such as entomology or horticulture.

Host Okay, now this service is available to both Iowa and folks in Minnesota?

Elizabeth Both Iowans and Minnesotans, we have 1-800 numbers, one for each state.

Host Ok, that's good, so no matter where you live, you can definitely get some help. So just go over it one last time, what are the numbers that folks can call, they can see them on the screen.

Elizabeth In Iowa, it's 1-800-262-3804, and in Minnesota, it's 1-800-854-1678, there we go!
Or email too, so that's always a good option.
And we have a website, so if you just Google Search "Answer Line," we're the first response, and we have some Frequently Asked Questions available there too.

Host Very good, well thanks Elizabeth Meiman, we appreciate you being on.

Elizabeth Well you're welcome, thank you for having me.